



More city walking tours in Leiden

Leiden is the city where Rembrandt van Rijn was born, in 1606. It is also the city of the Pilgrim Fathers, who were able to live and work here in freedom between 1609 and 1620. Leiden's historic centre has been remarkably well preserved ever since that time. The 'Leiden Loop' is a charming route that takes in many of Leiden's sights, highlights, and hidden treasures: it really is the City of Discoveries.

A unique walking tour that traces the footsteps of the greatest Old Master of the 17th century: Rembrandt van Rijn. It was in Leiden that Rembrandt literally and figuratively saw the light. Born and raised in Leiden, he spent the first 25 years of his life here, laying the foundations for his impressive artistic career.

The Pilgrim Fathers, the founding fathers of the United States, lived and worked in Leiden between 1609 and 1620. The Pilgrims Route is the perfect way to enjoy an unforgettable walking tour through historic Leiden, with plenty of sights along the way and a wealth of accompanying background stories, anecdotes, and illustrations.

COURTYARDS OF LEIDEN



In the footsteps of history



A walk along the prettiest courtyards and gardens.



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These courtyards are closed to the public



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A selection of the prettiest courtyards

The courtyards in the Leiden city centre are, each and every one of them, idyllic places that blot out the noisy bustle of the city and give the impression of being frozen in time. This booklet contains a selection of 21 of the most beautiful of these courtyards. What route you take is up to you; all 36 courtyards are shown on the map.

The Leiden city centre is encircled by the Singelpark (the 6.5-kilometre continuous park along the city's outer canals). You can walk from one side of the historic centre to the other, be it west to east or north to south, in little more than half an hour.

 The courtyards shown in green are open to the public. They are described in detail in this guide.  The courtyards shown in red are not accessible, but some of them do have a notable entrance gate or façade.

As well as this Courtyards of Leiden Route, there are guides available on the Rembrandt Route, the Pilgrims Route, and the 'Leiden Loop'. This symbol indicates where these routes cross.



Eager to know more? All themed walking tours are available at the Tourist Office Leiden.

COURTYARDS OF LEIDEN

Welcome to Leiden and its many pretty courtyards!

There used to be two hundred 'hofjes' – almshouses with courtyards – in the Netherlands, a quarter of which were in Leiden. Without exception, these courtyards are all idyllic places that give the impression of being frozen in time. Nowadays, there remain 36, of which this Hofjes Route describes 22 of the prettiest.

The residents have no objection to brief visits to 'their' courtyards, but they nonetheless value their privacy. Please try to remember this: the best way to view the courtyards is to do so from the entrance. You are also asked not to walk across the gardens.

Social care The first 'hofjes' were created more than five hundred years ago. The founders were from well-to-do backgrounds, many of whom wished to do something good for the city. The courtyards in Leiden are therefore an example of social care in the Middle Ages. Residents were able to live there for nothing and often received assistance in the form of food and clothing. In return, they were required to behave impeccably and show gratitude. The founders, who were religious (in many cases, Catholic), and who hoped that the prayers of the residents would help secure their place in Heaven after their death, often named 'their' courtyards after a saint or Biblical location.

Infill locations Courtyards were built on small plots of land that were left over between the housing blocks of the crowded city. The – often small – dwellings were usually entirely windowless at the rear, the only windows being those overlooking the communal garden. The gardens themselves always had a pump to supply the residents with water. There were also shared toilets – that is to say, shacks containing a barrel for excrement. It was only much later that the houses had their own sanitary fittings, and in some cases were enlarged through the addition of an extra floor or by converting two houses into one.



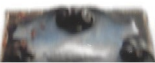
3 Brouchovenhofje



4 City gate
Eva van Hoogveen



15 Bethlehemshof



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- 1** Sint Salvatorhof
Steenstraat 17
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1627



Pointed arches above the windows; this is particularly noteworthy as this design is

1 Sint Salvatorhof

The St. Salvatorhof was founded by a priest, Paulus Claesz de Goede. He came from a wealthy Leiden family that refused to accept the Reformation, choosing to remain strict Catholics. In his will, he stipulated the establishment of almshouses for unmarried women and widows. After his death, the executors of his estate purchased an old handball court on which they built a complex of twelve houses. After the Reformation, this was the usual number of almshouse residences. It is said that this was in memory of Jesus' twelve apostles. The houses were completed in 1639.

Elderly residents still occupied the houses until the 1960s, when they were deemed to be no longer suitable for human habitation. The Stichting Leidse Studentenhuysvesting foundation took over the almshouses and courtyard, implementing a thorough programme of renovations between 1978 and 1982. The most recent renovation work took place in 1991.



2 Sint Stevenshof or Convent van Tetterode

Willem Aerntsz. van Tetrode was a wealthy brewer who lived with his wife, Christina Arentsdochter, in a house on Haarlemmerstraat. Intending to establish a courtyard, he purchased his neighbour's house and its yard in 1484. In 1487, he had a deed drawn up in his will by which the courtyard could be built after his death. Previously, in 1461, Willem had established the Brewers' Guild with a number of other brewers. With Saint ('Sint') Stephen ('Steven') as their patron, the guild acquired the name Sint Stevensgilde. This also became the name of the courtyard: Stevenshofje.

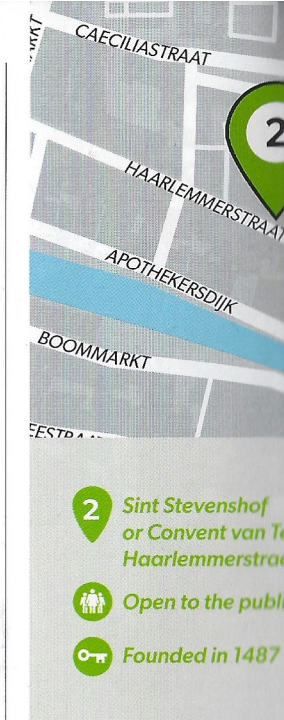
It was intended to provide housing for thirteen married couples. Among the men's duties was to attend mass every Friday in the Onze Lieve Vrouwekerk (church) to pray for the salvation of the founder and his wife.



The Stevenshoffespolder, which was located in the Municipality of Wassenaar until 1966, was once owned by Aernt van Tetrode and later by his son, Willem van Tetrode. The latter donated the land to the Sint Stevenshofje. The residential district of Stevenshof is now located on the former site of the polder.



Painting of the Sint Stevenshofje by Max Liebermann (1889). Collection of the Alte Nationalgalerie



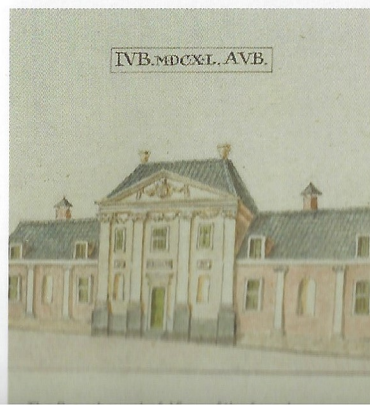
- 2** Sint Stevenshof or Convent van Tetterode
Haarlemmerstraat
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1487



3 Brouchovenhof

The Brouchovenhofje was an initiative of Anna van Brouhoven. She asked her brother Jacob to allow poor elderly people to live in houses free of charge. Her brother honoured her wish, and founded a courtyard. The work on their construction began towards the end of his life. The architect was most likely Arent van 's-Gravensande, who built fourteen houses (the standard number of twelve, plus two houses left by Anna van Brouhoven). At the time, the houses had just one storey: a second storey was added towards the end of the 18th century.

The gateway building bears the year of construction (1640) and the initials of Jacob and Anna van Brouhoven. When Jacob van Brouhoven died in 1642, the management of the courtyard passed to the city council of Leiden, of which he had been a long-time member. One point of note is that Papengracht was actually still a canal in 1631; it was not filled in until 1633.

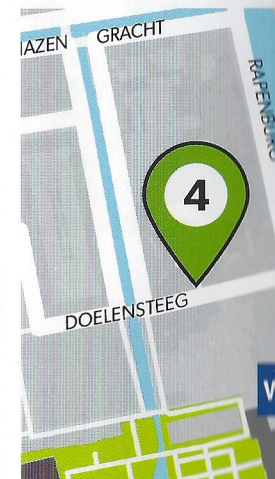


Stamp with the J. van Brouchoven coat of arms.

4 Eva van Hoogeveen

Eva van Hoogveen came from a very distinguished family, and had some significant capital at her disposal. It is possible that she wished to provide housing to people like herself – unmarried women (or widows) – who were not as wealthy as she was. Her will stated: 'a vacant plot on which a courtyard of twelve or thirteen houses or rooms shall be built, in each of which shall live an honourable lady, at least 40 years of age, who is without a husband'.

After her death in 1652, the executors of her estate purchased a number of building plots. The city architect Arent van 's-Gravensande built two rows of six houses on the central area in 1654/55.



- 4 Eva van Hoogeveen Doelensteeg 7
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1650

The gate on Doelensteeg was not built until 1659. The Latin inscription presents to the public this 'most chaste and praiseworthy virgin' as a worthy example. Her family's coat of arms – a sheep – is also shown. The former governor's room is located above the gate. The courtyard was run by four governors, who had the task of keeping the houses in good condition.

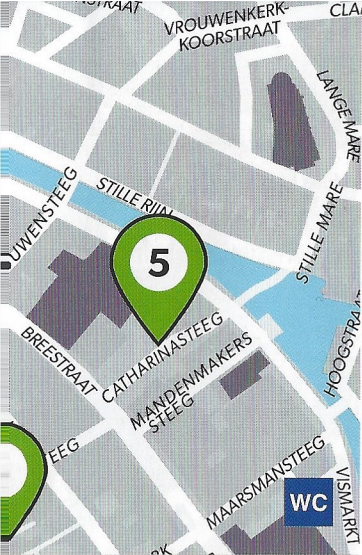


Eva van Hoogeveen city gate in the courtyard, which was installed in 1739. Henk Spek. Historische Vereniging Leiden.

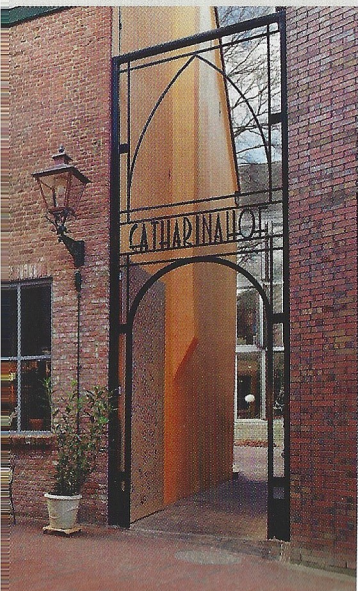
The sheep also features on the pump in the courtyard, which was installed in 1739. Henk Spek. Historische Vereniging Leiden.



Epitaph of Jacob van Brouhoven, in Pieterskerk Leiden. Collection of the Cultural Heritage Agency.



- 5 Catharinahof
Catharinasteeg
- Open to the public
- Designed in 2014



Entrance to Catharinahof
on Catharinasteeg.

5 Catharinahof

The Sint-Catharinagasthuis was established here before 1275, and is probably the oldest social care institution in Leiden. It was a shelter and care home for poor foreigners (such as mendicants), and a nursing home and hospital for the city's poor who were ill. The home's chapel on Breestraat still exists and has served as the Waalse kerk (church) since the 17th century.



Stadsgehoorzaal In 1872, the home was rebuilt, becoming the Stadsgehoorzaal. It was used for lectures, speeches, recitals, and meetings, but the building quickly acquired other functions too: for rehearsals and concerts by the Leiden music school, orchestras, and choirs, and for dancing in the evenings, for citizens and the officer corps of the local garrison. The building burnt down in 1889 and was replaced with a new one, completed in 1892.

Resting point A new pedestrian route was created in 2014 in order to improve the link between Haarlemmerstraat and Breestraat. It passes along the former site of the Sint-Catharinagasthuis and where the Catharinahof was established; a delightful resting point in the heart of the city.

36 courtyards Among the immediate neighbours of this new enclosed garden are Café Caat of the Stadsgehoorzaal and several other hospitality venues. Following the opening of the Catharinahof, Leiden now has 36 courtyards.



6 Jean Michelhof

Jan Michielsz., a cloth merchant originally from Wallonia, lived on Herengracht with his wife, Catarina Gekier. The couple, who had no children, agreed that whoever survived the other would establish almshouses. For that purpose, in 1686, Jan Michielsz. purchased a number of houses behind a gate on Pieterskerkstraat, dating from the early 17th century. His widow later purchased a few more houses nearby. After her death, they were converted for a new purpose: dwellings for four married couples and eight women, unmarried or widowed, all of whom were members of the Walloon Reformed Church.

No two houses were the same. As a result, the courtyard acquired a somewhat random but very picturesque character, which has inspired many artists over the years. It is not known why the gable stone bears the year 1610, given that the courtyard was built later.

The residents had a long-running tradition, according to which newcomers had to treat their fellow residents to a feast. However, the tradition was abolished in 1757.

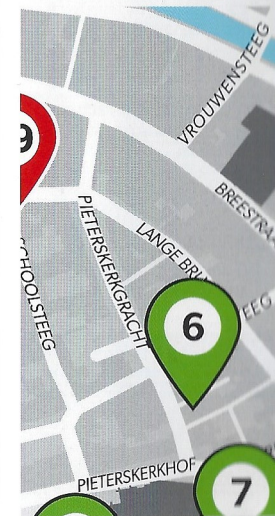
Ten years later, another tradition came to an end: the free distribution of beer. In 1682, the Jean Michelhof was purchased



Pump in the courtyard



Door and gable stone bearing
the year 1610



- 6 Jean Michelhof
Pieterskerkstraat
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1687



7 Pieter Gerritsz. Speckhof Van der Speckhof

This courtyard was established by Pieter Gerritsz. Speck, or van der Speck, a wealthy carpenter. He was also the steward of the churches. Among other things, he helped build the tower of the St. Stevenskerk in Nijmegen. He owned a great many homes in Leiden and, as a slum landlord, must have been acutely aware of how terrible the living conditions of poor elderly people often were. During his own lifetime, he built a courtyard behind his own house on Langebrug.

Van der Speck financed the courtyard with his own money, which he had earned through shares in the Dutch East India Company. His will from 1645 included stipulations on how the foundation was to be run. Due to the limited size of the site next to his home, the courtyard ended up on the small side, with just eight houses.

The courtyard was renovated in 1977, with the eight houses being converted into four



Old postcard of Van der Speckhof



7 Van der Speckhof
Pieterskerkhof 4

Limited access; please
pass through quietly

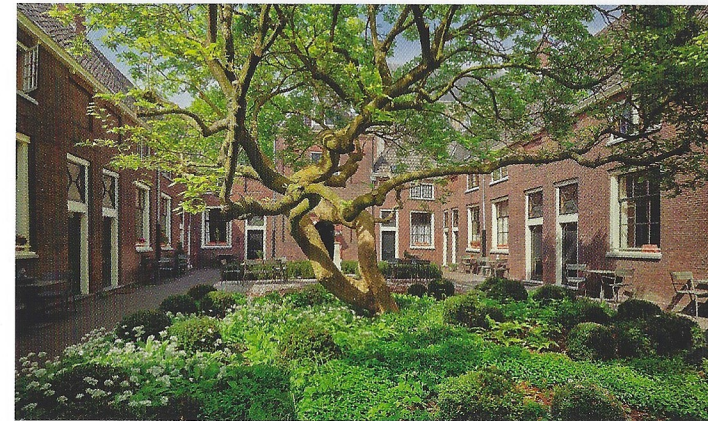
Founded in 1645



Of particular note are the
garden wall, the entrance
gate, and the exterior walls

8 Jean Pesijnhof

In 1611, several houses on Kloksteeg were purchased by a group of English refugees, who had fled on account of their religion. The Reverend John Robinson and his followers moved in there and, because they had no church of their own, held their services there for some time as well. In 1620, some of them left for America for a new future.

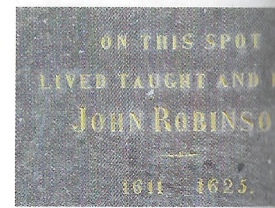


Fugitive Jean Pesijn was another fugitive in Leiden; he came from the Lille area in what is now the north of France. After the death of his only daughter in the plague epidemic of 1655, he and his wife, Marie de Lannoy, decided to establish a courtyard for elderly married people from the Walloon community.

Gate building



Marie bought the houses following the death of her husband. Located behind the Engelse Poort (the English Gate), named after the previous inhabitants, they had since fallen into disrepair. She died in 1681, and the executors of her estate purchased two adjacent houses, which were demolished to make way for the courtyard. It was completed in 1683. The courtyard was enclosed by a gate building with a central chimney and an entrance made of hard stone, above which is located the governor's room. A sundial dating from 1924 can be found near the rear wall of the courtyard.



John Robinson lived here until 1625. Some of his followers left for America in 1620 on the Mayflower. They later became known as the Pilgrim Fathers.



8 Jean Pesijnhof
Kloksteeg 21

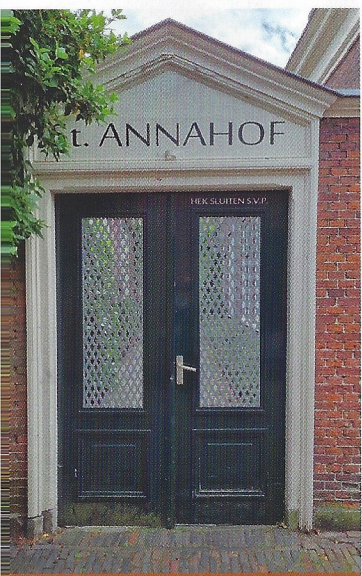
Open to the public
Please show respect

Founded in 1655





- 9 Sint Annahof
Zegersteeg 14
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1503



The entrance gate dates from 1627. The courtyard has another – prettier – gate at the end of Doelengracht, where it is designated as

9 Sint Annahof

Sint Annahof or Joostenpoort is enclosed by 5e Binnenvestgracht, Zegersteeg, and Jeruzalemschhof. In accordance with the wishes of Joost Hendricksz. van der Stijpen van Duivelandt, it was founded after his death in 1503 by his widow, Geertruit Joost Hendriks-weduwe, and his sons, Hendrik and Wiggers Joostzonen.

The courtyard was intended for thirteen widows or virgins, more than 40 years of age, and of impeccable conduct.



In 1862, the courtyard came under the management of the Diaconie der Hervormde Gemeente, who renovated it in 1876 and 1907. As a result, it lost its old character.

When the PTT was allocating postal codes to streets in the 1970s, they were faced with a problem: there were three St. Anna courtyards in Leiden (this one on Zegersteeg, one on Narmstraat (now demolished), and one at Middelstegracht 18). This courtyard was subsequently named St. Annahof.

It has been a municipal listed



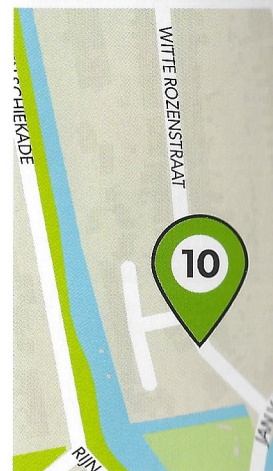
10 Justus Carelhuis

The Justus Carelhuis is the most recent courtyard in Leiden. It is situated at Witte Rozenstraat 51a in the Vreewijk district. The wealthy brothers Justus and Carel Pape, who were from The Hague, studied law in Leiden in the 19th century. Their retained their links to the city, resulting in various significant donations.

Carel Pape was the governor of the Barend van Namenhof (see no.12) and, in 1915, had the dilapidated houses of the courtyard demolished in order to build new houses, all at his own expense. Following the death of his brother, Justus, a legacy of 70,000 guilders passed to the governors of the courtyard, to be used for the creation of almshouses for Protestant married couples or for upper-middle class ladies.

The Justus Carelhuis was built in 1936, designed by Leiden architect B. Buurman (1883-1951). A sober but functional complex, it consists of twelve dwellings, the gardens of which are adjacent to the Trekvlief waterway. Management of the courtyard is still in the hands of the governors of the Barend van Namenhof.

After his death, Carel Pape left his collection of paintings to the city, with the intention that they would be housed in the Museum De Lakenhal. To fund the expansion of the museum that would be needed as a result, Justus Pape gave 50,000 guilders, and later another gift of 400,000 guilders. The new



- 10 Justus Carelhuis
Witte Rozenstraat
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1936





- 11** Crayenboschhof
Doezastraat 25
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1672



Gomarus is depicted on the 'De Staalmeesters' painting from 1675 by Jan de Baen, now in Museum De Lakenhal.



11 Sint Jacobshof or Crayenboschhof

Gomarus Jacobsz. van Crayenbosch, a wealthy Catholic cloth merchant who lived on the Hooigracht, founded the St. Jacobshofje or Crayenboschhofje. When he died, he left money for the foundation of the courtyard, for poor married couples. Gomarus Jacobsz. wanted a courtyard for his fellow Catholic citizens, but could not record this in his will, as Leiden had a Calvinist regime when the courtyard was founded and built. He solved this by appointing loyal Catholic citizens as governors.

The executors were probably unable to find a suitable plot of land or row of houses to purchase in the city, which was already extremely crowded at the time, and so they had to content themselves with building just six houses. The complex also comprises a governor's room and a gateway building.

A further eleven houses were added between 1863 and 1922, of which four on Ruime Consciëntieplein – behind the courtyard – were added in 1922, as shown on this commemorative stone.



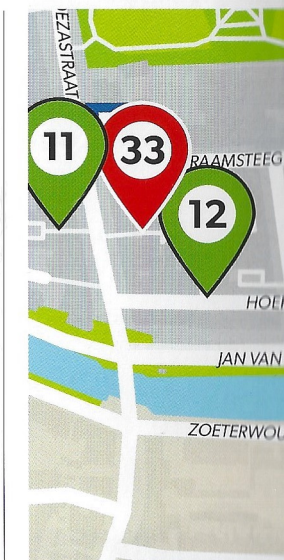
12 Barend van Namenhof

The Barend van Namenhofje was founded in 1730 by cloth merchant Barend van Namen for twelve childless married couples aged over fifty, and who were members of the Dutch Reformed Church. The courtyard was rebuilt in 1788.

Carel Pape, a lawyer and art collector in The Hague, and governor of the Barend van Namenhofje decided in 1915 that the time had come for the courtyard to be demolished. To celebrate his fortieth anniversary as governor, he had a new courtyard designed and built, at his own expense, by architect Willem Cornelis Mulder (1850-1920), who had previously renovated the Bethlehemhofje. This gave it its opulent and distinguished appearance, due to which it also came to be known as the 'villa courtyard'. Even today, the courtyard has a social purpose: those living here are students in the final phase of their studies. Most of them continue to live in the courtyard several years after completing their studies. The courtyard now has national listed status.



Older building elements, such as the stone crest above the doorway and part of a chimney in the governor's room, were relocated.



- 12** Barend van Namenhof
Hoefstraat 12
- Open to the public
- Founded in 1728





13 Bethlehemshof

Bethlehemshof is a courtyard on Levendaal with sixteen dwellings. The founder, Leiden merchant Gerrit Frankens van Hoogmade, originally established the courtyard in 1630 elsewhere in the city, on Langegracht.

In 1701, the Mennonites who lived here joined the 'Den Houcksteen' courtyard, which had been founded by their Flemish counterparts in 1660, here on Levendaal. However, the running of the two courtyards remained separate.



Due to financial reasons, the two were merged in 1811 under the name Bethlehem. In 1897, the section on Levendaal was given a contemporary façade and a second floor was added to the houses.

The courtyard was restored in 1978, during which its 17th-century character was fortunately retained.



14 Tevelingshof or Karel Tevelshof

The Tevelingshofje is located on 4e Binnenvestgracht, a canal now filled in. It was founded in 1655 and built in 1666, having been commissioned by Leiden merchants Jacob and Charles Tevel. During the plague epidemic of 1655, Charles Tevel stipulated in his will that Jacob should build a courtyard after his death, with twelve houses for childless married couples of at least twenty years of age. Later, Jacob and his wife had this number increased to twenty dwellings.



The courtyard is bound by streets on three sides. To use the available land as efficiently as possible, architect Willem van der Helm designed everything in a diamond shape. The site has a diamond-shaped layout. The floor tiles in the hall, the basic design of the pump, the entrance gate, the vestibule, and even the roof tiles, are diamond-shaped.

Of the twenty houses, exactly four



14 Karel Tevelshof Vierde Binnenvest

Open to the public

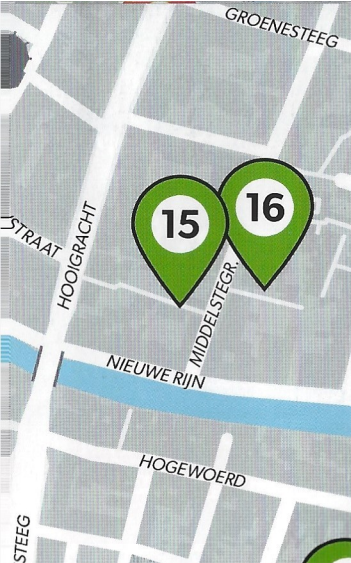
Founded in 1655
Built in 1666




Tevelingshof entrance gate.




Commemorative stone 'Bethlehem Anno 1631', from Langegracht between numbers 214 and 216, with the name 'Den Houcksteen'



15 Sint Anna Aalmoeshuis
Middelstegracht 2-4

 Chapel visits
Saturdays 2.00 pm - 4.00 pm for a small fee

 Founded in 1503



15 Sint Anna Aalmoeshuis

The Sint Anna Aalmoeshuis (also known as St. Annahofje) was built thanks to Willem Claesz., a wealthy brewer. In 1487, he purchased a dwellings complex on Hooigracht. After his death in 1491, his three children built the courtyard.

The chapel can be found at the end of the inner courtyard, one of the very few places of worship to have survived the Iconoclastic Fury of 1666. The interior is still intact, and oldest stained glass in the Netherlands is found in the windows.



Sint Annahofje, 1904.
Collection: Cultural Heritage Agency

The construction of the chapel was a thorn in the side of the chapter of St. Pancras, which fulfilled the pastoral duties for the nearby Hooglandse Kerk church. For example, it was forbidden to bury the dead in the chapel, and only the courtyard residents (thirteen women) were allowed to attend mass there.



Sint Annahofje chapel interior, 1904.
Collection: Cultural Heritage Agency

It was not until 1507 that an agreement about the chapel was reached with the dean of St Pancras, after mediation by high-placed clerics in the diocese of Utrecht. The agreement stated that an altar would be consecrated in the chapel and that mass could be read there, subject to certain conditions. There was to be no preaching, hearing of confessions, burying of the dead, or ringing of the bells. The chapel and the priest's chamber are open to visitors on Saturdays between 2.00 pm and 4.00 pm.

16 Schachtenhof

The Schachtenhof was founded in 1664 by Anthonis Jacobsz. van der Schacht. He had spent his childhood in the orphanage and knew what it was like to be poor. This may well be the reason why he and his wife, having no children, decided to use their money to build a courtyard. He had acquired his wealth as a producer of laces and ribbons, which he invested in, among other things, five dwellings on Middelstegracht.

His will stated that a courtyard with twelve houses should be built, in which residents aged 40 years or older would be able to live free of charge. It also indicated a preference for members of Van der Schacht's family and for residents who, like himself, had grown up in the orphanage in Leiden.



After his death during the major plague epidemic of 1669/1670, the executors of the estate decided to demolish the houses on Middelstegracht to create space for the building of the courtyard.




Decorations in sculpted stone can be seen above the gate, depicting the founder's trade: ribbons and trimmings. Noteworthy are the letters R and P that have been carved into the pump, which dates from 1730, and has two spouts: one for rainwater, the other for pump water. The courtyard was extensively restored




Crown atop Schachtenhof chimney.
Collection of Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken



16 Schachtenhof
Middelstegracht 2

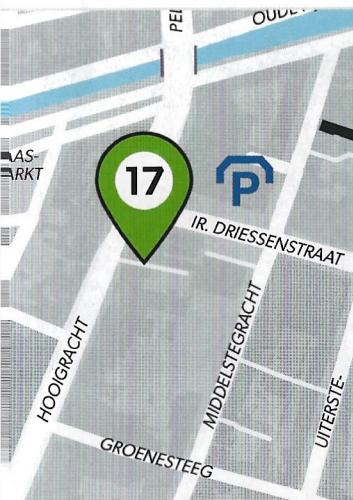
 Open to the public

 Founded in 1664



The courtyard has been extensively restored several times over the centuries. In 1939, the courtyard was largely cleared due to its dilapidated condition and rebuilt under the direction of H. A. van Oort, reusing the existing





17 François Houttijnhof

The construction of the François Houttijnhof was preceded by a notable series of events. The founder, François Houttijn, had stated in his will in 1685 that the money he left should be used to create a courtyard with eight houses. His wishes were to be carried out by his daughter, Maria, and her brother, Pieter. Unfortunately, they both died before the building work on the courtyard could begin.



The will stipulated that, in that event, the elders of the Remonstrant Brotherhood would assume responsibility for the task. However, they decided to ignore the wishes of the founder and to use the money to renovate the Joost Frans van der Lindenpoort, which was in a poor state of repair (see no. 19).

In 1736, a diligent elder, Dorremans, discovered that François Houttijn's will had not been honoured. Dorremans was furious – a reaction that so shocked the current governors that they had the François Houttijnhofje built within the year. In 1965, the courtyard was restored and sold to the Leidse Studentenhuisvesting foundation.



'Het Hofje van François Houttijn gesticht in den jaare 1737' (the Courtyard of François Houttijn, founded in the year 1737) can be seen on a stone above the entrance; this was more than half a century after his will had been drawn up.



18 Sint Janshof or Van der Laenhof

The Sint Janshof was founded in 1504, on behalf of Jan Stoop Kerstiaanszoon and his wife, Claertgen. It was intended for people of good character who had fallen on hard times due to misfortune. There were seven houses for single women, six for married couples, a governor's room, and a house that could be let to raise funds for the courtyard.

In 1565, the founder's legatees transferred the courtyard to Geraert van der Laen, a lawyer, who in the same year commissioned the renovation of the houses, the gate building, and the governor's room. After his sudden death, the name of the courtyard was changed to the Sint Janshof or Van der Laenhof.

In 1901, the houses at the front, along Haarlemmerstraat, were completely demolished and rebuilt. This was repeated for the houses at the rear in 1909. This was carried out under the direction of Jan Filippo Hzn. The most recent renovation work took place in 1983/84. The courtyard now consists of fifteen rental dwellings, and there is also a municipal monument.



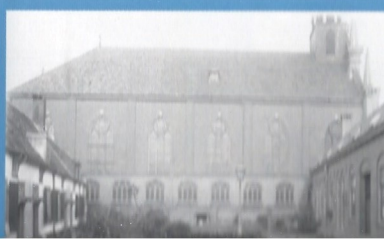
Façade of the Sint Janshofje on Haarlemmerstraat, early 20th century. Collection of Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken.



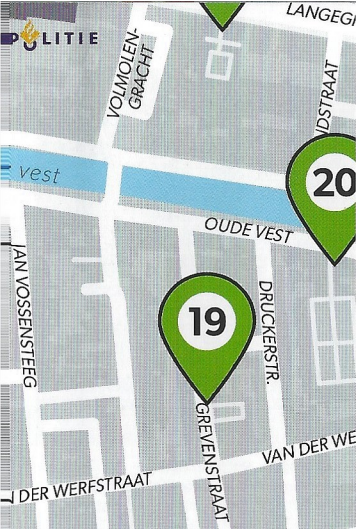
18 Van der Laenhof, Haarlemmerstraat

Open to the public

Founded in 1504



The Onze-Lieve-Vrouw Hemelvaartkerk church (also known as Monnikkerkerk) was a Roman Catholic church that was closed in 1934 and converted into a swimming pool, De Overdekte. It remained in use as a swimming pool for almost forty years. The building was demolished in 1979. During the demolition work, five religious paintings were discovered, which were transferred to Museum De Lakenhal.



19 Joost Frans van der Lindenpoort

Joost Frans van der Linden owned a gate, a kind of alley with dwellings, on Marendorpse Achtergracht (now Van der Werfstraat). His will from 1668 stated that his niece should convert it into a courtyard. It stated that the dwellings should be inhabited by the poor in perpetuity, without payment of rent.

Because he did not have a large estate, the houses quickly fell into a state of disrepair. The situation was rescued, however, when funds from the estate of François Houttijn passed to the Remonstrant Brotherhood in 1691. Although this money had been intended for the construction of François Houttijn's own courtyard, the governors first used the funds to renovate the Joost Frans van der Lindenhofje.

The courtyard dwellings were smartened up considerably, while the residents regularly received allocations of food, fuel, or money, as was usual for those living in almshouses. The François Houttijnhof was finally built in 1736 (see no. 17), in line with the wishes stated in his will.



Hofje Joost Frans van der Lindenpoort. Founded in 1668



The courtyard has a U-shape, with a smaller house positioned transversely on the central garden. The houses have two storeys and an attic. The façades are enlivened by niches and a profiled gutter cornice on blocks. Adjacent slum dwellings were demolished in 1936. The courtyard has been clearly

20 Meermansburghof

The Meermansburghof is a national listed monument and Leiden's largest courtyard. A monastery stood on this site during the Middle Ages, called Nazareth; it was replaced in 1596 by a complex of 63 small back-to-back workers' houses.



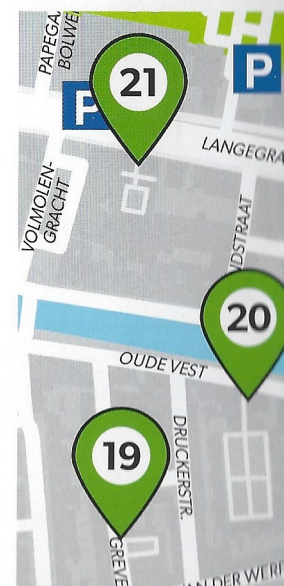
Dutch East India Company governor Maerten Meerman and his wife, Helena Verburg, had the dilapidated houses demolished in 1680 to build a courtyard. The complex was intended for the housing of needy but honourable widows and unmarried women older than forty.



The courtyard was renovated in 1778-1780, during which a splendid stucco ceiling was added to the governor's room. The most recent extensive renovation work was carried out in 1977-1979. In the courtyard stands a pump decorated with a fortress with a merman on top.

The merman on the hard-stone pump; photo from 1920. Cultural Heritage Agency

The governor's room above the entrance is decorated with paintings of the founders and of their daughter. The deed of foundation stipulates that these paintings are to remain in the governor's room forever, a



20 Meermansburghof
Oude Vest 159

Open to the public

Founded in 1680





- 21 Van Assendelfthof Langegracht 49**
- Open to the public**
- Founded in 1624**

21 Van Assendelfthof

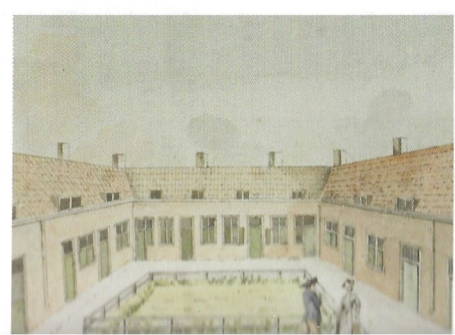
The Van Assendelfthof (also known as the Hof van Bartholomeus van Assendelft) was founded in accordance with the will from 1624 of wood merchant Bartholomeus Willemszn. van Assendelft, widower of Geertruyd Pietersdr. van der Werff.

His wishes were not carried out until 1681. It was meant to be a courtyard with fifteen houses, intended for men and women who were preferably poor friends of the founder. By 1762, only eleven of the fifteen houses on Langegracht that the heirs had purchased had been converted.



The courtyard fell into serious state of disrepair. It was almost entirely rebuilt in 1837 after a spring storm made renovations imperative. In 1968, the courtyard had two remaining elderly residents. This was followed by a period during which it was unoccupied, with the rooms being used as a bottle warehouse by a nearby distillery. The warehouse was on the point of collapse, before extensive restoration work was carried out in 1974.

The courtyard has been a national listed monument since 1976, and is managed by two governors with no church affiliations.

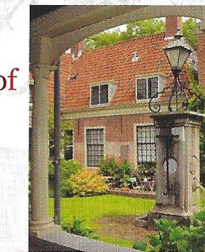


21 No access

Most of Leiden's courtyards are open to visitors. However, there are some that are closed to the public. The following list is of those courtyards that are **NOT** open to the public. Respect the residents and do not pass through the entrances.

22. Cathrijn Maartendochtershof

Pasteurstraat 2A
Founded in 1621



23. Jan de Laterehof

Tweede Binnenvestgracht 13
Founded in 1616



24. Coninckshof

Oude Vest 15
Founded in 1773

25. Sint Elisabethsgasthuishof

Caeciliastraat 16
Founded in 1428



26. Groeneveldstichting

Oude Vest 41
Founded in 1878

27. Groot Sionshof

Sionsteeg 4
Founded in 1480

28. Pieter Loridanshof

Oude Varkenmarkt 1
Founded in 1645



29. Emerantia Banninghof, Weduwenhofje or Klein Sionshofje

Lange Schoolsteeg 3
Founded in 1641



30. Bethaniënhof or Emma

Kaiserstraat 43
Founded in 1563

31. Jeruzalemshofje

Kaiserstraat 49
Founded in 1467

32. Heilig Geesthof / Cornelis Sprongshof

Doezastraat 1A
Founded in 1690 / 1850

33. Samuels de Zee's hof

Doezastraat 16
Founded in 1724

34. Cathrijn Jacobsdochterhof

Kaarsenmakerstraat 1
Founded in 1598/1928

35. Mierennesthof or Gerrit Lams Begijnhof

Hooglandse Kerkgracht 38
Founded in 1760

36. Juffrouw Maashof

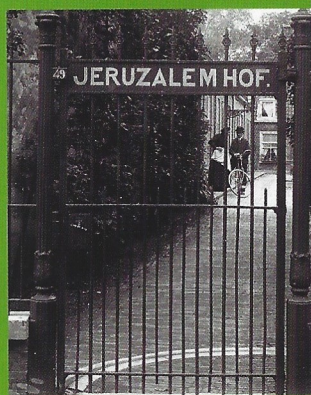
Kalvermarkt 6
Founded in 1899

Interested in learning more about Leiden's courtyards? Then book a courtyard walk with one of the city guides at the tourist center (VVV). The guides know all the ins and outs and will be able to tell you all about the history of the courtyards. It's a great





Map of the Republic
between 1715 and 1785.



Jeruzalemshof, early 1900.
Collection: Erfgoed Leiden en Omstreken.



Leiden and its courtyards then

The courtyards of Holland were built between the 13th and 19th centuries. There are now 36 courtyards in Leiden, most of which are in the centre of the city. That is a relative large number: by way of comparison, Amsterdam has 47, Haarlem nineteen, Gouda seven, and Delft has four. Courtyards existed primarily in the area referred to as 'Holland' in the 18th century. They were very rare outside the area and in neighbouring countries.

The courtyards and their almshouses were founded by private citizens, often city administrators, usually from wealthy backgrounds or the lower ranks of the aristocracy, with the aim of providing housing to the poor. The generous donors hoped that this would secure them a place in heaven. 'Their' courtyards were often named after them too, thereby ensuring they would not be forgotten.

Jeruzalemshof There are still several courtyards in Leiden whose origins go back to the Middle Ages. The first courtyard was the Jeruzalemshof on Kaiserstraat, previously Cellebroersgracht, which was established in 1467 by merchant Wouter IJsbrandsz. After visiting the Church of the Holy Sepulchre in Jerusalem, Wouter wished to pay homage to God and the twelve apostles.

The courtyard originally consisted of thirteen dwellings, which were intended for poor men in Leiden society. This was unique, as it was the first time a courtyard had been created in the Netherlands for men only. Women were allowed to live here in order to look after the men, but as soon as a man died, the woman had to leave.

Leiden came very close to losing many of the courtyards. Due to a lack of funds, the 20th century saw an increasing number of courtyards being neglected and falling into disrepair. Some, such as Klein Sionshof, were even declared unfit for habitation, and after the Second World War, serious consideration was given to demolishing several of the courtyards.

But thanks to private initiatives, the tide began to turn and the courtyards came to be appreciated more and more. As a result of the transfer of ownership to housing associations and

Leiden and its courtyards now

The courtyards, or 'hofjes', are little oases of tranquillity in the city. Like the residents, simply enjoy the peace and quiet and do not make too much noise. Ideally, you should stand at the entrances and view each courtyard from there. Respect the privacy of the residents, and do not peer through their windows.

Most courtyards are freely accessible. However, there are some that can only be admired on Mondays to Saturdays between 10.00 am and 5.00 pm. Access information can be found at the entrance to the courtyards.

If you are not allowed to enter a courtyard, simply view it from outside. Do not leave bicycles in front of the entrances and do not on any account take them inside the courtyards. Obviously, you should not leave any litter or rubbish.



Leiden Hofjes Festival

During Whit weekend, the Leiden Hofjes Festival opens the doors of the prettiest courtyards, with the hidden gardens forming the backdrop to a wide range of special musical



discoveries. From jazz to world music, from classical to dance and poetry. As a city of knowledge and culture, Leiden itself is the stage for the festival; not just in one of the concert halls, but the actual city, in all its beauty.



For the latest information, please see

