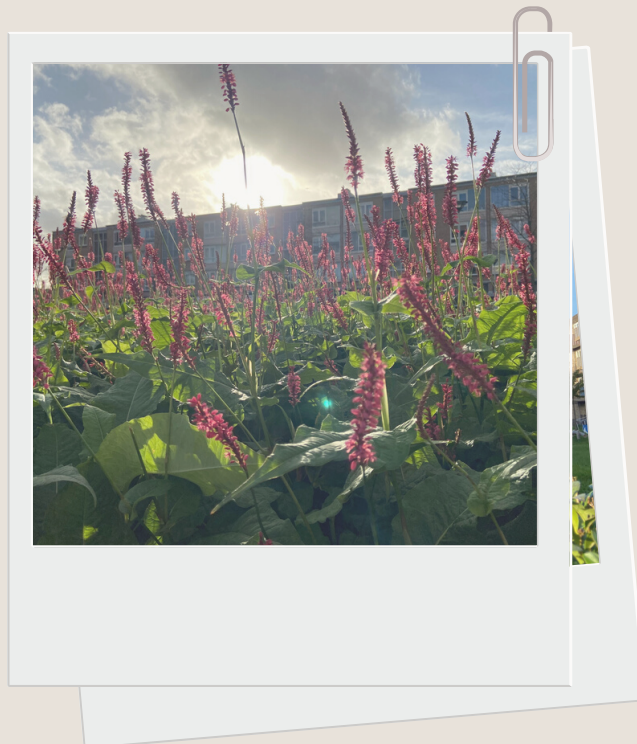


IT'S ALWAYS SUNNY IN

Morgenstond Zuid



As told by...

Carla Schmid, Maureen Smith, Wouter Roelofs
and Patrick Eichelmann Spinolo



LET'S GO FOR A WALK THROUGH THE NEIGHBORHOOD

The entire Southwest part of Den Haag is popularly regarded as the 'greenest part of The Hague'. It boasts an abundance of green strips for children to play with and a complex and intricate web of a culturally rich and diverse population of residents. When we zoom in on this area, we can see Morgenstond Zuid-people in this area live near urban green spaces, such as parks, playgrounds, community gardens, and canals. In a community mapping exercise, we set out to investigate if and why there is a lack of biodiversity in this borough and what the consequences of this absence imply. In addition, we want to learn about the positive effects of complex biodiversity and socio-cultural diversity in a city landscape. Finally, we acknowledge that transitioning to a welcoming and inclusive green space for biodiversity to bloom can only be navigated, not planned, via long-term community engagement. Building networks that integrate city officials and community liaisons to increase the knowledge pool for decision-making is a good way forward.

In recent weeks, our research group has been exploring Morgenstond (<https://www.denhaag.nl/nl/in-de-stad/stadsdelen/escamp.htm>). As a group of students from Leiden University, the primary focus was initially on the emerging biodiversity (c.q. plants and animals) in the area, but we soon stumbled upon another topic, which we thought to be more relevant to the residents of the neighborhood, but also related to the prevailing biodiversity. During our visits, we found out that the green space in the area is used to a limited extent by its residents, which in our perception should be defined as the core problem.

But, one may ask, why is this important? What do green spaces even do for the community? And, there are many answers, depending on who you speak with. In general though, green spaces improve air quality, reduce noise, enhance biodiversity awareness, and have multiple positive health benefits for the well-being of its community. Simultaneously, these places are incentivizing its inhabitants to further engage with the local community, for example by meeting each other during recreation activities and in organizing neighborhood gatherings. If community residents cannot use such areas to relax and unwind, they are underutilized, and the neighborhood does not access the health benefits (both mental and physical) of being outdoors. We went about our research with the locals in mind, being sure to hear their voices and really see what their concerns were regarding this topic. Hence, that is why we have decided to write our blog for the inhabitants of Morgenstond, in other words: a blog for the public.



a blog
for the
public



Throughout our research, we used the survey below to evaluate the usability of green spaces among residents in Morgenstond, for which we will present the results through visual data. Interesting meetings, stories and encounters with residents will further explain our findings. As such, this blog aims to raise awareness about the importance of a usable, accessible green space, for both the inhabitants and local authorities of Morgenstond. To reach a larger array of people, we translated our surveys into English, Dutch, Turkish, and Arabic.

Neighborhood Survey

How old are you? 0-18 19-30 31-45 46-60 61-80 81+

How long have you lived in this neighborhood? < 1 YEAR 1-5 YEARS 5-10 YEARS 10-20 YEARS 20+ YEARS

What language(s) do you speak? _____

How often do you and/or your family go outside for recreation? < 2 HOURS PER WEEK 2-3 HOURS PER WEEK 3+ HOURS PER WEEK

What does green space mean to you? _____

How would you rate the following?

	1	2	3	4	5
Cleanliness of the streets	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Green space usability	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Green space quality	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Any other comments?

We are extremely grateful for your time, your honest information, and your thoughtful suggestions. Thank you!!

Mahalle Anketi

Kaç yaşadınız? 0-18 19-30 31-45 46-60 61-80 81+

Né zamandır bu mahallede yaşıyorsunuz? < 1 YIL 1-5 YIL 5-10 YIL 10-20 YIL 20+ YIL

Hangi dilleri konuşuyorsunuz? _____

Kaftada kaç kere tek başınıza yada ailenizle eğlence için dışarıya çıkıyorsunuz? < 2 SAAT HAFTADA 2-3 SAAT HAFTADA 3 SAAT HAFTADA

Yeşil alan sizin için ne anlama ifade ediyor? _____

Aşağıdakileri nasıl değerlendirirsiniz?

	1	2	3	4	5
Sokakların temizliği	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yeşil alan kullanılabilirliği	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
Yeşil alan kalitesi	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Başka yorumunuz var mı?

Zaman ayırdığınız, bilgileriniz ve önerileriniz için son derece minnettarız. Teşekkürler!!

Survey van de wijk Morgenstond

Hoe oud ben je? 0-18 19-30 31-45 46-60 61-80 81+

Hoe lang woon je in deze wijk? < 1 JAAR 1-5 JAAR 5-10 JAAR 10-20 JAAR 20+ JAAR

Welke taal of talen spreekt je? _____

Hoe vaak ga jij en/of je familie naar buiten voor recreatie in de buurt? < 2 HOURS PER WEEK 2-3 HOURS PER WEEK 3+ HOURS PER WEEK

Wat betekent een groene omgeving voor je? _____

Hoe zou je het volgende beoordelen?

	1	2	3	4	5
De straten zijn schoon	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
De aanwezigheid van een groene omgeving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
De kwaliteit van de groene omgeving	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

Nog andere opmerkingen?

Wij willen je ontzettend bedanken voor je tijd, eerlijke informatie en je suggesties! Bedankt!!

استقصاء المجتمع

كم عمرك؟ 0-18 19-30 31-45 46-60 61-80 81+

منذ متى وأنت تعيش في هذا الحي؟ < 1 سنة 1-5 سنة 5-10 سنة 10-20 سنة 20+ سنة

ما اللغات التي تتحدثها؟ _____

كم مرة تذهب أنت و / أو عائلتك للخارج للترفيه؟ < 2 ساعة في الأسبوع 2-3 ساعة في الأسبوع 3+ ساعة في الأسبوع


ماذا تعني المساحة الخضراء بالنسبة لك؟ _____

كيف تقيم التالي؟

	1	2	3	4	5
نظافة الشوارع	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
سهولة استخدام المساحات الخضراء	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
جودة المساحات الخضراء	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>


أي تعليقات أخرى؟

نحن ممنون للغاية لوقتكم، ومعلوماتكم الصادقة، واقتراحاتكم المدروسة. شكرًا!!

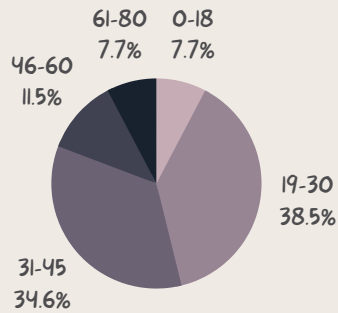


We believe that the effectiveness of engagement should not be measured in terms of numbers; instead, we focused on strategies to ensure honest participation in a familiar language and open to all. During our encounters, we facilitated dialogue to capture local residents' perceptions of green space usability in their neighborhood. The survey found that green space matters – results that certainly aligned with what we had perceived as the core problem in the area.

During our adventures in Morgenstond, we were able to survey 29 different residents. They were asked to answer some questions (in the surveys shown earlier) about their expectations of green space in general and then about their experience or perceptions of how well their local green space met these expectations. For example, green space conjures up images of children playing outside, birds chirping and singing, an abundance of flowers with bees and insects flying and scavenging about, and big-old trees producing cozy shades for people to enjoy the outside sitting on a bench and allowing time to pass by. Or are they?

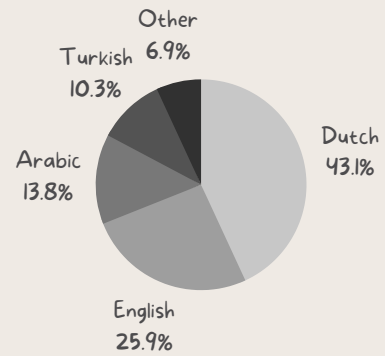


SURVEY RESULTS



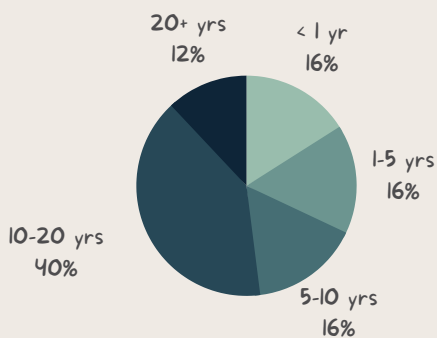
Age

Most of the people that we surveyed were between the ages of 19 and 45. If we had been able to reach a more diverse age group, it would have been interesting to see how our results could have changed.



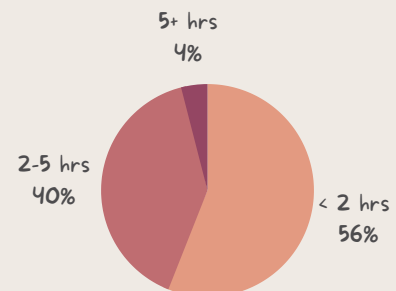
Languages spoken

When we first started our research, we were under the impression that many could not speak Dutch, but 43% of those we surveyed said they could. In the other category, we have the following: French, Spanish, Ghanian, German, Polish, Moroccan, and Hindi.



Length in neighborhood

Nearly half of those surveyed said they lived in this area for over 10 years. We wonder if this reflects the feelings of the results we found--do people who live here longer view the green spaces and biodiversity differently?



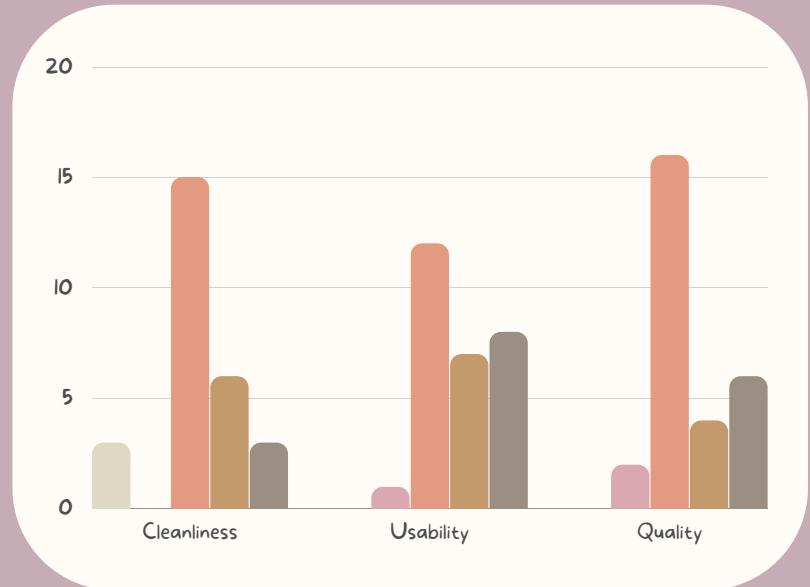
Time outside for recreation (per week)

We decided to ask this question, how many hours per week do you spend outdoors for recreation, to try and see if there was a correlation with that and the green space usability. In the future, we would want to ask if these numbers are different depending on the season or if it's entirely because of the green space in the area.

BUT WAIT, THERE'S MORE!



On a scale of 1 to 5
(with 1 being the worst,
5 being the best)



In popular folklore, we connect green spaces with nature and biodiversity. But all is not well in the community green spaces of Morgenstond; trash/littering is an eyesore throughout, safety issues need to be resolved, and places to sit and enjoy the space are lacking. Suppose communities are going to become stewards of the neighborhood's biodiversity resurgence. In that case, more attention must be devoted to addressing the aesthetic elements that compose the green space and making it inviting for people to enjoy.

These findings have important implications for the cooperation and design of community engagement mechanisms and the joint construction of processes that can contribute to the emergence of biodiversity in the neighborhood.

A PICTURE'S WORTH 1000 WORDS



The survey was focused on local residents but we did try to reach out to some of the other stakeholders we identified. We spoke with some of the shop owners (i.e. Bloemenmagazijn Fredy, phone number 0648758163), sent an email to one of the schools (<https://www.sovsodepiramide.nl/>), and sent our survey/project idea to Vestia, the social housing association (<https://www.vestia.nl/>). The community center, which would have been a great place for us to obtain more information/insight, was closed for construction. And we noticed, on the Escamp municipality website, there is not yet a plan for the Morgenstond neighborhood. This would be something that could potentially utilize the research we've done and build upon it.

The greenspace use and attitude survey provided beneficial insight into the current use of green space and trends in use and attitudes. It found significant increases in people wanting more say in managing their green space and getting involved in activities to improve their local biodiversity. The findings will be helpful to city officials and community organizers, housing and park managers, and organizations seeking to progress policy priorities about physical activity, mental health, active travel, community empowerment, planning, and green infrastructure.

“

We cannot protect
something we do not love, we
cannot love something we do
not know, and we cannot
know what we cannot see.
Or hear. Or sense.

”

- Richard Louv

We acknowledge that unknowns remain. For example, the survey did not identify whether respondents had children, but it would be interesting in future waves of the study to explore responses from households with and without children; and other surveys to explore children's views. A planned route to outcomes will be to develop strategies that will facilitate communication, translation, and mediation across the different cross-cultural communities that compose the neighborhood.

There are willing partners in communities across Morgenstond; efforts to mobilize community engagement for sustainability and unlock the hidden biodiversity of the neighborhood are more likely to be effective when they manage boundaries between community action and response and knowledge sharing and accountability in ways that simultaneously enhance the credibility and legitimacy of the landscape transformation process.

