

Make, move, (me)eat

A design proposal for the politicization of residents
in Bouwlust, The Hague

**Social Inequality in the City,
Diversity and Design**
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1. Introduction

This report is the final result of the Design Game for the course 'Social Inequality in the City, Diversity and Design', an interdisciplinary Master's elective at the Technical University of Delft.

The setting for this course is an area in the Bouwlust district of The Hague Southwest, called 'De Zichten', consisting of the ground floor of two housing blocks (the plinth) and the courtyard in between. As this district will be undergoing a drastic reconstruction for the next fifteen years, housing corporation Staedion has requested DesignArbeid (a foundation) to function as a connector and curator of the neighborhood through their participatory art and programming. They in turn have decided to set up a cultural plinth called 'Toon', which is situated in 'Het Zicht'. Toon/DesignArbeid's main goal is to survive the temporality caused by the reconstruction, by developing solutions for better use of space, the imagination of stories and the absorption of services that have been lost due to the reconstruction.

Toon has invited us to create a proposal for a new programming in order to increase the politicization of the community. Aside from Toon, this organization of activities can also be created in cooperation with other initiatives that are currently included in the plinth: De Buurtkeuken (a community restaurant), Museumlab (a dependance of the Museon/Omniversum) and Made in Bouwlust, which currently hosts Spullenbak (a circular economy initiative). Cooperation with older entrepreneurs that are still present in the plinth, such as a thrift shop and bike repair shop, is also possible.

Since Bouwlust suffers from issues such as poor health, a high percentage of low incomes, a lack of job opportunities and poor livelihood, the aim of the programming is to politically activate the residents that are disadvantaged due to these issues (Den Haag in cijfers, 2020, Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021). This can be done through community design as it gives residents the chance to make decisions that affect their lives themselves, which gives them political power. We therefore need to keep in mind the main research question:

'In this situation of 'constant temporality', how can space be created in which participatory art and culture can be used to politicize local communities? In terms of process, what role and contribution can different actors play and how do you ensure that the initiative is sustainable in the medium term?'

This research question is further divided into sub questions:

1. How does the design proposal create improved access to goods, services and other opportunities, in the context of the limited space in the Zichten/Ruimzicht ground floors and the courtyard garden?
2. How does the proposal create 'political skills' and facilitate a form of direct democracy?
3. How do you deal with the constant temporality of 15 years? Which alternative uses are possible in the medium term, including use of temporary architectural constructions?

The aim is to come up with a plan that provides fair access to goods and services, which is especially important for residents on low incomes, and to give residents a chance to be heard, as institutions often fail in this regard. This will help residents to develop political skills, and become involved in political issues and the planning process for the future of their neighborhood.

The activities that we propose can be further linked to the larger thematic background that the renewal consortium of the local authority, Staedion and property developer Heijmans have created together for the wider socio-economic redevelopment of The Hague Southwest: Make, Move, Meet. As it refers to the complex socio-economic situation of the district, it serves as an important contextual element to the Design Game. First, due to high levels of unemployment, poor job opportunities and low incomes, the aim of make is to create local employment. Second, move refers to the lack of physical exercise of residents in the neighborhood and the many physical and mental problems. Its aim is to make residents exercise more. Last, because many residents suffer from loneliness and the neighborhood is also very diverse (in ages and migration backgrounds), the aim of meet is to create opportunities where residents with different backgrounds can engage in conversation.

Structure

This introduction will be followed up by five additional chapters. The second chapter, called 'data collection and approach', provides an explanation of how our observations, conversations with stakeholders and residents, literature and other data are integrated into our data collection strategy. The third chapter focuses on the context of the design proposal. It provides context to the current and planned neighborhood changes by the use of literature, statistics and fieldwork findings. In the fourth chapter, we discuss our design proposal, how it facilitates direct democracy and can survive temporarily. In addition, we provide an analysis of the stakeholders involved, by mapping out their interests and power and provide a critical reflection, by applying the Theory of Change approach to our interventions, to define how they are expected to make an impact on the neighborhood. The report will be wrapped up with a conclusion and reflection. Lastly, our report is accompanied with an appendix. This is a poster that visually communicates our findings and plans, as well as a reflection of our lessons learned.

2. Data collection and approach

For the design proposal to be effective and successful, it is important that we, as designers, are familiar with the widespread context of the Bouwlust district and the Zichten. This knowledge should include data on the current situation, changes over time, and visions on the future. In addition to this, academic literature will be consulted to strengthen assumptions and gain knowledge on neighborhood processes, mechanisms and explore potential interventions and their effects. Sources for this data section will include policy briefs, news articles or web pages, data from organizations such as 'Den Haag in cijfers', and academic literature.

Relevant data includes statistical information on demographics, physical attributes of the neighborhood, renovation plans, and current social projects. Additionally, the stakeholders' perspectives are analyzed. Based on the existing information, we have developed questions beyond the boundaries of the information that is provided online, which we can use as a guideline for the stakeholder conversations. Considering their importance, residents are represented as a separate stakeholder and, while the design should remain feasible, we aim to let their wishes be highly influential on the design as it is primarily created for them.

While a lot of information and knowledge can be gained through desk research, we believe that it is important that this is accompanied by data that focuses on felt experiences. While data can indicate a need for change, the form of this change is subject to a lot of freedom. Especially in neighborhoods where there are low levels of participation and politicization (Snel, Custers & Engbersen, 2018). The current situation might be experienced differently by residents than by policymakers or other stakeholders. Therefore, on-site visits have deepened our knowledge and also served as a form of fact checking. During the on-site data collection, the existing knowledge has been broadened by our individual observations, more question-based conversations with stakeholders, and informal conversations with residents. Observations as a method of data collection are useful as they allow us to identify how things are organized, and to prioritize what is important to the people in the social setting (Kawulich, 2005).

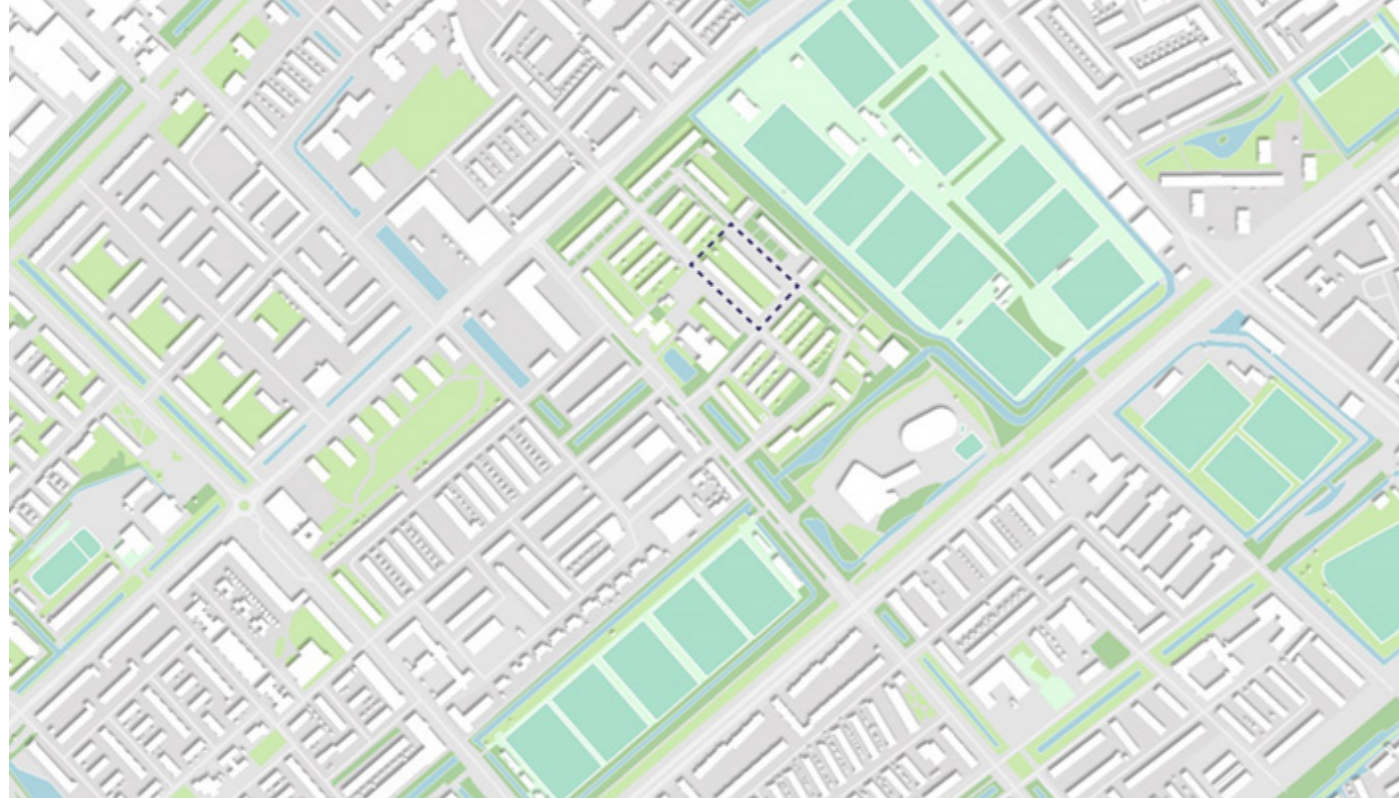
During the first session, on the 16th of March, representatives of stakeholders have been invited into the Xarage, providing us with the opportunity to ask questions. Moreover, after their short presentations about their work and vision, they answered questions regarding the demolition plan, the funding, the duration of the project as well as their aim. We, therefore, had the opportunity to learn more about their concerns and thoughts about how residents view this project. Additionally, we have approached people that engaged in other initiatives, such as the Buurtkeuken and the Spullenbak. These conversations were used to enrich the stakeholder analysis.

This first on-site visit was a cold and rainy day. While we observed that there were a few people outside, these included mostly residents walking their dog or people leaving or coming home. Based on the lack of residents outside during the first on-site visit, we have decided that we would go door-to-door in the upcoming weeks in order to have conversations with a larger range of residents. During these conversations, we were interested in the level of current neighborhood satisfaction, mental neighborhood engagement, neighborhood participation, ideas that would improve the neighborhood and potential interest in organizing and partaking in proposed activities. While these observations are very useful, it should be kept into account that the context of these conversations has an effect on the outcomes. The time of day, approachability and willingness to share experiences differs across resident groups. As the neighborhood visits were scheduled on Thursday mornings, amongst others: stay-at-home parents, unemployed residents, residents with irregular working hours or retired residents were most likely to be home. Due to the cultural variety that is present in this neighborhood, we also kept in mind that we might experience difficulties in terms of a language barrier, or be unable to have conversations with some residents.

For us as researchers and designers, it is essential that we combine our findings into a design that fits the ambitions of all stakeholders involved, and especially matches the desires of residents. Therefore, the data collection method is twofold: objective data retrieved from existing literature, and subjective data gained from more formal conversations with stakeholder representatives and more informal conversations with residents. Part of this report involves visual information, such as pictures, drawings and visual representations of our ideas. Most of these will be collected during neighborhood visits, or created ourselves.

3. Context

This chapter provides an analysis of further context of the Bouwlust district based on statistics, fieldwork findings (conversations with residents and stakeholders), and other sources, as well as current and planned neighborhood changes and how they relate to literature.



Location

3.1 Basic characteristics Bouwlust

De Zichten is a neighborhood in the Bouwlust district in The Hague Southwest. This neighborhood was built after the Second World War, in the context of the housing shortage and rapid urban development of The Hague. It consists mainly of low-rise apartment buildings and row houses and is relatively quiet and residential, with some green spaces and parks nearby. There are some small shops and restaurants in the immediate vicinity, but the area is not particularly commercial. The whole district has 28.195 inhabitants and an area of 428 ha.

3.2 Physical attributes

The Hague Southwest is a neighborhood characterized by green and blue spaces. These green spaces include trees amidst wide lanes, parks, and flowerbeds. And the blue spaces include ponds and ditches. The specific area of 'de Zichten' is no exception to this.

Ruimzicht is built up by four-story buildings, with the ground floor being reserved for facilities such as shops, social initiatives or business, and housing blocks on top of it. This is considered to be a stimulus for economic activities and creates amenities for the inhabitants of de Zichten. In between the two building blocks, there is a large green area that is accessible for everyone, with several trees, a small playground and a single bench.

Within the neighborhood, traffic is limited to low-speed transportation, and the Hengelolaan and Vrederustlaan connect de Zichten to other parts of the Hague. Tramline 9, and Buslines 21 and 25 connect the neighborhood with other parts of the city.

Tanja (a representative of Staedion) has pointed out to us that the large quantity of green spaces is greatly appreciated by residents, and that they hope it remains after the renovations. This shows that this is clearly an asset of the neighborhood that we can build upon. Although this green public space was not being utilized much during our visits, and the main user type was people walking their dog, this is most likely caused by the fact that we visited the neighborhood during school and work hours when not many people were in the streets. However, one of the first observations we had during our visit was the low quality of this public space. The space under the extensive Linden trees is filled with cars and vague grass surfaces, with almost no areas dedicated to humans. The sidewalks are narrow, there is a lack of benches and playgrounds are small and unappealing. The whole area has a lot of unused space that could be the envy of many other cities or neighborhoods, but the lack of attractive public space full of different activities leaves the potential of the area unfulfilled. In line with our conversation with Tanja, residents are in need of meeting spaces.



Photo of a playground behind Het Zicht with an added chair



Photo of the pond near Vijverzicht



Photo of the courtyard in between the building blocks



Photo of Ruimzicht

3.3 Current social issues

Bouwlust is a neighborhood with many challenges. Poverty is one of the main issues in the neighborhood. Over 62 percent of households in this neighborhood live on a low income, which is almost 15 percent more than the average of The Hague, and over 30 percent live in poverty. In addition to this, approximately 50 percent have only received low education, while for The Hague as a whole this is only 30 percent. There is also a lack of job opportunities in Bouwlust as there are only 25 jobs available per 100 residents, forcing residents to travel outside of the neighborhood for employment (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021; Den Haag in cijfers, 2020).

The poor health of the residents is another concern. Approximately 20 percent of residents in Bouwlust are overweight and more than anywhere else in Southwest do residents rely on the Wet Maatschappelijke Ondersteuning (WMO) (142 per 1000 residents versus 87 per 1000 in all of The Hague).¹ Over 15 percent have a high risk of anxiety and depression, and over 20 percent suffer from severe loneliness (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021; Den Haag in cijfers, 2020).

A third issue is the poor livability. The crime-rate in Bouwlust is about 8 percent higher than the average of The Hague. Compared to other large cities in the Netherlands, Southwest also faces more serious crimes, such as murder and drug offenses (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021). This also explains why residents told us that they do not feel like it is safe enough for their children to play outside on their own.

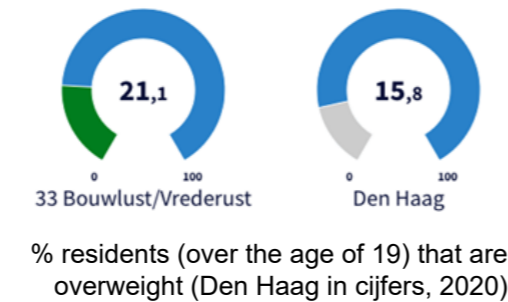
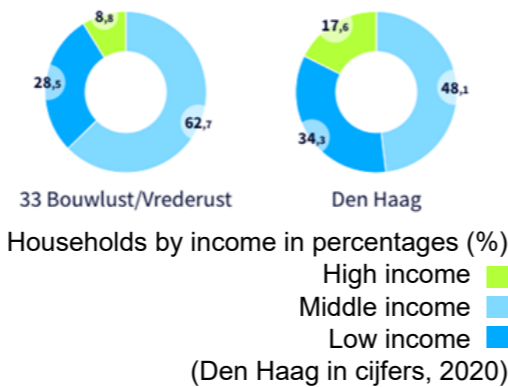
The social cohesion is lower than average in The Hague. Residents have told us that this is partly due to the diversity in migratory backgrounds and the fact that residents prefer to spend time with those with a similar background compared to others. The largest ethnic minorities are Turkish (20%), Moroccan (12%) and Surinamese (10%).

Statistics show that residents of Bouwlust are less content with their neighbors in comparison to the average of the Hague, feel less close to them and have relatively less positive interactions (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021). However, some residents have contradicted this narrative. They pointed out that they value the relationships with their neighbors, especially older people, and are afraid to lose contact with them due to the renovations, which force them to (temporarily) move. This shows that there is some social cohesion, although perhaps in a more segregated form.

A last issue that can be identified is a lack of political engagement and trust in institutions. This we have heard from residents themselves as well as from locally present representatives of institutions, such as Tanja Luttkik and Nina Cranen. However, it can also be seen in the Provincial Elections, which took place only several weeks ago, since the turnout of voters is much lower in Bouwlust than in the Hague on average. This shows that many people do not see the purpose in voting (if they can leave their house) or are not engaged enough with the elections to go out.

This might also be a result of the poor socio-economic situation of the neighborhood and its ethnic diversity, as, according to Snel, Custers and Engbersen (2018) the level of social and political participation is often lower in deprived and ethnically diverse neighborhoods than more affluent and homogeneous areas. In terms of the renovation projects in Bouwlust, Nina (a representative of Staedion, Heijmans and the municipality of the Hague) told us that they try to reach out to people and discuss the upcoming renovation project in marketplaces where many residents gather. In her experience this project is a difficult one, because the people seem to be suspicious and more closed. She personally also tries to reach out to

¹ The Wet maatschappelijke ondersteuning (Social Support Act) provides residents with the opportunity to request additional assistance from the municipality, such as transportation facilities, grocery services or a modification to the home, if they are not self-reliant enough or have trouble participating in society (Ministerie van Volksgezondheid, Welzijn en Sport, 2022).



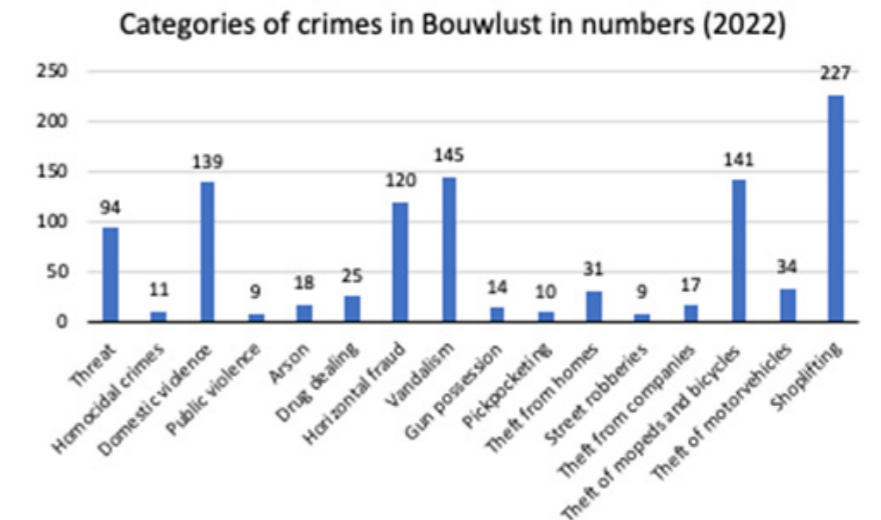
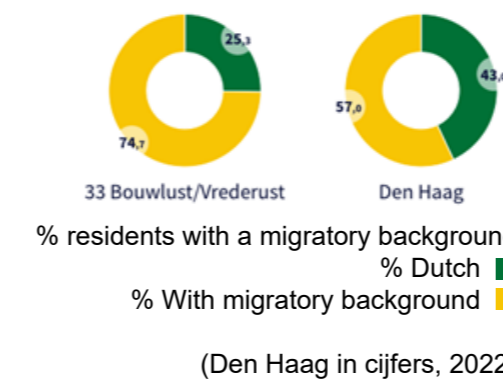
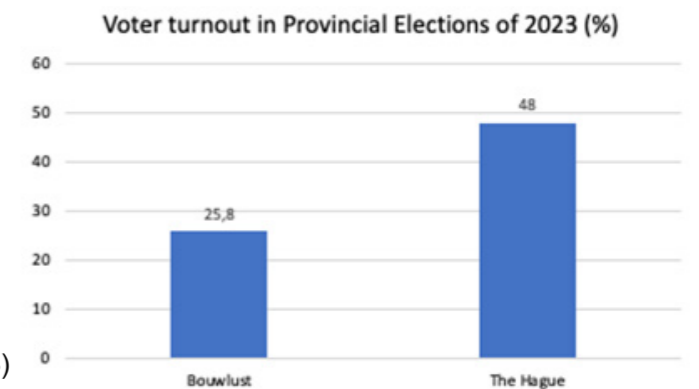
people by going to their restaurants but they give her the feeling that she is not welcomed, even though they are kind to her. Nina told us that there is a lot of resistance and criticism from residents regarding the renovation projects.

Residents themselves told us that this is because the upcoming renovation plans conflict with their emotions. Whereas Tanja told us that they have tried to involve residents in the decision-making process for the neighborhood and take residents' individual circumstances into account by inviting residents to meetings through flyers and by driving through the neighborhood on their cargo bike, offering coffee or tea and a talk, the residents felt like they were not being given enough choices regarding the future of their houses. For one group of residents, the demolition of their houses was postponed several times, which left them in a constant state of insecurity, especially since they wanted to renovate their houses themselves but did not know if it would still be worth it. Residents we spoke with understood that the renovation of the neighborhood was necessary but they were afraid that Staedion was trying to turn the neighborhood into a 'hypermodern area', which would change the current atmosphere of the neighborhood, and they felt like their voices were not being heard.

Since Bouwlust is characterized by poverty, long lasting unemployment, debts, and polarization, unsafety, poor health and poor opportunities for the youth, there are clear signs of segregation between the Hague Southwest and other areas.

Segregation can be broadly understood as heterogeneous repartition of groups into different neighborhoods, which is linked to the rising inequalities. These inequalities are based mainly on income and wealth, which lead to inequalities in other life sectors such as education, health, employment prospects, and wages of individuals (Van Ham et al., 2018). The income inequality is the result of the gap between the richest and the poorest in society, with each of them living in different communities (Van Ham et al., 2018). Not to mention that "residential mobility flows (here flows into and out of Bouwlust) tend to reinforce patterns of segregation" (Kleinmans, 2012, p.590). Therefore, initiatives affecting residential mobility have been introduced.

While the Hague Southwest offers many opportunities and includes a large range of beneficial characteristics, these are not yet used to their full potential. Therefore, multiple projects are developed to improve the neighborhood and the quality of life of its residents.



3.4 Renovation plans

In the whole neighborhood, the municipality wants to create additional living space by the restructuring of about 2,000 Staedion-owned dwellings in the Dreven-Gaarden-Zichten area, which involves both demolition and new construction as well as some renovation. During our first on-site visit Nina Cranen presented the details of these renovation plans to us. Afterwards we also talked with her and Tanja (Staedion) about these plans.

The plan is to add approximately 1200 rental homes to the current 1800, and to add another 1500 condominiums in various price ranges and tenures (although 90% of the dwellings should fall within the category affordable housing). Nina told us that diversity in tenants is necessary to help current residents who live on a low income and suffer from poor job opportunities. New job opportunities can be created by attracting businesses and new customers, who are able to afford the new services. Therefore, it seems relevant to welcome diversity in income and background. However, Nina remains critical about what entrepreneurs are invited to the neighborhood in order to avoid gentrification. To invite new entrepreneurs and initiatives, 7000m² will be added as space for non-profit facilities, as well as 15.000m² of commercial space.

While in many places of Bouwlust housing is completely demolished and built from the ground up (as this is often cheaper than renovation due to the poor quality of housing), in the case of 'de Zichten', the focus will be on improving and extending the already existing built environment, to make this a future-proof area. To fit more people in the same block, due to the housing problem in the Netherlands, they are planning to make buildings higher. Some gardens of current houses are going to disappear in order to allow the accommodation of more people, meaning that public space is likely to play a more important role in the future. Because the amount of cars is also going to increase, the new buildings will include an indoor parking garage (Staedion, 2022).

Staedion, Heijmans and the municipality are also planning to create a neighborhood where people will feel at home, where they can return to after the renovations and where spaces are created according to residents' wishes. This will involve repurposing and improving the quality of existing green spaces to facilitate meeting, moving and making, and giving current social renters the opportunity to return to the neighborhood if they wish to do so. In the meantime, they will need to be relocated to other (social) houses. Also, owner-occupied housing will be kept affordable and to prevent housing being bought by a private investor, new dwellings will be sold with a self-occupancy obligation and anti-speculation clause.

The future houses will not be dependent on gas, to improve residents' resilience (as gas is expensive), and to make houses more future-proof and environmentally-friendly.

As the demolition and renovation will take place in stages, it will take several years before current residents will be relocated and can later move back into the area. It is therefore expected that the renovation will take until 2040. In the meantime the neighborhood will need to be kept clean and safe, and activities will need to be organized to stimulate the involvement of residents (See: social projects).

The Steenzicht and Ruimzicht projects both seem to result from regeneration policies. Regeneration can be broadly defined as the efforts made by stakeholders to bring positive changes and opportunities to declining neighborhoods. According to Kleinhans (2012), regeneration policies can be divided into two types. The first kind are policies aiming to impact residential mobility by improving a neighborhood's environment and opportunities. By motivating some inhabitants to stay or attracting other residents, they constitute place-based policies, while the second kind of regeneration policies are people-based (Kleinhans, 2012). The latter focus on boosting the prospects of low-income households living in deprived neighborhoods, notably by giving them incentives to move. Since they constitute housing programmes constructing or regenerating dwellings, the Steenzicht and Ruimzicht initiatives correspond to place-based policies. For instance, the Ruimzicht project should offer 81 social rental homes as well as a meeting place for the residents of the area with access to local shops, while the Steenzicht project should offer 117 social rental homes and 103 mid-market rentals (Gemeente Den Haag, 2022). It shows a will to increase tenure diversity. Facilitating access to property for both lower and middle-income households can be a way to increase neighborhood quality because it fosters their sense of security, accountability and agency. This "empowerment through sale" tends to improve the neighborhood quality (Kleinhans, 2012, p.594).

However, housing programs are not sufficient to address complex social problems. They do not solve poverty, nor do they enhance education, employment, and social cohesion. The latter relates to the social interactions allowing to "cement stable relationships between members of a social system" (Kleinhans, 2012, p.590). In order to create a sense of community in Bouwlust, it seems coherent to combine people-based measures to place-based regeneration policies.



Photos of the current building blocks and what they could look like after the renovation (Source: presentation Nina Cranen)



Photos of the current courtyard and what it could look like after the renovation (Source: presentation Nina Cranen)

3.5 Past and current social projects

This desire to tackle current issues and create activities for and with residents is visible in the investments of the Dutch government. On November 16, 2018 it was announced that The Hague Southwest would receive €7.5 million from the Dutch government's Regio-enveloppe (Gemeente Den Haag, 2019). The municipality of The Hague added another €10 million on top of that (Dubbelaar & de Mos, 2021). Several stakeholders, one of them being the municipality of The Hague, then went on to work together on the Regio Deal Den Haag Zuidwest. Investments in projects started in 2019 and would last for four years, ending by the end of July 2023 (Dubbelaar & de Mos, 2021; Gemeente Den Haag, 2019).

These projects focus on society, the individual and guidance to work, based on the three pillars: 1. Society and participation; 2. Vital residents and 3. Activating, learning and working (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021). The goal of the first pillar is to strengthen the social community and social participation, with the goal that people will feel more involved and at home in their street, neighborhood and district. The goal of the second pillar is for residents to live more physically active and healthier lives, to improve their health and wellbeing. And the last pillar hopes to activate the talents of residents, preferably via paid employment. In the summer of 2021 already 32 projects were launched and another seven were approved to commence soon (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021).

A first example of such a project is Vreedzame Wijk (Peaceful Neighborhood) which hopes to provide a sustainable and safe educational climate in which peaceful resolution and mutual respect is central. Up until the summer of 2021 police and wellbeing partners in Bouwlust have assisted with this project and since September 2020 they have been talking with classes and teachers. Also, a children's neighborhood council has been established and district mediators have been trained (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021).

Another example is the Beweeglab (Exercise lab) which was established in Bouwlust at the end of 2020. In this exercise lab a small team is present, including a community sports coach who functions as a connector between sports and other domains, such as education, care and welfare (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021).

Due to the overlap between the pillars of the Regio Deal and the make-move-meet theme, the current theme that we can link our project to seems to build further on goals that have been set in the past years.

3.6 Make, Move, Meet

Opposite to our initial first expectations, there are many facilities present in Bouwlust. Besides The Xarage that we visited, there are supermarkets, a thrift shop, a boxing gym, a restaurant, a bike shop and several others listed on the map. These facilities serve as places for socializing and employment. Nonetheless, even this amount of facilities can not provide jobs for everyone and there are several basic facilities missing, such as a Havo/VWO-school.

Four of these actors that we spoke to can be linked to the main themes of the socio-economic redevelopment program in Southwest: De Buurtkeuken, Toon/DesignArbeid, Sabra's Bootcamp and Ruşen's Xarage.

Ruben Abels - Toon/DesignArbeid

Ruben Abels from DesignArbeid, or Toon, told us that this organization defines itself as 'a cultural production house'. Its aim is to simultaneously provide support to the local economy, education, and innovation. In order to do so, DesignArbeid's medium is art. Framing a neighborhood project through art can be controversial because the mainstream understanding of art focuses on the individual. For instance, liberals believe that an individual goes to a museum to be educated and challenged. DesignArbeid, however, promotes participatory public art. They display art in an accessible place, such as a street, in order to create a dialogue among people. Public art intends to provoke a debate because it focuses on the group rather than on the individual. This type of art does not only seek to raise an issue but to create an inclusive safe space for people to discuss it. By sharing their hardships, members of the community might realize that what they considered an individual problem is actually a shared problem resulting from a systemic failure. This approach makes sense in a culturally diverse neighborhood because the dialogue creates a common ground among inhabitants. DesignArbeid does not act as a moderator between the development project and the community but facilitates people's expression of their agency through participatory public art. The idea is to achieve a self-governing community through political activation. In this sense, DesignArbeid wants to motivate the community to Meet and become a political player.



Dennis van Toorn - Buurtkeuken

On the 22nd of March a participation kitchen was opened in Het Zicht, called 'De Buurtkeuken'. Ever since this festive opening where residents could enjoy a nice wrap made by a professional cook, its coordinator, Dennis van Toorn, has been keen on creating new projects to invite people in and work on the improvement of the social cohesion of the neighborhood. His goal is to create a Meeting place where anyone is welcome to walk in and enjoy a nice cup of coffee or read a book in the cozy corner of the room. His current plans are to hire a professional cook every monday, wednesday and friday and to provide dinners for residents for relatively low prices (+/- €4). As the kitchen is meant for residents, but is also meant to be used by residents, any local who is eager to cook for the neighborhood is welcome to do so when no cook is hired. We can expect that this goal will be achieved soon, as several residents have already let Dennis know that they would be willing to after the first evening and have been thinking along since. Dennis in turn is willing to promote their meals through flyers, their website and by including them in his weekly program. The meals will be largely subsidized by local supermarkets, using products that will soon reach their expiration dates. The money charged for the diners will be partially spent on additional ingredients and the rest will go to the cook or the residents who have cooked that evening. Dennis is currently looking for other initiatives and organizations that want to cooperate with him, such as local foundations, but this has been a challenge as they seem to see him as a competitor. He has also been thinking of cooperating with Sabra's bootcamp to organize a monthly bootcamp together, as he is a certified strength and fitness trainer, but at the moment of our meeting he had not reached out to her yet. As the Buurtkeuken is an initiative of Staedion and Dennis was hired by them, it will probably be relocated to the other side of Het Zicht once the renovations start (which according to Dennis will likely be in September or October 2023). Until then it will be located on Het Zicht 130, which overlooks the courtyard at the back.



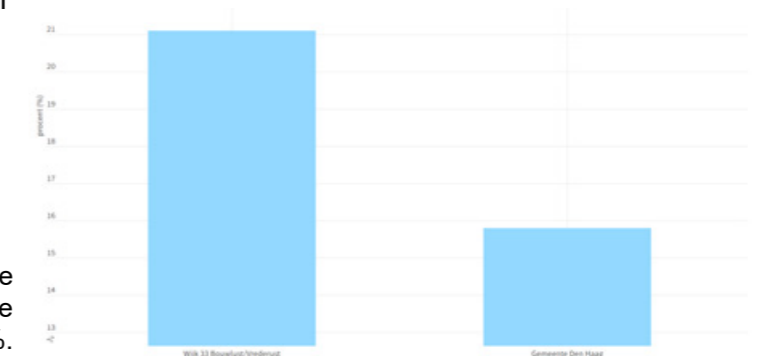
Sabra Rahiembaks - Sabra's Bootcamp

Sabra Rahiembaks, the owner of Sabra's Bootcamp, has created a business where the theme 'Move' is central. But since she also organizes group lessons she also provides the opportunity to Meet people. Sabra has been in the Dutch military for over ten years and is a former boxing world champion. In Ruimzicht 99, she now owns a property where she trains women and children in a combination of boxing and taekwondo.



Since many residents, also children, of Southwest are overweight (as shown in the graph underneath), we intend to focus on the improvement of the physical well-being of residents. Yet, Sabra also trains the brain through physical exercise and regards training the body as extra. Pushing people past their limits creates endorphins which makes residents forget their negative thoughts. This is her way to teach people that physical exercise can make them feel better, instead of trying to ease pain through an overconsumption of junk food.

More specifically she provides training for women who face domestic violence, by teaching them boxing and self-love, and mourning coaching. Since she has lost one of her four daughters, she knows how to connect her feelings of loss with her religion (Islam). Through her experience she coaches people who suffer from similar feelings. By providing physical exercise in a group or personal setting and personal coaching, Sabra tries to improve residents' mental and physical well-being.



Over 21% of residents in Bouwlust, past the age of 19 are overweight, whereas for the rest of The Hague this is just below 16%. (Den Haag in cijfers, 2020).

Ruşen Koç - De Xarage

Ruşen was our host in Ruimzicht during our field trips. Amongst other things, Ruşen is developing a fashion brand. The rationale behind this is the right to exclusive clothing for everyone. In urban culture, expensive couture is often regarded as a status symbol, and against expectations, it is not uncommon to find out that while their parents are living off welfare, these young people work in the supermarket to buy a Moncler jacket. Even though this might sound contradictory, Ruşen considers these activities and the ownership of designer clothing as a right, and wants to turn this around into a system in which this part of culture produces something for local communities. Instead of trying to change consumer patterns, Ruşen designs high quality, high priced clothing, with a narrative surrounding migration flows. While profit margins in designer brands are approximately 80%, flowing out of neighborhoods, Ruşen attempts to keep these money flows inside neighborhoods, by investing profit locally, and hiring local residents, thereby creating new job opportunities for the neighborhood.

4. Design proposal

Chapter four is the heart of our report. In this chapter we discuss our designed interventions that we believe will suit the needs of the neighborhood. We will also map out the interests and power of the stakeholders that are relevant for our proposal. Lastly, we will critically reflect on our design by applying the Theory of Change approach to define what inputs are needed to achieve the proposed activities, what their outcomes are supposed to be and what effects they will have on the neighborhood to tackle current issues.

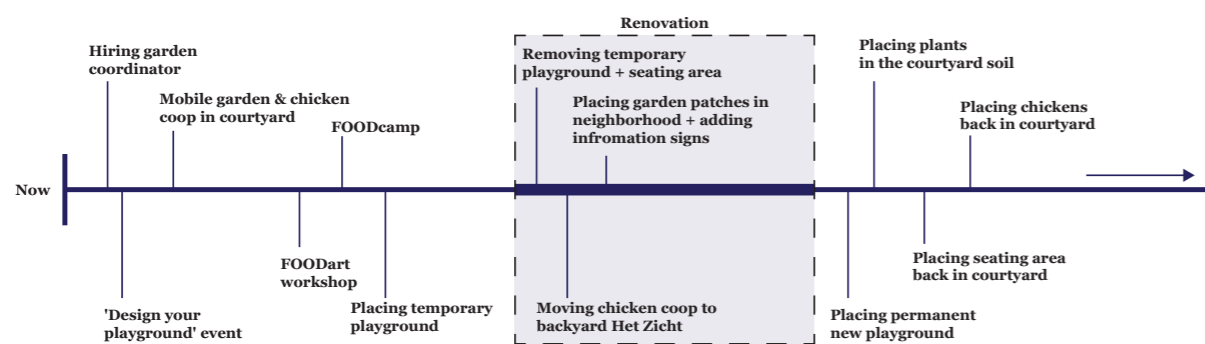
4.1 Design proposal: 'Make, Move, (Me)eat'

Because of current and upcoming renovations, Bouwlust is facing a period of change in the upcoming fifteen years. To make residents more comfortable during these times of uncertainty we believe that it is important that a sense of community is created or maintained. An important driver for this is an improvement in the quality of life of residents. In addition to this, residents are given the opportunity to be involved in their living environment and voice their opinions about the renovation projects. From our point of view, we think that community building and resident participation works best if it's bottom-up, instead of top-down involvement. However, from conversations with residents, we have learned that many residents tend to be hesitant towards participation and that it is important to consider residents' incentives to participate.

Thus, in the initial phase of community building projects, we think that it is important to build upon existing structures and have a coordinating team, made up of local entrepreneurs or residents managing the projects. Bouwlust is blessed with and should benefit from the presence of inspiring entrepreneurs. It is important to mention that while the projects are initialized by a coordination team, people that are known and trusted in the neighborhood, the focus should be on transmitting these responsibilities and tasks to local residents.

Therefore, we have attempted to create a design proposal that fits into residents' interests, and maximizes the existing initiatives. It also adapts to the 'constant temporality' of the neighborhood by analyzing all projects included in this proposal through the 'Make, Move, (Me)eat' framework. The latter is inspired by Staedion and Heijmans' ideology of 'Make, Move, Meet' (Staedion, 2022). It fits the main idea of our proposal, which is to increase the general well-being of the residents by improving their diet, physical health, and to some extent their mental health. Additionally, we have added activities with the aim to increase the political engagement of residents. We intend to achieve this through several interlinked projects. We propose to turn the courtyard in between de Zichten into a multifunctional meeting space. As such, the courtyard would host a community garden, a chicken coop, and a playground (with a seating area) that are moveable. These initiatives would be further developed by connecting them to existing activities and entrepreneurs. For instance, including Buurtkeuken in the project would allow the formation of community meals.

Timeline



Location 1. Community garden with chickens

Our plan is to turn the courtyard in between de Zichten partly into a (small-scale) community garden, where herbs, flowers, fruits and vegetables can be cultivated. As many homes do not have a garden, and after the renovation many private gardens will be replaced by public spaces, these community gardens will target inhabitants of the neighborhood that do not possess or will lose their garden. The goal of the community garden is not to produce food on a large scale, rather as a way in which people can experience the fun and mental benefits of gardening activities (Koay & Dillon, 2020). Ruşen told us that many residents like to garden and that some have also told him that it would be nice if there would be some animals in the neighborhood. We have therefore decided that some chickens might be a good addition, as they do not need a large amount of space and have the added benefit of producing eggs. Their manure also keeps the soil fertile and by scratching they help with the aeration of the soil. Our aim is a flock of about eight chickens. Since an individual chicken needs four square meters of space and the usable section of the courtyard is approximately 80 meters in length and 20 meters in width (=1600m²), we believe this should be feasible (Flamingo Pet Products, n.d.).

For the chicken coop we were inspired by the concept of a Kinderboerderij, which is a familiar concept in the Netherlands, where children (and their parents) can learn about smaller animals in a playful way. We see this for example at De Nieuwe Drenck, where people can visit a small animal zoo and do different activities like ping pong or play in a playground (De Nieuwe Drenck, n.d.). However, as the plot between de Zichten is very small and larger animals will produce smells that will not be appreciated by residents living close-by, we have decided to keep it simple and only choose chickens (and also no roosters, to prevent noise pollution).

The idea is that residents that are part of this initiative, garden and take care of chickens together. Depending on the season, they would plant, grow, or collect vegetables, fruits and plants in the garden. To ensure the functioning of this initiative, it requires a division of labor among participants. Thus, a coordinator would be needed for the garden. Residents can contact this person to register if they want to take part in the project. The garden coordinator would be the person organizing the distribution of tasks according to everyone's schedule and in charge of checking whether the garden is taken care of. This person would also make sure that the products of the garden are equally distributed among the participants. However, it remains to be decided who would be this coordinator. We believe that ideally, this person is a local resident, as they know the neighborhood well and might already be a familiar face. As such, residents are more likely to perceive the coordinator as trust-worthy and engage with the community garden. To motivate a Bouwlust inhabitant to take on this responsibility, it might make sense to provide this individual with gardening training. This gardening training would both be beneficial for the gardening coordinator individually, as well as benefit the community as a whole. A certification is a useful addition to a resume and thus induces the employability of this person while at the same time, it activates the talents of the neighborhood.



Figure 1. Gardens and chickens on the move (Balcony Garden Web, 2022; Amazon, n.d.)

(De Nieuwe Drenck, n.d.)

The choice of this community garden project was due to the evidence by academic literature and past projects that it activates public participation in a neighborhood. Indeed, examples in the United States have shown that community gardens have the potential to strengthen neighborhood social ties and political activism (Glover et al., 2005). A community garden can be defined as “an organized, grassroots initiative whereby a section of land is used to produce food or flowers or both in an urban environment for the personal use or collective benefit of its members” (Glover et al., 2005, p.79). Because members are free to join or leave this independent and organized group, a community garden can be understood as a leisure voluntary association (Glover et al., 2005). Some researchers have revitalized Tocqueville’s (1835) idea that an individual becoming a member of a voluntary association is likely to increase his/her civic sense and belief in democratic values. According to Warren (2001), voluntary associations can create three kinds of democratic effects:

First, there are public sphere effects because a community garden usually is “characterised by direct participation in decision-making, high turnover in leadership [...], and low hierarchy” (Glover et al., 2005, p.80). It implies that gardeners interact directly with each other when organizing the achievement of their common goal. A gardener taking part in a community garden must share tools and space with other participants. It requires cooperation, which is easier if these two gardeners communicate in a deliberative manner. By taking collective decisions between equals, as members of the community garden, it provides an “opportunity for people with different class, racial, or ethnic backgrounds to come together around a common interest” (Glover et al., 2005, p.79). A participant is likely to have more empathy for another and to overcome his individualism for the benefit of public interest.

Then, there are developmental effects to voluntary associations when it enhances the autonomy of the individual (Glover et al., 2005). As they take part in the collective decisions regarding the community garden, individuals form their own opinions that reflect their belief systems. The group can be a source of knowledge for individuals which fosters their political efficacy (Warren, 2001). It means that through an active membership in the community garden, the individual tends to feel that he/she has a greater power to politically influence his/her community. In this sense, “community gardening can be a source of political empowerment” (Glover et al., 2005, p.80).

Finally, most community gardens intend to create institutional effects, such as access to affordable and healthy food, safety, or claim for public space (Glover et al., 2005). In this sense, the introduction of a community garden is Bouwlust is likely to facilitate the creation of a self-governing cohesive community and activate the skills of its members while promoting healthy nutrition. Additionally, Corrigan’s (2011) study in Baltimore, United-States, has shown that low-income and minority populations tend to have less access to healthy food and that a community garden will improve individual and community food security.

We also need to take into account the temporality of the project because of the renovation activities that will take place. Therefore, the community garden will consist of mobile patches and a movable chicken coop. This way the plants and chickens can be moved and still fulfill residents’ needs even during the renovations (See Figure 1). Our aim is that easy-to-make and cost-friendly gardens and a chicken coop are constructed by using wood from the workshop (that is owned by Toon) next to the Xarage. As this wood is already treated, recycling it is an environmentally-friendly way of construction. We hope that Toon wants to take up this part of the project, in cooperation with residents or students from the local vocational school (Hofstede College). This way the construction might activate the talents of residents and provide them with some useful work experience. We hope that Toon also is interested in investing in additional materials, such as nails, wheels, soil and seeds if necessary, although we hope that these costs can be covered through a subsidy from the municipality.

Before the renovation, the planters and the chicken coop can be placed in the courtyard. Once the renovation starts, we propose that the chicken coop is placed in the yard behind the building across the street from the Buurtkeuken as the kitchen is most likely to move there as well during the renovation. For the garden patches, we propose that they are placed across the neighborhood near construction sites. Our idea is that Toon provides signs with information on the current state of the renovation that can be placed in the soil, or next to the patch. Aside from information, the section of text will end by asking the resident a question, such as:

- What is your best memory about this place?
- How do you feel about the changes of this block?
- What do you hope de Zichten will look like ten years from now?
- What is something the neighborhood cannot exist without?

It will ask the residents to share their feelings about the place where the construction is taking place and what their memories and hopes for it are. Every section will be accompanied by a different question. We hope that Toon can create a space on the planters where some colorful waterproof markers (Edding permanent acrylic markers for example) can be kept so that residents can write their answers to the question on the planter. This would also need some further explanation on the informative sign as well. This is a form of public participatory art that not only keeps the residents up-to-date about the renovation, but also triggers their political engagement as it gets them thinking about the future looks of their neighborhood. Because they are able to read other people’s answers, it also allows them to see if there are people who feel the same as them. As we can conclude from Ruben’s (Toon/DesignArbeid) presentation, if residents notice that more people share their feelings, residents might be more inclined to bring up the issue in conversations and voice their common concerns to institutions of power.

After the renovation, the planters have served their main purpose and can be given away to residents for example (although they might need a coat of paint). The chicken coop can return to the courtyard and the plants can be planted into the soil.

While this project leans upon resident’s participation, it does pose a challenge in terms of funding. Providing someone with gardening training, chicken food, and the purchase of gardening tools require financial funds, leading to this discussion. As later explained in the stakeholder analysis Stedion owns most of the housing facilities in the neighborhood as well as the courtyard between de Zichten. Therefore, Stedion has a high interest in the creation of a community and strong social ties between inhabitants as this would ensure the occupancy of its apartments on a long-term basis. We advise them to help the new garden coordinator in applying for a one-time neighborhood activity subsidy from the municipality of The Hague in order to receive a budget. Once the budget has been spent (or if the subsidy is not granted) this housing corporation might be willing to finance the expenses related to the community garden.

Location 2. De Buurtkeuken

We propose a collaboration between the community garden initiative and Buurtkeuken. The latter is a community kitchen located in de Zichten. Its manager, Dennis van Toorn, expressed his interest when we introduced him to the idea of shared meals based on the harvest of the community garden. Depending on the season, the garden may have a higher yield. A part of it can be used to create community meals. The food could be cooked by some volunteers or in collaboration with the chef hired by de Buurtkeuken. The meal would be free for those who participated in the gardening or the cooking process as a reward for their hard work. Other inhabitants are free to join in exchange for the usual small contribution. Since the vegetables, herbs, fruits and eggs are produced in the garden, it ensures a low price. It is relevant given the level of poverty of the neighborhood and the current inflation. This collaboration raises awareness of how the food that ends up on people's plates is produced, it also provides education on how to cook it in a healthy manner.

For its implementation, this project can draw on several existing initiatives. It can notably inspire itself from the organization called 'Conscious Kitchen' in the Hague. Although their food provision is not ensured by community gardening but through a collection of unsold fruits and vegetables at Den Haag market, we can see how participants collect and cook foods together. During the weekly dinner, all volunteers gather to share a meal and are encouraged to move around tables to engage with different persons. As they share vegan recipes inspired by different cultures, it shows that food also has a highly cultural function, and culture exchange can be facilitated through food. Moreover, individuals that are not taking part of the project are invited to dinner in exchange for a contribution of around 6 euros (Conscious Kitchen, n.d.).

Another example is Cascoland, a joint program based in Amsterdam. One of the projects is the social garden, which was first created in 2010 in a social housing block and transformed into a vegetable garden. After a period of neglect, the garden has now been reorganized in a way that people can meet there, socialize, and at the same time take care of the garden, which they do together every Friday (Cascoland, n.d.). Cascoland has also had a project in Amsterdam New-west. Here they have reclaimed unused public space and turned it into an orchard. They have also placed a greenhouse where volunteers can cook and preserve food in jars. The produce was sold on a local market. This way they grew healthy and affordable food for the neighborhood (Cascoland, n.d.).

Another reason why Dennis' participation would be useful is because the Buurtkeuken can function as a location for events that are organized. Dennis has already indicated that he would be willing to host or rent out the Buurtkeuken for neighborhood initiatives. In light of the food-theme, cooking meetings or workshops can take place. We would like to propose two workshops that fit into the redevelopment narrative as examples of what could be possible: moving and me(eat)ing in a FOODcamp, and making and me(eat)ing with FOODart.

The FOODcamp is an initiative directed at improving the lifestyles of residents through sports and healthy foods. It would consist of a bootcamp and a (healthy) barbecue in the courtyard between de Zichten afterwards. Aside from being the project manager of the Buurtkeuken, Dennis is also a bodybuilder and fitness trainer, and overall a sports fanatic. Dennis has already expressed his interest in cooperating with Sabra's bootcamp, which from the kitchen's perspective is located directly on the other side of the courtyard. As Sabra teaches boxing and taekwondo, Dennis and Sabra could easily organize the FOODcamp together. And if it would be preferred by residents, their cooperation would also allow the group to be split up between men and women (or adults and children) if necessary. After the bootcamp there will be a workshop on healthy cooking and a joint barbecue in the courtyard. For this, Dennis will have to hire a cook. However, Dennis already does this regularly and is in contact with cooks who, as far as we have understood, want to cook for the Buurtkeuken for relatively low prices. In addition to this, on the longer term a neighborhood resident could be suited for this job. To cover the overall costs, however, residents will have to pay a small price. Still, harvesting from the local community garden as well as financing from local supermarkets makes it possible for the Buurtkeuken to keep costs low, and accessible for most residents in the neighborhood. Another way of keeping the financial burden low is by asking participants to bring a small dish or ingredient themselves.

As Dennis is hired by Staedion, his work should not lead to additional costs. Sabra, however, is an entrepreneur. We hope that she would be willing to lead the bootcamp for free, as attracting new participants could provide her with some new clients and as she is very passionate about tackling child obesity in the neighborhood. However, if she is unwilling to join in on the project, since she has a very busy schedule, Dennis is probably still able to lead the bootcamp by himself. No matter if Sabra can join or not, she could promote the activity among her current clients, as they might be interested in participating in a workshop that teaches healthy lifestyles. The lifestyle project like the FOODcamp could be repeated multiple times, or its components can be organized individually, depending on the residents' desires. We expect that a workshop like this would be especially attractive for teenagers and young adults. However, it could also be further specialized to target only children or elderly for example.

Another example of a project could be a FOODart project. Under the lead of Toon, a workshop can be organized in the Buurtkeuken where residents make food art together. The food will be provided by the garden and the kitchen. If necessary, participants could be charged a small price for the food, but this should be avoided if possible, as it can be a barrier for participation. Toon could invite residents to make art around a certain subject, such as the renovations. To get the conversations started, Toon could also present a piece of food art and ask residents if they have any feelings or insights they would like to share. The goal in the end is to provide residents with a chance to meet other residents, to share any opinions they would like and to create political engagement. Placing Toon's piece of art in front of the Buurtkeuken (or perhaps a photo version if the original is edible) a week before the workshop would be a nice way to promote the workshop. Depending on the foods used, residents could eat their artworks afterwards or foods can be reused by the kitchen. It would be best if the workshop was open for people of any age.

To make sure that the Buurtkeuken is inclusive, it is important that the center theme remains food, and that residents that do not feel comfortable with engaging in either the FOODcamp or FOODart project, are able to solely participate in having dinner. For both of the projects we recommend that they are promoted by delivering flyers at residents' doors and that posters with information are hung up at the places of local stakeholders and in public places, such as supermarkets.



(Cascoland, n.d.).



An artpiece by Haneefah Adam (Sokal, 2020)



Visual sketches for Ankali club by AB and Collective (Prague, 2022)

Location 3. Playground and seating area

Currently, there are some playground facilities for children, scattered around de Zichten. However, from conversations with residents we have come to learn that parents do not consider the neighborhood as a safe place for their children to play outside on their own. In addition to this sense of unsafety, the facilities are small, lacking and insufficient. The current devices are very basic, so children will be easily bored out and they only allow for two or three kids to play together. This data is disappointing, especially since residents let us know that the children do like to play outside. In addition to this, 26.5 percent of residents in de Zichten are classified as children (younger than 20 years old), and would benefit from a playground (Den Haag in cijfers, 2022). Therefore, we believe that a new playground bears a high potential in terms of neighborhood improvement, centered around the central theme of children's right to have fun and play outside. Not to mention that using the playground improves children's physical health. A playground allows children to make connections with other children, can serve as a meeting point for parents, and incentivizes children to play outside and move. Another motive can be found in the tendency towards community participation, in line with findings from the 'Better Beginnings, Better Futures, Residents Participation report', identifying that the most important motive to participate was the desire to enhance the life of their children (Roche, Petrunka & Peters, 2008).

Now we have identified that a playground facility should be placed in the neighborhood, there are some considerations to take into account.

First of all, how should the playground be designed, and what kind of facilities should the playground include? Considering the importance of resident participation in decision making, we believe that we should include those who benefit in the designing process. In order to achieve bottom-up involvement, there will be a 'design your playground' event, in which children are invited to think along in the design process as such an approach is deemed central in creating a child-friendly city (De Visscher, 2008). This event can be shaped through a one-day event or rather in a drawing competition form. This will be communicated through flyers or posters, as residents have identified this as their preferred communication method. Nearby schools and the public library will also be used as a communication tool. In our opinion it would be best if Toon would organize and host this event, as politicization through art is one of their main goals and they already have access to the necessary art supplies.

The goal of this is both in enthusing children and parents about the new facilities as well as in politicizing the community and fitting the new facilities to the desires of residents. In addition to this, we believe in a 'jong geleerd, oud gedaan' mindset. By stimulating participation at a young age, this will create a sense of inclusivity and belonging, promoting active citizenship, participation and empowerment in later life stages (Nutbrown & Clough, 2009). It should be taken into consideration that the target audience for a 'design your playground' event might not include all beneficiaries of playing facilities. To target a more inclusive audience, the playground could be accompanied by a petanque track, depending on residents' opinion towards this.

Secondly, there might be an issue with the building of the playground simultaneously with the renovation activities. Therefore, the renovation should be taken into account when designing the playground. Either the playground can be placed before the renovation, but the feasibility of potential obstruction for the renovation should be considered in this case. If the playground obstructs the renovations, the playground equipment needs to be temporarily removed during the renovation and placed back afterwards. As a result, the equipment either needs to be mobile, or only built when the renovations allow this. An alternative could be to (temporarily) place a trampoline, or other simple individual devices in the yard before the renovation, and to add the playground afterwards. The process of designing the playground according to residents' needs could be complemented by the run-up to building the actual playground.

Lastly, regarding the creation and funding of the playground once the renovation is finished, there should be an analysis of potential funding and crowdsourcing activities. Depending on the quality of the existing facilities that are currently scattered across the neighborhood, we propose a displacement toward the playground in between de Zichten if possible, or replacing them with other facilities. This decision is based on the residents' negative experience with unwanted gatherings of adults around these children's facilities, and the potential economic and environmental benefit of re-using existing equipment. While removing the playground facilities might sound rigorous, this is in line with our own observations and experiences that came forward from conversations with residents. While expanding playing facilities, this will make room for other facilities that for example target an older audience. The result of this process will be a larger and concise playground, where more facilities are concentrated in one place, in the courtyard, as well as more open space and room throughout the neighborhood.

We want to create a space where children can play and at the same time their parents will feel safe and can also enjoy their free time. These two sides of the same coin are also elaborated on in academic literature (see: Bennet et. al., 2012) Therefore, we suggest creating a seating area where residents can meet and relax, having a cup of coffee or tea at de Buurtkeuken while they watch their children play at the playground. Robin, an intern working for Toon, informed us that she is currently working on a prototype for a seating area for the courtyard, therefore our project could nicely be combined with hers. Although it would be nice if the courtyard would become a popular meeting place for parents, it is likely that there will not always be a group of parents present to watch the children even if a relaxing area is created for them, because people simply do not always have the time to relax. This is in line with another finding from the 'Better Beginnings, Better Futures, Residents Participation report', where parents seemed to be longing for relief from child care (Roche, Petrunka & Peters, 2008). We therefore want to propose a social extension of the playground in which the playground will be accompanied and managed by a voluntary playground facilitator ('Tante Toos') that watches out for the children. This could be facilitated by the creation of a playground committee, consisting of local parents, where they discuss who has time to watch the kids at a certain time. However, it could be as simple as having a group chat and creating a monthly schedule, or be accompanied by organizing creative events or other events such as a children's disco in the longer term. Considering the scope of our research we have not been able to identify the willingness of local parents to participate in a committee as such. We propose that it would be best if this initiative was started by the garden coordinator, as this person will often be present near the courtyard and can promote the availability of this service. If the playground committee is created, the garden coordinator can be relieved of these tasks.

4.2 Stakeholder analysis

We have identified several stakeholders that are relevant for our proposal. The most important internal stakeholders are De Buurtkeuken, Toon, Sabra, as well as the residents that are given the opportunity to work for one of the projects. External stakeholders are the municipality of the Hague, Staedion and local residents.

Buurtkeuken

De Buurtkeuken will have high interest in the project and high power. Although Dennis does not have the freedom to do anything he wants, as the Buurtkeuken is under the control of Staedion, Dennis has pointed out to be quite flexible and eager to develop new projects for and with residents, and with other stakeholders. The garden and the seating area that can be moved near the kitchen will be in his interest, as the additional food from the garden will help to keep the prices of food for residents low and the seating area will attract more residents to the kitchen. The FOODcamp is also in his interest, as it not only targets what Dennis is personally passionate about, sports, but is also a great way to promote the kitchen and attract new people. The latter is also the case for the FOODart workshop. While the FOODcamp is expected to target multiple resident types, we believe that amongst them are young adults, especially men, in their teen years or early twenties. These young people might have less social and local ties to the neighborhood than older residents do. Therefore, as residents in this age group represent the future, it is in the community's best interest if we could attract this age group as well. Whereas the FOODcamp might create an opportunity to include this difficult teachable age group, the FOODart workshops might be more accessible for everyone.



The FOODcamp and FOODart projects are only two examples of workshops that could be organized if the facilities in the courtyard are actualized. These workshops might even attract and incentivize residents to engage in the organization of activities, and relieve Dennis of his tasks and responsibilities. Dennis will also have the power to create further initiatives as he has been hired to do so and has been given the spatial facilities to invite people in. He will have a say in further initiatives than can be organized in relation to facilities in the courtyard, but has also had a say about the FOODcamp, as we have discussed this idea with him.

Toon

Set up by DesignArbeid, we believe Toon might have high interest in this proposal since the mobile garden patches as well as the FOODart project are in line with Toon's mandate to foster the creation of a self-governing community through public participatory art. In this sense, taking part in artistic activities is likely to politicize residents.



Sabra's bootcamp

The FOODcamp could attract a new group of customers for Sabra and make her work more visible to other residents of the neighborhood. However, it is unlikely that this is in her interest at this moment. She currently has a busy schedule and does not advertise for her company, as she has enough customers as is for now. She does have a passion for improving the lifestyles of children in the neighborhood and is an important actor for the neighborhood to tackle this issue. If she has time, she might still be interested even though she does not need the participating residents as clients for her own company. We believe Sabra has medium power in this project and medium interest.



The municipality of The Hague

The municipality has high power and medium interest. However, they are not directly involved in our proposed interventions as we propose a rather bottom-up approach. According to the data published about the Hague, the Southwest region suffers from issues like poverty and poor health more than other districts of the city. Part of our design proposal focuses on physical activity and improving diets. Since over 20 percent of residents are overweight, it is likely that it is in the interest of the local government that projects are started that tackle this issue and that they therefore might be willing to invest in the projects financially (Den Haag in cijfers, 2020). Additionally, our projects are targeted towards the improvement of residents' quality of life and mental health. Our design proposal also targets politicization



and stimulates participation, potentially leading to an increase in economic prosperity and wellbeing in the long-term. However, because many Bouwlust residents currently live on a low income, we do not expect that our projects will give a strong boost to the economy on a municipality-level.

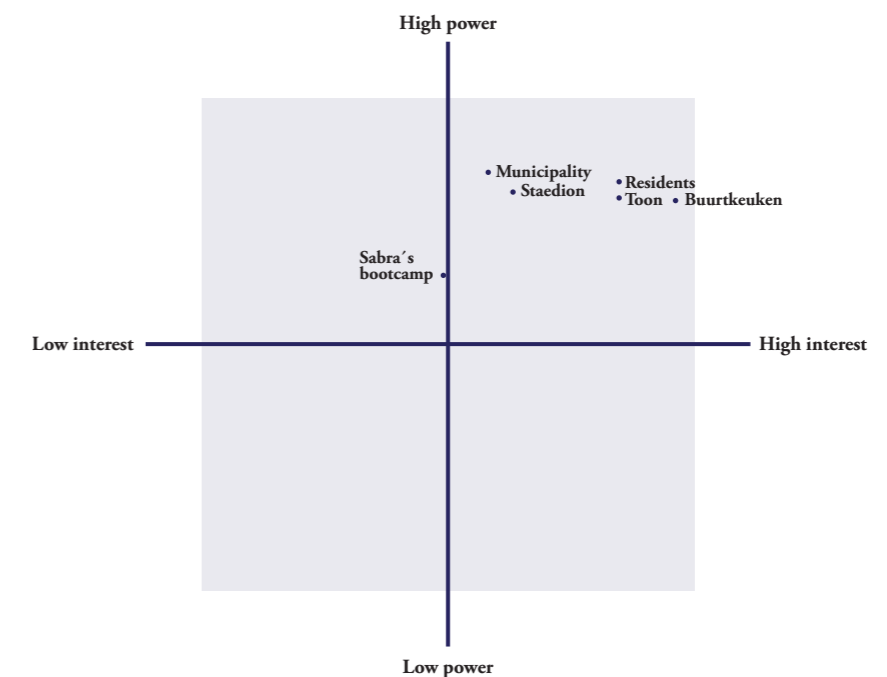
Staedion

Staedion has high power and high interest in the projects, as they own most of the housing in the neighborhood, and are in charge of the request for DesignArbeid to help create a stronger connection between residents in the neighborhood. Together with DesignArbeid, Staedion has co-created the make, move, meet-theme in order to tackle larger socio-economic problems in the neighborhood. They will not be directly involved in the projects in the way a coordinator would be, but they are responsible for deciding what initiatives will be placed in the plinth underneath the building blocks, as well as in the courtyard in between. It is therefore in their interest if these initiatives are successful in creating a social cohesion and help tackling current socio-economic problems. If this is not the case, Staedion will also have the power to decide that a project will not be carried out or that an initiative will need to make way for new initiatives if they are not successful.



Residents

The aim is to give residents high power and create high interest. Although the projects will be led by coordinators to provide them with some organizational structure, we hope that there are some residents that want to play a key role in the projects themselves. Ideally, the coordinating roles can be fulfilled by residents on a longer term. For the community garden, the coordinator will be a local resident for example, and the aim is that the garden patches and chicken coop will be created by residents as well. These specific tasks can only be fulfilled by several residents. However, all residents will be given the opportunity to have a direct say about the new playground, and their political skills will be activated through the garden patches and the FOODart project, if they partake in this. Although they will function more as clientele in these cases, the aim is that these activities will politically activate residents to ensure that they will have a direct say over their neighborhood in the long-term, as well as over possible future projects, and become more politically involved.



Stakeholder analysis

4.3 Critical reflection - Theory of Change

Context	Efficiency			Effectiveness
	Inputs	Activities	Outputs	
Low income & poverty Lack of job opportunities Poor health & lack of physical exercise Poor livability & lack of safe playground area Lack of social cohesion Lack of trust in institutions & political engagement	Funding Municipality of The Hague Staedion Donations Wood from Toon Human capital A newly hired garden coordinator Local volunteers for the garden A cook for the FOODcamp Students from the vocational school/residents for the garden Local initiatives and entrepreneurs (Dennis, Sabra & Toon)	Community garden Socializing Crops and eggs Informative signs (public participatory art) De buurtkeuken FOODcamp workshop FOODart workshop Community meals Playground 'Design your playground' event Safe playground Seating area near Buurtkeuken Playground facilitator	Lower prices Buurtkeuken Feeling of community and sense of ownership over the land More meeting spaces More physical exercise and knowledge on healthy cooking Safe playing area Political activation of residents	Improved accessibility Buurtkeuken as a meeting place Job opportunity and work experience Improved lifestyles New customers Buurtkeuken and Sabra Improved livability Stronger social cohesion Political involvement of residents in future plans

Current situation

Bouwlust is facing many challenges. As over 60 percent of residents live on a low income, poverty is one of the main issues in the neighborhood. Also, getting out of this poverty is difficult due to the lack of job opportunities close-by. Almost 38 percent of residents are depend on additional benefits from the government, while for the municipality of The Hague, this is almost 10 percent less. This includes welfare benefits as well as benefits due to disability and unemployment (Den Haag in cijfers, 2020).

The health of the residents is another concern. Over twenty percent of the population, over the age of nineteen, is overweight. According to Sabra, this is the case for many children, as well as adults. During our neighborhood visits which were during school hours, we found the streets to be empty. However, residents have let us know that children like to go out and play together outside. This indicates that there is the tendency to be physically active amongst children. On the other hand, parents have also let us know that they do not experience the neighborhood as safe enough for children to play outside on their own. Also, the playgrounds that do exist are lacking because many are individual devices that do not allow for more than two children to play together or lack seating areas for parents. We believe that one larger playground allowing more children to play together, accompanied by a meeting place for their parents, would be a better alternative.

Besides giving children the opportunity to play outside safely, a second incentive is the improvement of the current social cohesion in the neighborhood. Bouwlust is a very diverse neighborhood in terms of ages and migratory backgrounds. In Bouwlust, approximately 25 percent is Dutch, and 75 percent has a migratory background, of which Turkish (20%), Moroccan (12%) or Surinamese (10%) represent the largest groups (Zuidwest op z'n best!, 2021). From the conversations with residents, it has come forward that Dutch proficiency differs across residents, and that social ties across cultural backgrounds are weak. We have heard that people from these different groups prefer to interact with others with the same background. According to these residents, because there is not much interaction between people with different backgrounds, there is no strong feeling of community in Bouwlust overall. At the same time, Tanja (Staedion) noted that the courtyard in between De Zichten is used quite a lot, and that the residents are in need of meeting spaces. Even if it is not completely clear if residents meet around de Zichten, a community space in the courtyard would accommodate the residents who used the courtyard before and would create a space where people from different backgrounds can meet, as it is situated in between residential buildings.

A last problem that we noticed from conversations with residents is that many locals feel distrust towards institutions, and especially housing corporation Staedion. While Tanja (Staedion) and Nina (municipality, Heijmans and Staedion) have let us know that they try to listen to residents and incorporate their wishes into the renovation plans, residents feel like they are not being heard. On the one hand this seems to be caused by the continuous delay of renovation plans, which has caused feelings of constant insecurity regarding resident's living conditions. On the other hand this is caused by residents' emotional attachment to the neighborhood. They are afraid to lose their current neighbors, now that they will have to move elsewhere for some time, and are afraid that Bouwlust will be turned into a busy and hyper modern neighborhood, with a different ambience.

Based on these statistics and conversations with residents and local stakeholders, we envision a project that both tries to improve the health of residents, creates opportunities for people to meet each other and tries to create a stronger common political voice. We want to do this in cooperation with stakeholders that are already present in the neighborhood and that have similar goals: De Buurtkeuken, Sabra and Toon. The most important part of the project is the community garden. We believe that it is necessary that a coordinator is in charge of the garden to make the project succeed, since Tanja told us that projects have failed in the past where this was not the case. Who to appoint for this position, is one of the main challenges in our design proposal. It would be ideal if the coordinator will be someone from the neighborhood, who is trusted by the neighborhood, or put forward by the neighborhoods' residents. Someone who knows the neighborhood well and is a familiar face is more suitable if we want to attract residents to participate in the projects. The process of finding a suitable candidate for this is complex and costs a lot of time. Considering the distrust towards Staedion, it is discouraged to employ someone 'top-down'. However, all current entrepreneurs in the neighborhood, amongst which Sabra and Ruçen, have a full schedule, and therefore would not be able to take up this large task. Within the scope of our knowledge, Dennis seems to be the best person to either be an interim coordinator, or someone who can accommodate the search for this coordinator. Since the opening of the Buurtkeuken was less than a month ago, it is unsure yet what the position of Dennis will be. In addition to this, Dennis is employed by Staedion, which might lead to mistrust among residents. Even though we believe that he is sincerely engaged with the neighborhood and could partake in the process of finding a suited candidate, this is something that should be taken into account and examined further.

In the end, it is important that considering the responsibilities and tasks of this coordinator, this includes providing a job with an income for this coordinator. As this person would still have to be trained via and employed by Staedion, communication in the coordinator search process is key.

Inputs

To successfully execute the project it is needed that the stakeholders that are involved are willing to invest their time, money, or materials. Since we propose that the courtyard will be transformed into a community garden space, with a chicken run, a seating area, and a playground. The community garden demands investment in a local coordinator, as we believe that there is currently no entrepreneur available that can take up this role. Ruçen (Xarage) has told us that gardening is popular amongst many residents and that it is likely that someone local will want to step up to fill this role. We recommend that Staedion recruits someone by hanging posters with information at the spaces of local stakeholders throughout de Zichten (Buurtkeuken, Sabra's bootcamp, Xarage, etc.). It is also needed that Staedion invests in the training of this coordinator, to make sure that this person has enough knowledge on city farming, but also on community creation and political activation of the community.

We hope that Toon will want to invest in the mobile garden patches, the chicken run, and a small tool shed by investing materials, as they have a large amount of usable wood stored in the workshop next to the Xarage. In cooperation with students from the local vocational school or with residents together, we hope that they will also want to build these items.

For the tools for the garden, but also for additional needed products for the patches and the chicken coop, such as buckets, nails and chicken food, we advise to apply for a neighborhood activity subsidy from the municipality of The Hague. On a neighborhood level this will be a one-time subsidy up to €1500 (Gemeente Den Haag, n.d.). We hope that Staedion will want to support the project financially when the money has run out. If it is impossible to receive a subsidy, we hope that Staedion will be willing to invest in gardening tools, and Toon in additional materials for the patches and the coop.

The needed inputs for the playground are dependent on the outcomes of the 'design your playground' event and demand a further analysis of potential funding and crowdsourcing activities after the event. By combining existing devices the price of the playground can be kept low. If this is not the case however, another solution needs to be sought. Crowdsourcing could be a solution, but with the large amount of low incomes of residents in mind we do not expect that this will be feasible. We therefore advise to ask Staedion to invest in the playground, as the plot of the courtyard is owned by them. In this case, as the manager of the playground, it is mandatory that Staedion draws up a management plan, has the equipment checked regularly and keeps these checks in a file (Nederlandse Voedsel- en Warenautoriteit, n.d.). Because the device is positioned in public space, it is also necessary that it receives a certification, because it must comply with strict legislation (Warenwetbesluit Attractie- en Speeltoestellen) (Veiligheid.nl, n.d.). A budget between €15.000-20.000 should be a sufficient investment for a playground with a combination of climbing and sliding devices (Hercules Speeltoestellen, n.d.). However, additional costs for soil remediation, a safe surface, inspections and certificates, as well as a possible temporary move due to the renovation, should also be taken into account.

A final investment that is requested from every stakeholder involved is time. This is needed for the creation of the playground, the garden, the FOODcamp and the FOODart project. Especially for Sabra this might be a challenge, as she has a busy schedule. Dennis on the other hand seems to be quite flexible and willing to take up most of the organization of a FOODcamp.

Activities

We propose to bring new life to the courtyard in between the residential buildings of de Zichten. Since the greenery is an aspect of the neighborhood that is appreciated by many residents, we propose to extend this to the courtyard, whilst at the same time turning it into a space where residents can meet. We therefore propose to turn the courtyard into a community garden. Due to the renovation, our idea is to plant vegetables, fruit trees, flowers and herbs in mobile garden patches for the time being. During the renovation these will be placed throughout the neighborhood (and chained), together with signs that provide information of the state of the renovation and what that section that the plant is standing close to will look like in the future. At the bottom of the sign residents will be asked to answer a question about their feelings and memories of the neighborhood. The answers will be written on the sides of the planter. In this way planters not only make the neighborhood more charming during a time of renovation, but they also keep the residents up to date and trigger their political engagement regarding changes in the neighborhood. After the renovation, the plants can move back to the courtyard and can be planted into the soil. We also recommend making a path through the garden so it is easier for residents to walk through it and to add a seating area. As Robing, an intern at Toon, is currently working on a prototype for a seating area in the courtyard, this might be a nice combination of our projects.

We also propose to add a chicken coop to the garden. Although the area would need some further fencing, letting chickens scratch through the garden is good for the aeration of the soil and the plants benefit from their manure. It is also a playful way for children to learn about animals and where their food comes from, as these chickens will produce eggs. Like the garden patches, this run will also need to be moved during the renovation. We propose to move the run to the yard behind the building across the Buurtkeuken, as it is likely that the Buurtkeuken will move there during the renovation as well. After the renovation, the chicken coop can return to the courtyard.

A coordinator will be in charge of the project to make sure that the garden is kept tidy and that the chickens are being fed. Residents that want to participate in taking care of the garden or taking

care of the chickens can register with this coordinator. This coordinator will also be in contact with Dennis from the Buurtkeuken. Those who have registered to work in the community garden will be able to dine there free of charge.

We also propose a cooperation between the Buurtkeuken and Sabra's bootcamp. They could organize a FOODcamp, which would involve a bootcamp, followed by a barbecue with a cooking workshop in the courtyard behind the Buurtkeuken. The goal is to get residents to be more physically active and teach them how to cook healthy foods. The bootcamp can be led by Dennis and Sabra together, since Sabra is a boxing and taekwondo trainer, and Dennis is a bodybuilder and a fitness trainer. For the cooking workshop Dennis will need to hire a cook, however, this is something that the Buurtkeuken already does multiple times a week.

Another project will be FOODart, a cooperation between the Buurtkeuken and Toon, where food art can be created by residents. Toon will lead this workshop and invite residents to express their feelings and insights about art. Residents can also make art themselves, using food provided by the garden and de Buurtkeuken.

A last aspect that will be added to the courtyard is a larger playground, as the neighborhood is currently lacking a larger space where children can safely play together. As a seating area will also be provided it will at the same time serve as a meeting place for parents, as they watch their children. If the Buurtkeuken is opened at that time parents would also be able to have a cup of coffee or tea at the same time. Under the leadership of the garden coordinator, an initiative can also be started whereby a parent can look after a larger group of children at the same time, which will make playing outside safely more accessible for children.

Outputs

The first output is that a comfortable meeting place in the neighborhood is created, where people can discuss daily life or changes in the neighborhood, but also do gardening, enjoy a cup of tea or coffee, while comfortably watching their kids at the same time, as the project also provides a safe place for children to play together.

The project will also provide a job opportunity for a resident, as the community garden will require hiring a new coordinator, and some work experience for residents or students from the local vocational school, as the community garden with the patches and the chicken run will need to be built by a group of people.

Another service that it will provide is cheaper meals in the Buurtkeuken, as the vegetables, fruits and eggs from the garden and chickens can be used to create their meals. For those who want to work in the garden it can provide a free dinner.

Lastly, we propose that the Buurtkeuken will cooperate with other stakeholders to organize workshops from their place or in the courtyard behind their place. A workshop on food can be organized in cooperation with the garden coordinator. The FOODcamp can be organized in cooperation with Sabra, and a workshop on food art can be organized with Toon.

Outcomes

The first outcome we hope that our project will achieve is creating a stronger social cohesion in the neighborhood. We hope to achieve this by turning the courtyard into a place where different people from the neighborhood can come together as most of the activities we propose take place here.

Because a coordinator will need to be hired and the garden patches with the chicken run will need to be built by a group of people, the project also contributes to the creation of employment and work experience.

Our project will also improve the lifestyles and overall health of residents, as the goal is to teach them how to cook healthy meals and to be physically active together. The vegetables and fruits for the Buurtkeuken are a way to keep the kitchen's meals healthy, gain knowledge about healthy food and are cheap for residents who struggle financially.

We also believe that our project will attract new customers for the Buurtkeuken and Sabra. As people who are interested in working in the garden are invited for free meals in the Buurtkeuken, the Buurtkeuken will attract more residents than it does now. With the FOODcamp, those who already train with Sabra and are interested in improving their lifestyle overall, might find this project attractive and get to know the Buurtkeuken. And, as the bootcamp, led by Dennis and Sabra, will be done outside, residents will see more clearly what Sabra's work is about, as she normally works from a closed-off garage.

Additionally, the project will improve the livability of the neighborhood as it attempts to create a safe space for children to play. This playground in turn improves the physical wellbeing of the children as they are physically active. With one bigger playground with a seating area for parents, it is more comfortable to watch the kids. Especially if they can enjoy a coffee at the same time. Although it is meant as a place where parents can meet, if not all parents can watch their kids, with one larger playground it is also easier for one adult to watch over multiple children. Hopefully this lowers the threshold for families to go outside.

Lastly, we hope that the project will create political engagement. The information signs accompanying the plants and trees that are placed near construction sites can trigger residents to form an opinion about the current renovations. At the same time we hope the Buurtkeuken can serve as a meeting place to share these opinions (as during the renovation, the courtyard between de Zichten is most likely unusable) and that a workshops with food art can provide residents with an opportunity to express their feelings regarding the changes in the neighborhood, as well as their opinion over an example piece of art provided by Toon.

5. Conclusion

To conclude, the core of this design proposal centers around the introduction of moveable structures in the courtyard between de Zichten. We believe that the presence of a community garden, a chicken coop, and a playground would activate the neighborhood by giving residents the ability to 'Make, Move and (Me) eat'. It allows the creation of a sense of community while remaining sensitive to the constant temporality of the upcoming 15 years.

At the beginning of the renovation, their physical closeness allows the encounter of residents with different interests and priorities. In addition, the proposal includes links between these moveable structures and existing initiatives and stakeholders, such as Toon, de Buurtkeuken, and Sabra. It could result in organic community meals, and workshops around food, such as the FOODcamp and FOODart project. In this sense, all the projects included in this proposal are ways to improve the health of residents but also aim to encourage their political engagement and activate their talents.

Since the current construction activities in this neighborhood will result in an additional 2,000 homes in the neighborhood, we hope that our interventions sustain local ties for current residents, as well as create satisfied new residents who intend to stay for the long term.

6. Reflection

In this last chapter we reflect on the lessons that we as a group have learned from the Design Game and what we would do differently in a future project.

A first takeaway for this project is that observations of institutions are not always the same as the opinions of residents, even if institutions claim to know the neighborhood well and claim to have done their research. This shows how important the involvement of residents is in the creation of a design. Due to problematic communication between Staedion and residents, many residents have developed mistrust towards this institution. By bringing a form of direct democracy into the design process, residents' ideas can be incorporated into the plan directly, which in turn will make them more enthusiastic to actually use new facilities. This will however require that residents are politically engaged first, to make them more willing to share opinions and ideas, and that there is a stronger social cohesion which creates the feeling that residents are sharing ideas for the common good. Since this will take time, not all of our proposed ideas involve direct democracy, but they try to increase politicization and social cohesion first, with the thought that projects in the future can be created by residents through direct democracy.

What we also learned is that residents are much more eager to share opinions and feelings when you engage with them in an informal conversation and offer a listening ear, than when you prepare concrete questions in advance. By empathizing with residents you also better understand their circumstances. From this we learned that a design that is feasible and that tackles the issues residents struggle with is more important than imposing all of our own creativity onto residents' lives because, after all, the design is created for them.

Another takeaway, which is actually a limit of our design, is that observations are very dependent on the moment you visit the neighborhood during the day. Since we only visited during work and school hours, empty streets do not mean that people only stay indoors. Many people are simply not home at that time. This also shows that there are only so many people that you can talk to within the limited time a research project takes place. Since we only visited the site four times, during the same hours on Thursday morning, it is likely that we as researchers still only have a limited vision of the neighborhood, its ambience, strong suits and problems.

Moreover, we had difficulty in identifying the different project coordinators. It is easier to project our ideas on actors like Dennis and Sabra who are already entrepreneurs in this area. However, they are not inhabitants of this area, their schedule is quite busy, and their interests can vary and overlap. For example, Dennis is employed by Staedion, which may affect his interpretation of the project and lead to mistrust by the residents. Therefore, we have discussed the possibility of encouraging the emergence of new coordinators by activating the capacities of the residents. However, this may involve a period of research and training of the person. This brings us to the important issue of funding. Indeed, there is no guarantee that institutions of power like Staedion will be willing to finance our different projects and that they will be accepted by the residents. There is the possibility of crowdfunding but it seems complex to set up in a district strongly concerned by poverty.

Another issue that we ran into was the language barrier. Many residents only spoke Dutch, meaning that the two Dutch speaking students of our group (Emma and Savanna) needed to do the talking with residents and had to later explain their conversations to the rest of the group. It is very likely that in this process information has slipped away which has caused the non-Dutch speakers to miss details regarding residents' opinions and problems.

The language barrier also caused problems when using other sources, as almost all information on renovation plans, policy briefs and statistics were in Dutch. Not only was this a challenge for us, as it led to an unequal division of work at times, it also shows a much larger issue. For any resident who does not speak Dutch, much information on the current renovation plans is inaccessible. Since it has occurred during our visits that a resident did not speak well-enough Dutch to talk to us and since almost 75 percent of Bouwlust's residents have a migration background, it is likely that there is more than one person in Bouwlust who does not speak the language.

The municipality of the Hague does have an English and French website, but the search engine does not show the same results as the Dutch one as most news articles do not have a translated version. Some websites do have the option to translate the website completely using Google Translate, but these translations are not always accurate. In order to include all residents in a democratic decision-making process about the future of the neighborhood, it is necessary that the information is also accessible to all residents. This is something we want to keep in mind for any future projects we will work on once we enter the workfield.

Teamwork is another factor we want to reflect on. Since the composition of students for this course was very interdisciplinary this gave us the opportunity to learn from each other, however we also learned to compromise and take people's different ideas into account. We do feel like the groups for the Design Game could have been mixed better according to different educational backgrounds, as this often led to an unequal division of work. In our case, all the graphic design was dependent on one person for example.

All in all, the Design Game was a useful way to understand placemaking and how spatial design can counter the social inequalities in an area. As designers we were placed between the wishes of institutions, initiatives and entrepreneurs, and of course, residents. In the end we have to admit that not all these wishes can be fulfilled due to the complexity of the neighborhood. The most important lesson is that our solution should be an inclusionary one and that the diversity of residents' identities should be accommodated and celebrated.

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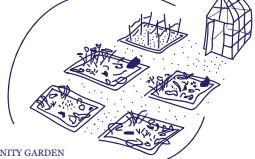
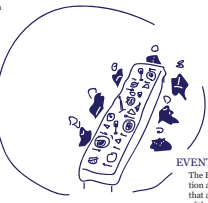
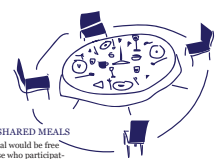
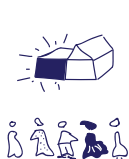
8. Appendix

MAKE, MOVE, (ME)EAT

A DESIGN PROPOSAL FOR THE POLITICIZATION OF RESIDENTS IN BOUWLUST, THE HAGUE
SOCIAL INEQUALITY IN THE CITY, DIVERSITY AND DESIGN, TU DELFT

Because of current and upcoming renovations, Bouwlust is facing a period of change in the upcoming fifteen years. To make residents more comfortable during these times of uncertainty we believe that it is important that a sense of community is created or maintained. An important driver for this is an improvement in the quality of life of residents. In addition to this, residents are given the opportunity to be involved in their living environment and voice their opinions about the renovation projects. From our point of view, we think that community building and resident participation works best if it's bottom-up, instead of top-down involvement. However, from conversations with residents, we have learned that many residents tend

to be hesitant towards participation and that it is important to consider residents' incentives to participate. Therefore, we have attempted to create a design proposal that fits into residents' interests, and maximizes the existing initiatives. It also adapts to the 'constant temporality' of the neighborhood by analyzing all projects included in this proposal through the 'Make, Move, (Me)eat' framework. We propose to turn the courtyard in between de Zichten into a multifunctional meeting space. As such, the courtyard would host a community garden, a chicken coop, and a playground (with a seating area) that are movable. These initiatives would be further developed by connecting them to existing activities and entrepreneurs.



What is your best memory about this place? How do you feel about the changes?

Lessons learned

1. Observations of residents are not always in line with residents opinions.
2. Providing a listening ear creates open and honest discussions with residents.
3. The language barrier was a challenge for non-dutch speaking students and led to an unequal division of labor at times.
4. The language barrier created by institutions can lead to miscommunication between institutions and residents.
5. The diversity of disciplines made us learn from each other but also depend on each other.
6. Not all wishes of stakeholders can be fulfilled. Inclusion of residents and accommodating their diversity is most important.



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