Making room for people: choice, voice and liveability in residential areas

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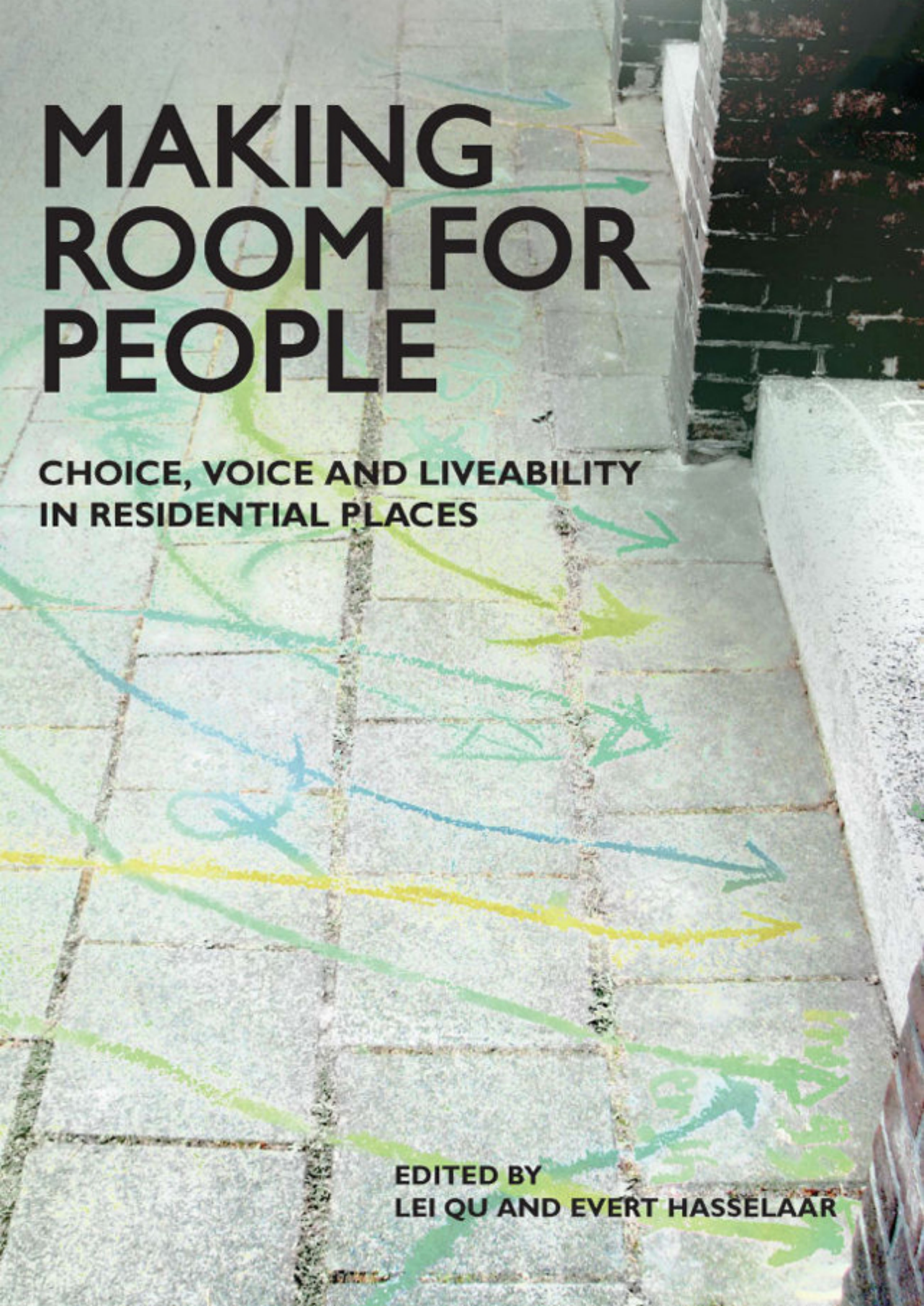

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1. Introduction

Lei Qu[1] and Evert Hasselaar[2]

'Above all, we have to make room for people to decide how they want to live and dwell, and enable them to materialise these thoughts.'
Adri Duivesteijn, alderman of Almere, The Netherlands
(translation by the editors)

1. About the book

This book elaborates on preferences in housing. It explores how users, occupants, and citizens can express their needs, searching for the enhancement of individual choice and control over their residential environment, and the predicted positive spin-offs for urban collectives. The central question is: *What are the conditions under which an increase of people's choice and voice over the places they inhabit contribute to more liveable urban areas?* In other words, are there examples that can demonstrate that a policy focus on individual citizens results in better functioning communities? Related are sub-questions on citizenship and the functioning of democratic societies: Does the creation of active citizenship and the deregulation of bureaucratic procedures improve a collective responsibility over neighbourhood space, or more durable housing solutions? Does a 'bottom up planning' strategy justify diminishing governmental involvement in urban planning and housing?

The book is not about the housing market, although conditions on the market are important: is the market booming or in decline; is there a shortage of dwellings or a high vacancy rate; are buyers enthusiastic about future value prospects or do they postpone moving out, afraid of declining prices? This book is not studying policy either, although it considers the fact that policy matters form the framework for urban and building performance; for instance, the shift from rental houses to privately owned houses and recent discussion on tax reduction based on mortgage-rent, which influence 'emotions' and the market. The chapters mainly fo-

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cus on Dutch cases that individually address the outcomes of relatively new policy measures, such as the promotion of self-provided housing, new packages of rent and ownership options in social housing, and alternative forms of participation of ethnic minorities in design and decision making processes. Some case studies provide specific insight in non-participation and symbolic forms of protest, while others highlight dwelling preferences and people's influence over their residential environment in relation to neighbourhood change. Based on the brief comparisons with other European cases, the book offers an overview of various attempts in western societies to 'make room for people' in housing and urban planning, shedding a fresh light on the possibilities and limitations of bottom up or middle ground policy approaches for sustainable urban areas. The options to make choices and to have a say in urban design and housing matters are used as a conceptual framework. 'Choice' and 'voice' are the main concepts that structure our empirical material.

The combination of authors from both research and practice backgrounds is an advantage of this book. Some authors are deeply involved in participatory planning and have been for many years. They are the promoters of citizen involvement, of cooperative development, of integrating living with work and other facilities. Other authors are involved in planning issues and are more critical of current practices. The authors share the ambition to present an overview of experiences with the building industry and to show housing associations, commercial developers, architects and students what is possible, why participatory planning and cooperative housing is pursued by dozens of groups and how it can be viewed as a reflection of the preferences of people that are not rewarded, unless through self-determined processes. The idea of this book is not to present a set of separate cases, but rather to look at them systematically towards a better understanding of the different approaches. Due to the fact that the cases presented in each chapter vary greatly, and are very much related to the specific situations, it is more feasible to use varied approaches to set frameworks. Most of the chapters explain their own contextual framework to embed the cases; some have their own theoretical frameworks for understanding the transformation processes, and others introduce evaluation frameworks that could be used to define the level of participation within their case. For the book as a whole, we are not seeking a common framework that could be positioned on top of all the study cases, but trying to define the conditions under which the increase of people's voice and choice could contribute to liveable urban areas.

2. Concepts of 'choice', 'voice' and 'citizen participation'

In Article 25 of the *UN Declaration of Human Rights*, housing is considered to be a right for everyone, which points to housing as an area of concern for welfare state policy (Bengtsson, 2001). Housing preferences, along with housing satisfaction and expectations, have been the major topics in housing research during the last three decades (Beamish et al., 2001), which can be defined as the expression of the quantity and quality of housing features that residents would like to have (Dillman et al., 1979; Morris and Winter, 1978). Housing preference studies have been used to help researchers and developers understand the current trends in housing. This is a consumer-oriented approach to understanding the housing situation from the users' view as compared to other market-oriented approaches. In this sense, the work of this book is very much based on housing preference studies; however more emphasis will be given to

the mechanism of participation, namely the chances for people to get involved in the planning and design processes, within the range from making choices to raising voices. Therefore, the concepts of 'choice', 'voice' and 'citizen participation' are very often mentioned in this book.

2.1 'Choice' and 'voice'

The conceptualisation of customer choice and citizen's voice partly derives from Hirschman's (1970) framework of 'exit', 'voice' and 'loyalty', or in its more extensive form, the exit/voice/loyalty/neglect model (Rusbult et al., 1982). In short, Hirschman defined 'exit' as the decision of individuals to quit an activity and to withdraw from participation, 'voice' as the option to phrase dissatisfaction or propose change, while 'loyalty' refers to feelings of attachment to a product or community (Hirschman, 1970). 'Neglect' occurs when a sense of loyalty is absent (Rusbult et al., 1982). In urban studies this framework has been used to predict residents' attitudes and behaviour (e.g. Permentier et al., 1997).

'Choice' is discussed in the literature as a complex concept, partly because it implies that individuals and households have the capability to choose. Rational choice is based on access to information and on the ability to make a subjective estimation of the alternatives. According to Brown & King (2005: 72) 'Choice — the capability of deciding between alternatives — presupposes competition.' Because every competition has winners and losers, the aim to enhance individual housing choice implies that some people will not have the option to reach their preferred housing condition. Competition over housing alternatives can undermine social welfare at the societal level. The notion of choice thus links to a political economic debate on the welfare state, which will be explained more in detail later.

'Voice' has also proven to be an important concept, as is choice, in governance studies. Voice is the ability to influence plans and products, to be involved and heard in the design and maintenance process. This involvement creates awareness and stimulates learning processes that are essential to the adaptation of new technologies and to guarantee user friendliness. It not only refers to co-governance (Paul, 1992), but also to notions of individual and collective self-esteem, identification, authority and control (Dowding et al., 2000). The Dutch policy document *What People Want, Where People Live: Housing in the 21st Century* explicitly uses the concept of voice to refer to various ways in which individuals and households can have a say in how and where they live.

To compare the two concepts, 'choice' can be understood as people trying to 'make the most out of what they have' (Elster, cited in Brown and King 2005: 67), while 'voice' as the attempts of people to actively change things by speaking out, individually or collectively. In other words, 'choice' is linked to the customisation of the market, while 'voice' is associated with citizenship and civil responsibility. The concepts of 'choice' and 'voice' allow for interpretations of whether and how residents participate, as well as how they communicate preferences and give meaning to the residential environment.

2.2 'Citizen participation in planning'

Planning is a professional act that occurs within a political community and context, which is linked to interests of many stakeholders, sometimes with opposing desired ends. Planners select the means to a desired outcome, but can only advise the decision makers. Furthermore, planning problems are so-called wicked problems: a problem for which each attempt to create a solution changes the understanding of the problem. Wicked problems cannot be

solved in a linear fashion, because the problem definition evolves as new possible solutions are considered and/or implemented (Rittel and Webber, 1984). Results of most planning activities are discernable only 5 to 20 years after decisions are made, therefore feedbacks and corrective actions are difficult to have. This situation makes citizen influence in the planning process a political decision. In the context of user influence in the planning process, there is a differentiation between changes that can be viewed as system improvements towards more democracy and more user orientation, and more radical transformations of planning systems (Faludi, 1973; Forester 1989; Healey, 1997; Arnstein, 1969; Davidoff, 1965). For instance, advocacy planning turns the system around and induces a transformation process, while participatory planning can be viewed as system improvement. When social action is involved, as in the 1970s in the Netherlands, the debate was on the difference between social learning and mobilisation toward social change. In 1972 a critical student group evaluated a participatory planning process in Apeldoorn and concluded that it was merely a reform of socio-democratic ideas, while they were expecting social mobilisation, changing the planning system into a bottom up democratic movement and leading to self-management. In this book this debate still continues: what is the linkage between knowledge and action; are the presented cases leading to reform or transformation of planning systems? The book is stimulating this debate, without clear-cut labeling of the efforts made (Table 1.1).

It is recognised that five core policy tasks are important to Dutch housing policy in the years ahead: increasing the options for citizens while giving due regard to social constraints, creating opportunities for people in vulnerable situations, housing combined with tailor-made care, improving the quality of urban life and meeting the desire for a greener residential environment (VROM, 2001). This will call for new forms of planning — 'participatory planning'. It can be defined as a planning process in which the participants (future occupants or people in

Table 1.1 User influence in the planning process: linkage between knowledge and action

	Desired Outcome	
	System Improving*	**System Transforming****
Linkage Between Knowledge and Action	Incrementalism Comprehensive planning Traditional participatory planning Social learning	Advocacy planning Transactive/ collaborative planning Mediation Critical theory Social mobilisation Utopianism

*A representative of system improvement is Sherry Arnstein (1969).

**Representatives of system transforming are Paul Davidoff (1965) and Patsy Healey (1992).

Source: Adapted from: History Theory of Planning, 2008, City and Regional Planning Program, GeorgiaTech

the surrounding neighbourhoods) are stimulated to become actively involved, are helped to form and express their ideas and eventually become co-producers of the neighbourhood and the city (definition based on Idea Brewery, 2009).

Participation of future occupants in the design process is viewed as personal involvement of stakeholders who discuss and discover their housing preferences as well as ways to express their needs to designers and project developers. This is the strict meaning. Participation is needed in a true democratic society, where it supports empowerment of people and stimulates active citizenship and steps taken from providing information to facilitating communication and finally cooperation and co-production. This strategy was applied among others by the Workgroup 2000 foundation in the period 1973 to 1990 in dozens of professionally moderated participation procedures. This work was inspired by the student revolts of the 1960s, the *Making of the Counter Culture* by Theodore Roszak and strong belief in 'constructing the society' through action research, in reaction against the future oriented research paradigm of the previous period. Participatory planning in the 1970s was based on advocacy planning (Davidoff, 1965). The protest movement against decisions to tear down urban areas in favour of commercial developments was led by advocacy planners, often young architects and students of architecture. This became in the 1970s part of a movement towards better local democracy. Citizens were supported by their advocates in getting better access to information and experts, were helped with the drawing of alternative plans and with forcing the decision makers to follow a more transparent decision making process. In this sense, the advocates of citizen participation were action researchers, involved together with citizens from the community in a learning-by-doing process. This is an approach to research that is oriented toward problem solving within social and organisational settings.

The ladder of 'citizen participation', presented by Arnstein (1969) was in that period used to conceptualise the level of influence of the residents. This ladder has been adapted by the authors of this book to meet modern insights. To understand the different forms in which participation is presented, eight levels of participation are arranged in a ladder formation with each level corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in determining the end product (Figure 1.1). The bottom levels are (1) Denial and (2) Neglect. These levels represent 'non-participation'. Their objective is not to enable people to participate in planning, but to avoid participation. Level (3) Informing and (4) Consideration, allow the have-nots to access information, which gives them a better opportunity to respond, however without influence. Under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be acknowledged. Level (5) Cooperation is simply a higher level of acceptance because the ground rules allow have-nots to advise, but the power holders continue their right to decide, in other words, non-level cooperation. Further up the ladder are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision making clout. Citizens can enter into a level (6) Partnership that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional power holders. At the topmost rungs, level (7) Delegated Power and level (8) Citizen Control, have-not citizens obtain the majority of decision making seats, or full managerial power. 'Knowing these gradations makes it possible to cut through the hyperbole to understand the increasingly strident demands for participation from the have-nots as well as the gamut of confusing responses from the power holders' (adapted from Arnstein 1969).

Arnstein and also Theodore Roszak (1968), who wrote about the rebellious young people in the late 1960s, along with examples of citizen protest against destruction of inner city

neighbourhoods in Boston and New York, inspired students in the Netherlands to go into the neighbourhoods to advocate alternative urban strategies, based on new forms of social interaction and also a new way of learning and making a professional career. The orientation of European youth at that time was very much the hippy movement in the USA. The participation ladder by Arnstein was used in the Netherlands to criticise the frequently organised 'hearings' as one way-communication with a low level of influence. The 1960s witnessed in Europe, following developments in the USA, the destruction of old quarters of inner cities, to make room for large scale commercial developments and the private car. This process was stopped by protest movements, supported by students and led to experimentation with participatory design processes. The planning focus moved towards renovation and reconstruction rather than large scale clearance and redevelopment. In the 1980s the movement weakened, but since 2000 it seems to be reviving and adopting new ways of communication and action oriented approaches. The role of students in the 1960s has now been taken over by positive, socially active and creative people in their thirties and forties, but also includes the ageing people who were themselves the activists of the 1960s. While the participation process at the large scale of national and regional policies has proven its reason for professionalism, the self-determined social activities at the scale of neighbourhoods are still an issue for the citizens themselves: bottom up, non-conformist, dynamic and depending on enthusiastic local people.

Using the ladder as a framework poses a dilemma. A framework can obstruct an open view of the complexity and dynamism of processes for which the context is ever changing and where all levels of influence and all stakeholders coincide. Aiming for more influence of users requires social proximity and level playing fields, where dynamic acting from a given context is more important than pursuing strategies to reach fixed and SMART (specific, measurable, attainable, relevant, and time-bound) goals. In a given context many different strategies may prove to work and lead to success. An active role of citizens implies diversion rather than conversion. Participation works in many ways. The case studies represent varied means to exert influence over different issues in urban development. They demonstrate how people care for the built and social environment they share. What we do not expect is to fit these experiences into a framework: we would rather look for tools that bottom up initiatives can use to realise

<table>
<tr><td>8</td><td>Citizen control</td><td rowspan="3">Citizen Power</td><td rowspan="3">Voice</td></tr>
<tr><td>7</td><td>Delegated power</td></tr>
<tr><td>6</td><td>Partnership</td></tr>
<tr><td>5</td><td>Cooperation</td><td rowspan="3">Tokenism</td><td rowspan="5">Choice</td></tr>
<tr><td>4</td><td>Consideration</td></tr>
<tr><td>3</td><td>Informing</td></tr>
<tr><td>2</td><td>Neglect</td><td rowspan="2">Non participation</td></tr>
<tr><td>1</td><td>Denial</td></tr>
</table>

Figure 1.1 Ladder of citizen participation (Source:adapted and changed from Arnstein 1969 by the authors)

their preferences. The act of writing this book has mirrored real life issues in the planning process: from conversion to diversion; taking an approach to grasp the reader's understanding rather than to create a blueprint for participation processes. For example, Chapter 5 introduces the concepts of inside-out and outside-in, in contrast to a framework for citizen influence or the top down and bottom up controversy, which is by the authors considered 'structuralist'. Inside-out means that professionals begin in their own context by collecting data, setting goals, making designs and putting forth proposals and then communicate with external parties to invite these parties to 'cooperate'. The outside-in approach takes the human and non-human subjects and factors including specific networks as the starting point and the end point of the planning process. As far as collective commissioning is promoted by the professionals in the field or by government policy, it is by definition an inside-out approach. However, these approaches to increase voice and choice for people should be considered as means but not a goal in themselves. Instead, creating liveable urban areas within different contexts is actually the ultimate ambition.

3. International context

The premise of this book is that the liveability of urban areas is based on taking the social worlds of the people who live and dwell in cities as a starting point for knowledge building and decision making (Cowan and Marsh, 2004). Although the book will mainly focus on Dutch cases, some comparisons with conditions in France, Belgium, England and Germany will be made.

3.1 Paradigm policy changes

As a global phenomenon, market forces have had dramatic influence on housing and urban transformation processes in most of the countries worldwide, since the late 1990s, when neoliberal approaches became more and more dominant in urban development or redevelopment practices. Privatisation of the social housing stock can be seen as one of the examples. The decentralisation process and withdrawal of the state from the housing provision system has generated various socio-spatial consequences in different countries, such as socio-spatial segregation and the emergence of informal settlements, which require policy responses. Some policy responses target the level of people's participation as well as the mechanism of public-private partnership, to promote social sustainability and liveability in cities. Here social sustainability mainly refers to the extent to which the living quality achieved may keep satisfying the demands, adapted by the local residents, and strengthen the socio-economic structure (Stouten, 2010), giving special concern to making the urban environment more equitable for disadvantaged groups (Keil and Desfor, 2003) and avoiding social exclusion, determined by the position of a household on the housing market (Castells, 2000). The fundamental question behind these policy changes is then how to provide housing of relatively good quality for all social groups. Considering the changing roles of the public and private sectors in the housing provision system, as well as the changing concepts of ecologically sustainable living environments, the emerging question to be addressed is how to get people involved in housing construction and distribution processes. Involvement is part of a strategy to create neighbourhoods that can deal with conflicts, with periods of economic crises and loss of reputation, by

stimulating actions of those citizens, business people, housing managers and officials who care for the neighbourhood and take action towards positive development processes.

The housing paradigm shift in the past decades was also related to shifts in other public services, where a customer perspective, alongside a commercial perspective, was introduced with the aim of increasing efficiency and flexibility. However, to a far greater degree than the other three pillars — education, health care and social security — housing is actually a market product, which makes it a 'wobbly' pillar, according to Torgersen (1987:117). In most Western countries, the market contracts serve as the main mechanism for housing distribution, while state intervention has the form of correctives, defining the economic and institutional setting of those market contracts. (Oxley & Smith, 1996, Bengtsson, 2001). The policy focus differs per country and will shift from time to time, between protecting the most poor of the society and improving the living conditions for the majority strata of the social groups. These different policy focuses eventually determine who will be the actors involved and which new policies will be introduced to promote citizen participation.

The discussion on models of welfare regimes in the academic context helps in understanding the changing approaches towards improving affordability and liveability in different countries. The most significant organisational changes have occurred in the social rented sector. Social rented housing has gone through dramatic changes in many European countries in the last two decades, driven by privatisation: the transfer of council housing to ownership in Britain, the dissolution of the non-profit sector in Germany, and the sale of social housing in the Netherlands, etc. It was expected in the Netherlands, for instance, that home-ownership would empower tenants, give them more influence over their home environment, and create state-welfare alternatives in the form of 'asset-based welfare' (cf. Sherraden, 1991; Groves et al., 2007). This shift resembled the housing policy discourse in the 1990s in the UK, where the freedom to exercise choice in housing was closely associated with empowerment, and ultimately, with home ownership and quality of life (Brown and King, 2005). It is also broadly relevant to the debate on empowerment worldwide, for instance in the USA. William Peterman (1994) clarified the term 'empowerment'; it implies home ownership for conservatives, shared responsibility with housing authorities for liberals, and community organisation and community control for progressives (Varady et al., 1996). The US Department of Housing and Urban Development (HUD) shifted the focus away from supply-side initiatives (such as building more public housing and improving communities) toward demand-side programmes (such as rent certificates and housing vouchers). Furthermore, HUD intends to promote self-sufficiency in public housing through a comprehensive approach, including offering services like job training to residents, encouraging home ownership, etc. (Varady et al., 1996).

Increasing choice options is another attempt from the policy level to improve living conditions in the social rented sectors. For instance, since the late 1990s, the Choice-based lettings (CBL) system was introduced, which has increasingly influenced the social housing allocations' agenda in the Netherlands (the Delft model)[3] and also other countries such as the UK, offering customers greater choice than the traditional approaches. '…Allocation policies

3 An influential choice-based system of allocating affordable housing used in the Dutch town of Delft. Under the system housing applicants choose available affordable homes advertised in the local press, rather than wait to be offered a home by a housing officer. Because tenants have had an active role in choosing their homes, they may be more likely to stay longer.

for social housing should provide choice wherever possible while continuing to meet housing need …this is the best way to ensure sustainable tenancies and build settled and stable communities.' (ODPM, 2002a, paragraph 5.3.). Similar approaches can also be found in Austria, where the social rented sector plays an essential role in different phases of residents' lives. This includes the movements into and out of social renting. This method helps to increase housing choices for people, when comparing affordability and access with other housing segments. These approaches are more or less based on the Delft model.

In addition to the construction of owner-occupied and rental housing, cooperative housing is being developed as 'the third pillar' of housing supply. In Germany, because of the residents and community-oriented properties, cooperative housing is an important policy objective of the federal government. The reform of the *Housing Subsidization Act* in 2002 entailed a strengthening of the housing cooperatives by providing access to subsidies upon promotion of the self-help housing supply by mobilising the involvement of members in search of housing.

What has happened in the Netherlands is in line with this international context. As in many Western European countries, Dutch urban planning and housing policies towards the end of the twentieth century have also been characterised by a paradigm change. Housing and planning policies have been transformed from a predominantly state-dominated system into a market-based system guided by neo-liberal principles.[4] The erosion of the welfare state was accompanied by a policy scope that focused on individual residents. Mottos like 'active citizenship', 'private initiative' and 'consumer focus' increasingly appeared in professional discourse. Residents were expected to be active and knowledgeable citizens, demonstrating some degree of individual responsibility for their residential environment.

3.2 Socio-spatial transformation

Housing policies must be placed in the context of urban and regional development. On the one hand, different notions of housing policies may be associated with broad-reaching strategic urban and regional development; while regional development will have dramatic influences on housing choices for people. For instance, from the mid-1990s, many European countries followed the trend to create polycentric structures, which can work on different levels, for instance, contribute to the formulation of a European territorial cohesion policy (Meijers, Waterhout and Zonneveld, 2005). In the Netherlands, besides the polycentric spatial development of Randstad Holland, the concept of 'decentralised concentration' was also popular and supported the growth of small cities into strings of pearls, or agglomerations with interdependent areas and well optimised service levels, improving integration of settlement and transportation (Timmeren and Röling, 2007). The general concept in settlement planning under 'decentralised concentration' was a long-term strategy to promote urban networks among cities and their surrounding municipalities, to bring about spatially and functionally concentrated settle-

4 'The shifts in housing policy towards a free market in the Netherlands are reflected in: (a) sharp reductions in subsidy outlays, deep cuts in the state housing budget, and the complete phasing out (in 1995) of property subsidies (e.g. subsidies for new construction) in favour of subject subsidies; (b) the fact that the majority of new housing construction takes place in the owner-occupied for-sale sector rather than the social rental sector, at the high end of the housing market; (c) the promotion of the sale of social rented dwellings; (d) more independent housing associations; and (e) a general policy attitude geared to freedom of choice for housing consumers and hence a looser rein on the market mechanism' (Van Kempen et al., 2000).

ment structures, with new housing areas closely connected to public transport infrastructure. Such spatial re-structuring, together with the influence of land and housing markets, has led to differentiated living environments.

As mentioned in some chapters, social changes are key aspects that are very much considered in this book. Social polarisation and the formation of multi-cultural societies are common phenomena nowadays in global city-regions, with spatial implications for housing choices. This, together with the differentiated housing typologies, has worsened the problem of socio-spatial segregation, for instance, gentrification of the strategic locations in cities, an increasing percentage of expensive commercial housing in the suburbs, and the downward spiral of inner city neighbourhoods, etc. Within such a context, the vulnerable groups should be well considered in planning and design processes.

4. Context in the Netherlands

4.1 The changing role of the users

The Netherlands has a long tradition of negotiation, starting in the thirteenth century with cooperation between farmers who collectively planned and maintained the polder landscape with dykes, ditches and windmills in the marshy areas in the western part of the country. This system remains dependent on the input of individual farmers, regional boards and elected bodies at different scales, it shapes the present culture of negotiation and the consensus approach among stakeholders with different interests, such as between housing associations and tenants.

The emerging attention to the role of the user is interesting in the historical context of the Netherlands, especially since the 1960s, when the production of houses grew to massive proportions. New functional demands were emerging, based on modern household appliances such as the laundry washing machine, the refrigerator and the introduction of the private car. This period is characterised by lively discussions on housing quality, led by engineers. The revolutionary ideas of CIAM I in 1932 were becoming reality.

The man as a machine, light/air/space and functionalism created a new idea about performance criteria and also production methods. The user was at the focus, not as a participant but as a set of ergonomic characteristics and functional demands. With a positive idea of the neighbourhood as the nucleus of society, planners believed that a neighbourhood could be planned to become a model society with decent citizens living in functionally divided, safe and spacious areas and with access to services, which made these societies independent of the services in the central city district. These studies led to innovations and a stepwise increase in performance levels. A great step was made in 1965 with the *New Demands and Regulations* that prescribed much more space and better services in the kitchen and bathroom. In the early 1960s, industrialised building techniques were promoted and subsequently became the mainstream in 1963. The industrialised building techniques, with a large share of high-rise buildings and a great improvement in number of dwellings erected each year, resulted in large post-war neighbourhoods, often quite remote from the city centres, with good quality public areas but with poor quality private and semi-public outdoor spaces.

Criticism of high-rise buildings emerged, especially toward the forced encounters with strangers in the semi-private domains and the lack of private outdoor space. The reaction

started in the early 1970s, demanding more citizen involvement in urban development, especially the reconstruction of the old inner city areas and the demand for detached houses. The reaction led to *woonerf*; small scale urban environments, unfriendly for cars, the streets suitable for children to play, composed of detached houses. This period showed also the first cases of direct citizen involvement, starting with advocacy planning by 'leftist' students in 1968/1969 in Oude Noorden (Rotterdam), Dapperbuurt (Amsterdam) and Westerkwartier (Delft), and the central district of Groningen etc. (Ouwehand, 2008; Nelissen, 1995; Bent, 2010) and was then followed by well designed and managed 'participation procedures'. This was the period of voice, with power exercised through social action and through participatory design workshops. The activists organised the voices to express the needs of a range of groups, a phenomenon that can be seen in larger cities mainly, while in smaller cities the local authorities were still able to exert a director's role. The experiments were institutionalised in consultation requirements for major planning decisions and also for housing stock policy that included a yearly negotiation with tenant representatives on changes in rent levels.

Voice would be the mainstream until the mid to late 1980s, when economic crises caused a shift towards an individualistic framework, with reduced financial support or priority for private investors. During the following period commercial project developers played an important role. The voice orientation disappeared in new construction, but was institutionalised in renovation projects and continued as a strong movement in urban restructuring activities. This change ran parallel to the transition of social housing associations from state controlled user based unions towards independent institutions.

4.2 The changing roles of the state and social housing associations

In the Netherlands, social housing has a long tradition dating back more than a century. The social housing association as a hybrid organisation has had the role of combining public and market activities. The associations are private bodies that were to a large extent financially supported by the state and were used by the state as instruments to control housing policy, and also to a certain extent the spread of income and the size of the construction-labour market. Around 1990, the social rented sector reached more than one-third of the total housing stock, and then gradually began to decrease, following the general European trend of a structural decline in the share of social rented dwellings. One of the reasons for such reduction was interpreted by the Ministry of Housing as a decrease in size of the target group, and an increase in demand for owner-occupied dwellings. Since 1995, the annual contributions from the state for new construction and management of the existing stock of social rented dwellings have disappeared, and the social rental sector has ceased to be a heavy burden on the public budget. Since the 1990s, housing policy has increasingly targeted people at the margins of society. Those who no longer belong to the target group and are still not yet able to buy their own homes see their housing opportunities deteriorating (Cao and Priemus, 2007). The sector is now self-supporting, owing to the housing associations which became increasingly independent in the 1990s. Since then, social housing associations have started to merge. This type of merger within a region enables housing associations to increase their market shares in the regional housing market and diversify their housing stock.

The status of social housing associations as private housing providers combining market activities (financially independent institutions) and public tasks (housing for the poor) should be seen as the basis for increasing the range of choices for larger social groups, who are still

not capable of finding proper housing on the market. Moreover, stigmatisation and segregation arises when the social rented sector is small and only serves poor tenants. Therefore, it is always necessary to have a rental sector with a mixed tenure structure of various incomes, ethnicities, ages and family types. This can only be achieved by having a broad and diversified social housing system, in which the role of social housing associations in safeguarding the social dimension of housing is maintained (Cao and Priemus, 2007). Increasing the possibilities for participation of the future tenants in social housing construction or regeneration could be one viable approach. However, the roles of important stakeholders have changed over the last decades. Housing associations reformed and merged and became large companies, while the management focused on finances and property values rather than social values. Housing production was taken over by commercial developers in the 1990s, often linked to a construction company. The social housing institutions then developed their associated project development agencies, competing in size and property ownership with the commercial developers. The design process did not change and participatory processes were not in view, although the investments of social developers and housing institutions broadened to include services and school buildings, in support of the social reconstruction of city areas. These developments place the housing associations outside the scope of participatory planning, except when renovation and reconstruction are at stake. However, as social entrepreneurs the social housing associations can still be considered as partners who can support self-developed housing, and planners with better knowledge and awareness of the needs of the communities with which they have a long lasting and intense relationship. With minor policy change, the housing association could become the co-creators of housing projects based on 'voice' of the future occupants.

4.3 The new housing policies encouraging 'voice' and 'choice'

The policy document of VROM (2000) *What People Want, Where People Live : Housing in the 21st century* explicitly encouraged self-provision in housing as an alternative in housing production, which for a long time was monopolised by local governments, real estate developers, housing corporations and the construction sector. The Ministry of Housing stated in 2000 that it aimed to produce 30 percent of the new housing production through forms of self-provision, but only recently has this process begun to accelerate reaching a level of 15 percent of new constructions and since then decreasing to about 10 percent. This level is higher than in England, but much smaller than in France and Germany, where almost 50 percent can be labelled self-provided housing, contrary to speculative housing (Barlow, 1992; Duncan, 1993). While self-provision in the Netherlands traditionally tended to occur on a small scale among the middle-class in rural areas, the policy document specifically promoted individual and collective self-help housing (including ready-made catalogue solutions and do-it-yourself-building) in urban areas. People in favour of aided self-provision and customer-made design often use neo-liberal arguments, stressing individual self-determination, self-expression, private initiative and responsibility for the residential environment. In other words, these forms of private initiative would give people a voice in how and where they live. Another often mentioned argument is that self-provision results in cheaper housing solutions and faster building processes, which would help to open up the stagnating Dutch housing market (SEV, 2006; Noorman, 2006). This however will be re-evaluated in one of the chapters. In addition, self-provision is said to contribute to the differentiation of the housing stock and to more varied urban milieus,

thereby enhancing the spatial quality of neighbourhoods. According to researchers and city managers, in the long run the organisational adaptations needed to enable self-provision and bottom up planning will be compensated by an 'enduring involvement' of residents, and the creation of authentic locations 'with a unique history' (KEI, 2007; Duivesteijn, 1999).

Underlying the policy narrative is the premise that self-help, individual responsibility and individual choice help to create better functioning communities and, indirectly, more liveable urban environments and a better quality of life (Cowan and Marsh, 2004). The various policy aims and measures thus have in common that they address individuals in their roles as neighbourhood residents, tenants, home-owners, consumers and citizens, whereas the policy narrative suggests a causal relationship between individual freedom of choice, individual responsibility, empowerment and self-organisation on the one hand, and better functioning urban areas (at a collective level) on the other. On the policy level, the future prospects of a housing development will also depend on some other factors, for instance the social quality of the neighbourhood, the quality and attractiveness of the dwellings and external conditions set by urban planning or financing options. The question is if the present trend could represent a transition toward a consumer dominated market and cooperative as well as self-defined planning. The circumstances in the housing stock are not changed, meaning that it still may not be possible to give the present occupants a power base in planning. The best options are in renovation plans where the tenants must approve of the changes in the design and quality level (in the Netherlands at least 70 percent of households on a block must approve of the proposed project). The market of new developments is still largely unchanged, though many good examples show that change is welcome.

5. Empirical contribution

This book presents cases in both new housing developments and urban regeneration including renovation of existing neighbourhoods. The book takes examples from Dutch policy practice as a starting point to critically assess citizen participation, residents' dwelling preferences and processes of place making in a broader perspective. Each of the contributions in this book analyses the nature of self-organisation and participation in a specific context. The order of chapters is as follows:

Table 1.2 Chapters of the book

Chapter 1 Introduction					
Chapter 2 Participation in deprived neighbourhoods	Chapter 3 Design ateliers involving the community	Chapter 4 Market dominance and participatory planning	Chapter 5 Evaluation of (C)PC projects	Chapter 6 Collective design for living and working	Chapter 7 Self-managed co-housing
Chapter 8 Conclusions					

Source: author

Some chapters focus on the role of important stakeholders in urban development, while others highlight the ideas and perceptions of different actors. These roles are related to the voice and choice of the consumers on the housing market. The range of influence is explained, illustrated by cases and by discussion about historical trends and future options for consumer influence. We also examine cases where people do not participate or choose to opt out.

Moreover, the scope of housing is too narrow in the context of voice and choice: the authors do not focus on fragmented sectors where work places are divided from residential areas. Based on their experiences of working with the residents, some of the authors draw conclusions about the necessity of mixing housing with other urban programmes, like small offices, commercial and recreational functions, which is in line with the central premise of the book about the liveability of urban areas. Therefore in some of the chapters, the cases also include office areas where different urban functions should be mixed, in order to respond to the demands of local residents or specific target groups, increase the level of participation, and eventually improve the liveability and vitality of those urban areas.

6. Structure of the book

The issues of 'neighbourhood participation' and 'self-building' are grouped in this book, meaning that the chapters follow a logical order. After the introduction, chapter 2 deals with political backgrounds at the national and local level, followed by design atelier practices at the neighbourhood level in chapter 3. Chapter 4 functions as a 'hinge' between the neighbourhood and dwelling level and the chapters afterwards present many cases of collective private commissioning:[5] chapter 5 with results of an evaluation study, analyses the pros and cons of private, collective and participatory commissioning; chapter 6 with results of an action researcher and advocacy planner, proudly explains developments and prospects, mainly in the city of Amsterdam; chapter 7 is about one specific segment in the arena of collective commissioning, the history of a planning, maintenance and social action process followed by a group of legalised squatters that developed a special function in the city community of Rotterdam. The summaries of the chapters are as follows:

Lei Qu and Evert Hasselaar define in the introduction chapter the terminology of voice and choice in the contemporary Dutch urban planning and housing provision processes, and link it with the paradigm policy changes in the international and national context. The practice in the Netherlands is introduced, which leads to the problem statement and central research question for the book.

Gabriela Rendon's chapter presents a historical overview of policies in urban renewal in the Netherlands, where participation has been a key issue and voice has become important. The study focuses on how citizen participation is formulated in recent urban policy and is being implemented in deprived neighbourhoods and therefore to what extent the voiceless and marginalised have the power to transform their own urban and housing conditions. This

5 Collectief Particulier Opdrachtgeverschap, or CPC. It is a new way of building; a group of individuals develop their neighbourhood by themselves. As future neighbours, these home-makers organise themselves into collectives and jointly acquire a plot of land, employ an architect and then, without adopting a developer as an intermediary, develop a residential complex that meets their personal housing specifications.

chapter is based on the case of Tarwewijk, one of the most segregated neighbourhoods in the south of Rotterdam, which is the focal area of several national and local policies, initiatives and visions addressing urban improvement and integration through civic engagement.

Edward Hulsbergen and Paul Stouten argue that neighbourhood design ateliers may serve as instruments for bottom up planning processes, against the background of drastic changes in the last decades regarding urban development, renewal and regeneration, in which many neighbourhoods and districts cope with the persistence of urban problems and the ongoing need for spatial and social interventions to meet new demands. With several cases, they explain six different approaches that design ateliers follow to involve users (Forum; Gouda-Oost) or interested parties (Delft), to get a stagnated or deadlocked process back on track (Geerse) or to coordinate the demands of different interest groups in a single programme (De Haan,Van Schagen).

Evert Hasselaar analyses different levels of customer influence in new housing developments. He presents six case studies that represent different steps on the ladder of influence on urban planning and housing design. These case studies show different outcomes, both physical and social, and demonstrate that the stronger the focus on semi-public qualities and social interactions, the more the occupants gain control of the development process. The outcomes reflect different optimisation results in the range of conflicting preferences. This leads to an elaboration on the ladder of citizen participation and the dimension of preferences.

Luuk Boelens and Anne-Jo Visser give a post-structuralist vision on private, collective and participatory commissioning in the Dutch building industry. This chapter is based on an empirical reference to an evaluation survey by Utrecht University and TNO that was undertaken on behalf of the SEV (the Housing Experiments Steering Group) and VEH (*Vereniging Eigen Huis*) into the experiments carried out under their aegis for private commissioning, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning. It recommends the adoption of a more focused and post-structuralist perspective that is adapted to today's needs, rather than governmental ambitions and objectives that impede these types of commissioning. They argue that a much more emphatic change to an outside-in approach is needed in order to give a long lasting perspective to self-organised housing.

Hein de Haan argues that it is necessary for residents to work together to achieve 'real' living and working urban blocks, due to the fact that client oriented development in the Netherlands is mainly focused on market driven consumer choices. Several collaborative housing projects (Het Kameel in Vlaardingen and Vrijburcht, BO1 and Grubbehoeve in Amsterdam) are introduced in this chapter. There are also projects with concerns for cultural aspects: how to stimulate creativity and provide opportunities for young people (Urban Resort Amsterdam: Volkskrant building, Artist village of Ruigoord). He concludes that collaboration is a way to cut down the building costs considerably, to develop a wider variety of facilities and to install sustainable technical systems at a reasonable price.

Lidewij Tummers shows with cases that cooperative housing projects are appreciated by residents; with the collective forms of living realised in monumental buildings and/or in newly built complexes since the 1980s she illustrates that their qualities can be sustainable. She points out that although many expectations are associated with the role of collective self-provision in enhancing the spatial quality and accessibility of urban areas, as well as the social quality in neighbourhoods, the developers, administrators as well as construction parties often remain hesitant towards collective living projects and communal facilities. This chapter

explores the difficulties of collective projects, especially during the design and construction phase. It also discusses the implications for professionals and current planning procedures.

Evert Hasselaar and Lei Qu review the case studies of the book in the concluding chapter, and define a new ladder of citizen participation that could be used to determine the range from voice to choice in housing provision processes. In response to the call for new participatory housing approaches, this chapter reflects on the new roles of the actors involved and the need for innovation in planning and design processes. It ends with a common conclusion that the initiatives and approaches are highly context sensitive.

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2. Politics, Practices and Constraints of Socio-spatial Restructuring through Citizens' Active Engagement

Gabriela Rendón[1]

1. Introduction

The intensification and concentration of interrelated urban problems in certain low-income neighbourhoods in Western Europe have been a great concern of citizens and governments since 1980. In response, urban policy has evolved with a degree of convergence among countries which demonstrate similar trends and features, especially in relation to residents' engagement and action. This chapter explores how citizens' active engagement has been experienced in urban policy and its implementation in the Netherlands. Also, to what extent have the deprived, the voiceless and the marginalised exercised the power to transform their own urban and housing conditions?

This chapter analyses urban restructuring processes in deprived neighbourhoods through urban policy and free market practices, and the social and spatial results emerging from those transformations. The critique is based on the case of Tarwewijk, one of the most deprived and segregated neighbourhoods of Rotterdam. This area has been part of several national and local policies and initiatives addressing urban improvement and integration through residents' engagement.

The first aim is to outline the urban complexities of deprived residential areas; the way in which these neighbourhoods have been transformed, and the spatial, economic and social effects of these transformations. The second aim is to describe the current features of urban restructuring policy and approaches to implementation addressing citizen participation. Both feasibility and the transformative power of citizens among these policy frameworks are considered. The third aim is to expose how civic participation is formulated and undertaken in urban regeneration processes, as well as different tactics of deactivation and disempowerment working alongside these processes — constraints on citizens to achieve urban change. Ultimately this section aspires to outline and inquire how urban practices could be rethought

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and re-oriented towards residents' participation amplifying locally based dynamics, knowledge and patterns of inhabitation and organisation.

This chapter is based on empirical and scientific research. The empirical analysis was constructed through the experience of working in an active-research undertaken by Cohabitation Strategies, a non-profit cooperative for socio-spatial research, design and development based in Rotterdam, where I am a member and co-founder. The cooperative has worked since 2009 in Tarwewijk on different projects, mainly focused on urban segregation.

2. Urban renewal programmes alongside economic, social and spatial restructuring

2.1 Economic and housing provision changes

The decline of traditional industry and the rise of the service and technological economy starting in Western Europe in the late 1970s has generated different conditions; the erosion of unionised industrial labour and introduction of a flexible, less-unionised structure based in tertiary industry; fragmentation and polarisation of occupations between high-pay/high-skill and low-pay/low-skill workers; erosion and downgrading of middle classes; surplus of work forces experiencing impoverishment to an unprecedented degree; and consequently spatial differentiation based on socio-economic status (Soja, 1997; Brenner et al., 2009). In the Netherlands these conditions have been evident. In addition since the mid 1970s successive recessions, unemployment, growth of socially polarised societies, as well as the rise of racial and other forms of social conflict have contrasted with the cutbacks in welfare benefits, the decline of social housing and the stimulation of homeownership — a form of provision exclusively for those with the right economic conditions (Harloe, 1995: 498).

Low-income and unemployed households that have arisen from the ongoing economic restructuring have been constituted by both natives and non-western immigrants that have arrived in different waves and are positioned at the bottom of the labour market (Harloe, 1995; Aalbers, 2006). In some cases, as in the city of Rotterdam, the citizens with non Dutch backgrounds make up almost half of the city population.[2] However they have yet to mingle with locals or to share the same housing accessibility concerns until recent years when both household groups have been struggling with housing accommodation. In Rotterdam, as in the rest of the country since the 1980s the social rental housing stock for low and moderate working class households has been reduced, from 57 percent in the year 2000 to 48 percent in the year 2010, while the home ownership sector has increased from 21 percent to 33 percent in the same period. Currently social housing allocation is only for those with little economic power (Harloe, 1995: 500). This has prompted the better-off tenants to move out into the private rental housing market, despite the increased rents. Some households have achieved this with the help of public subsidies which have changed from 'bricks and mortar' to indirect subsidies given as housing allowances to lower private market rents. Disadvantaged

2 According to *Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek* (2010) in 2000 the percentage of natives was 60 percent; this share has dropped to 52 percent in 2010. The population with different backgrounds has almost reached half of the population.

households have mainly occupied the housing left by families able to afford to rent or buy a house from the free market sector and to move to better-off city areas. Housing policy in the last two decades has been oriented towards homeownership, increasing tax relief in order to push such a trend. However only those with the right economic conditions have been able to afford a private home.

The financial and political commitment from the state in regard to housing provision has been gradually transferred to the private sector, setting privatisation, deregulation and decentralisation as the main agenda. Housing associations deal nowadays with the private and social housing supply, though the state continues to have a regulatory role (Harloe, 1995). Public-private partnerships have strengthened, coordinating every aspect of housing provision, distribution and allocation.

2.2 Neighbourhood decline and segregation

Economic and housing provision changes have been important factors in the downgrading and fragmentation of working class neighbourhoods, social struggle and discontent. Impoverished conditions have not only been present but have tended to concentrate in specific areas generating spatial and social differentiation within the city. Certain cases can be seen in large social housing estates that are maintained to keep the standard living conditions by the corresponding housing associations that own them. In other cases, in neighbourhoods where most of the housing stock belongs to the private rental sector, substandard living conditions are common as are illegal practices. Greater social and economic changes as well as internal neighbourhood agents have also influenced neighbourhood decline and spatial segregation.

In the Netherlands, as in the rest of Western Europe, the most common drivers of urban decline are: large scale deindustrialisation, decline and decentralisation of employment from major cities, rise of unemployment and outward migration of wealthier residents and inward migration of more deprived residents, as well as real estate forces and urban policy (Lupton and Power, 2004; Lupton and Turok, 2004). These factors have tended to lead to a downgrading of the average income and status of residents, as well as to a downgrading of the housing stock, streets, public space and facilities. In addition the combination of some of these factors has led to a decline in real estate values, structural vacancies, housing abandonment, and in the extreme cases to illegal practices, crime, neighbourhood stigmatisation and spatial segregation (Andersen and Kempen, 2003; Aalbers, 2006). In fact, spatial segregation has been associated with neighbourhood decline and its related features due to the increasing spatial concentrations of deprived groups in specific declining neighbourhoods due to affordability. While the locations in each country may diverge from place to place — from inner city districts to housing estates on the urban periphery — the urban conditions may converge with many features (Andersen and Kempen, 2003). In European welfare states the spatial distribution of households can be determined to a large extent by direct and indirect government intervention, having as a dominant dividing line class and income (Deurloo and Musterd, 1998: 387; Buck and Fainstein, 1992; Wacquant, 2002).

2.3 From working class to deprived district: the case of Tarwewijk

Tarwewijk emerged in the south bank of Rotterdam at the end of the nineteenth century owing to the construction of the *Maashaven* (Meuse Harbour), the large scale grain industry and the

Figure 2.1 Charlois City District and Tarwewijk (Source: Gabriela Rendón)

first dwelling area called Tarwebuurt. Tarwebuurt was built in a polder that had recently been acquired by the city district of Charlois, and expanded rapidly with the growth of large scale industries (Figure 2.1). Windmills and rural housing were torn down around the 1930s along the *Katendrechtse Lagedijk* to make room for new housing and urban infrastructure, such as the tram line and the *Maastunnel* (Meuse Tunnel). During this time a gradual migration to urban areas from the provincial regions of Brabant, Drenthe and Zeeland occurred, establishing a community in the area.

In post-war years Tarwewijk welcomed an influx of migrants coming from Turkey, Morocco and later the Dutch colonies. The newcomers settled down in the area and became part of the labour force of the expanding port and industrial activities which stimulated the expansion of residential areas. Many of the first inhabitants, mainly of Dutch origin, began moving to new vicinities around the 1960s, for instance to Spijkenisse, when port mechanisation started to take place and a smaller work force was needed. The local residents who remained in the Tarwebuurt and adjacent areas witnessed the influx of working class immigrants. By the 1980s immigrant communities had prospered economically, allowing some families to start buying properties in the Millinxbuurt, a neighbouring area, from Dutch families that had fled to other areas (Figure 2.2). Privately owned housing started transitioning into private rental housing, positioning Tarwewijk even more as a 'reception area' for newcomers.

By the mid 1980s, the displacement of economic activities and the recessions of the 1970s had affected Tarwewijk's physical and social structure. However, the unprecedented decline manifested in the area at the beginning of the 1990s was not only rooted in socio-economic and housing provision changes, but also in other factors: drug-related crime, redlining, the district's take-over by a few landlords, speculation, and exploitation of undocumented immigrants.

In 1992 the city of Rotterdam decided to close two of the most notorious areas for drug abuse in the city centre. Activities related with drug dealing and use moved to south and

western districts, such as Spangen and Tarwewijk (Bruin and Riemersma, 2003; Burgers and Kloosterman, 1996). In the case of Tarwewijk, its urban structure and location contributed to the attraction of drug-related practices. The metro line provided easy access, through the Maashaven station, to the Millinxbuurt (Figure 2.3). Most of the illegal practices concentrated in this neighbourhood, especially in properties owned by landlords subletting rooms at high rents with little use supervision. This stimulated the arrival of trouble making occupants, temporary residents and immigrants, mostly of Antillean and Surinamese backgrounds (Aalbers, 2006; Bruin and Riemersma, 2003).

The real estate sector played an important role in the socio-economic decline of the neighbourhood in the 1990s. Housing deterioration and illegal practices related with drugs and the

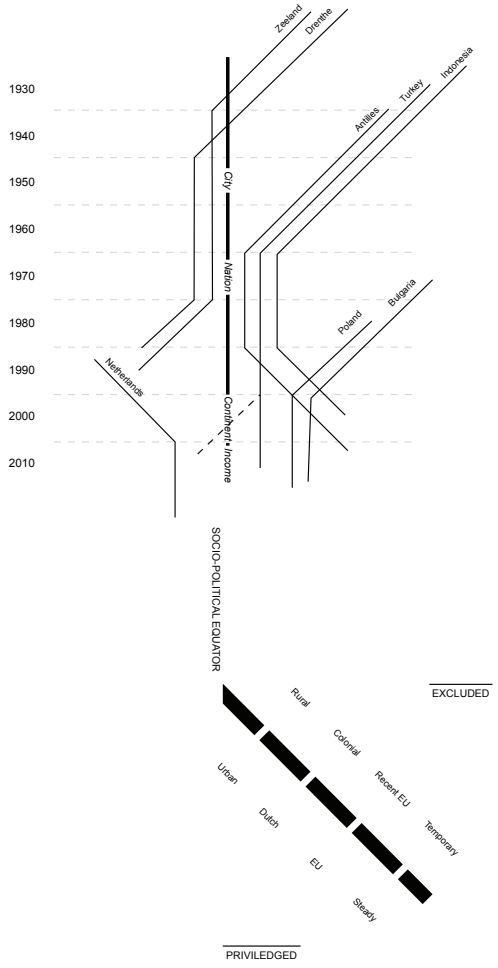

Figure 2.2 Diagram of immigrant influx in Tarwewijk
(Source: Cohabitation Strategies, image redrawn by John Steenbergen)

exploitation of undocumented immigrants were stimulated by redlining, property milking and speculation. ‘In the late 1990s, it was impossible to get a home mortgage in large parts of the city of Rotterdam…banks were using a coloured map for the provision of home mortgage capital’ (Aalbers, 2006). Redlining was evident in low-income and ethnic minority neighbourhoods all over, most critically in Tarwewijk, recognised at that time as a loss-making area (Aalbers, 2006). Homeowners were not able to sell properties to people in need of housing mortgages but only to landlords, most of the time at fire-sale prices. These landlords started taking over the housing stock and ‘milking’ the properties by renting the space to those with limited options — undocumented and immigrants. Profit making was easy through property milking, maximising rent income through overcrowding the sublets and disinvesting by avoiding expenditures such as maintenance and utilities. The exploitation of properties by landlords has also been associated with speculation. From 1990 on many property owners have intentionally neglected their buildings expecting to be forced to sell by the government or by a socially responsible entity (Aalbers, 2006).

Tarwewijk has around 11 700 inhabitants, of which 25 percent are of Dutch origin. The remaining 75 percent are composed of different backgrounds (COS, 2009). The social composition has changed through the years. The number of natives has tended to decrease and undocumented immigrants to increase (Table 2.1). They are not included in the population count but are estimated to make up around 25 to 30 percent of the population of Tarwewijk and 6

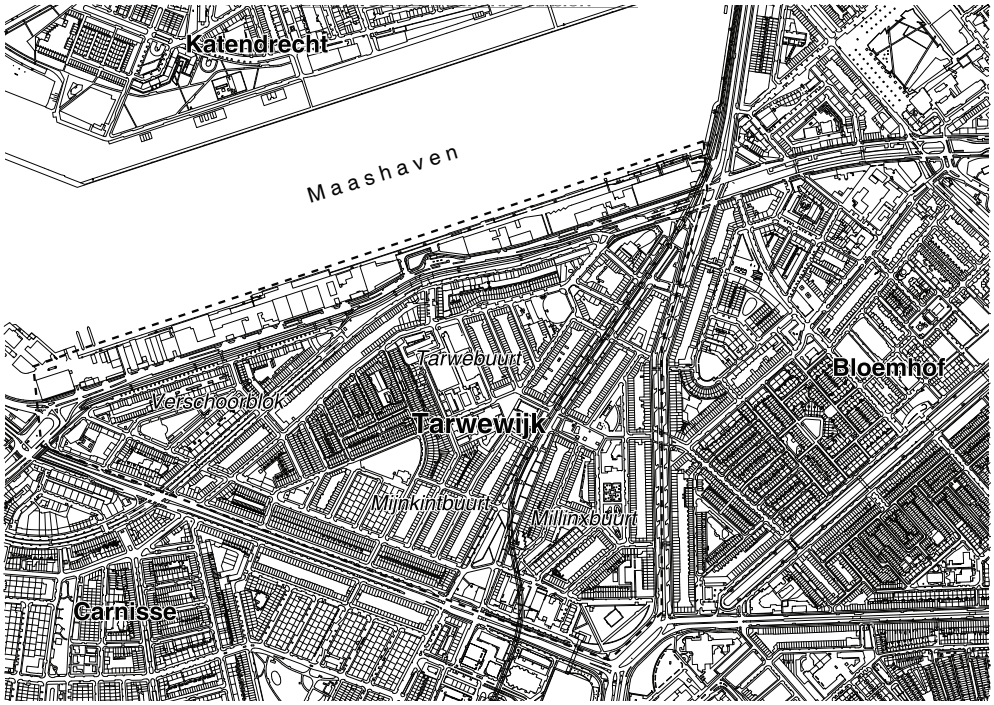

Figure 2.3 Tarwewijk neighbourhoods and surroundings (Source: Gabriela Rendón)

Table 2.1 Tarwewijk Social Composition (% percentage of persons)

	1995	2000	2005	2010
Natives	56	39	28	25
Surinamese	12	14	14	15
Turkish	8	10	13	14
Antillean	6	8	10	9
Moroccan	6	6	8	8
Cape Verde	2	2	3	3
Other non-western	7	12	16	13
European Union	5	5	5	10
Western	4	3	3	3

Source: Centrum voor Onderzoek en Statistiek (2010) Buurtmonitor

percent of the population of Rotterdam (Aalbers, 2006; Deelgemeente Charlois, 2008). Most of those who are undocumented live in sublet rooms and overcrowded shared apartments. According to statistics there is overpopulation in around 11 percent of the 6000 dwellings of the area and approximately 25 percent of the residents move every year, this without counting the illegal immigrants (COS, 2009).

About 28 percent of housing in Tarwewijk is privately owned and the remaining 72 percent is rental housing. From this portion around 30 percent is social housing owned by one housing corporation, Woonstad. The other fraction is owned by private owners (COS, 2009). In Tarwewijk houses have the lowest residential market value per square meter of the city (Aalbers, 2006). The great majority of the housing stock, 80 percent, was constructed before 1944 (COS, 2009). In Tarwewijk average income is also among the lowest in Rotterdam. The unemployment rate is 30 percent which is much higher than the city average of 17 percent (Deelgemeente Charlois et al., 2008). At least 14 percent of the inhabitants have social assistance. This is partly generated by the over-represented group of single-parents, which account for over half of the population, and the under-represented group of traditional families (Nicis, 2007). According to the safety index the district has fluctuated. The score raised from 3.5 in 2002 to 5.3 in 2006, decreased once again in 2007 scoring 4.6 only to drop further in 2009 with an index of 3.9. Tarwewijk is positioned once again as one of the most unsafe neighbourhoods within the city (COS, 2009). The average level of safety in the city that same year was 7.3, and it is expected to be stabilised at 7+ in the coming years through an enforcement and repression approach, which according to the municipality has worked in the last decade (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2009).[3]

3 This approach has been undertaken in Tarwewijk through camera supervision, fencing of public spaces and surveillance of Antilleans and Eastern Europeans. For further information about the criteria read the document Confidence in security: take part in the city Gemente Rotterdam 2009.

2.4 Urban renewal policy and residents' position

A number of working class neighbourhoods have experienced important changes as in Tarwewijk in the last twenty years. In response, urban renewal practices and policies have evolved over time. At the first International Seminar on Urban Renewal held in The Hague in 1958, experts in the field agreed that urban renewal was to deliberately change the urban environment injecting new vitality through planned adjustment of existing areas to respond to present and future requirements for urban living and working (Miller, 1959). It was identified with three principles: redevelopment (demolition and reconstruction); rehabilitation (improvement of the original structures) and conservation (preservation of historical monuments and non residential areas in general) (Miller, 1959). In the last two decades urban renewal has been addressed as a multi-faceted and complex process that must be regarded not only with physical propositions but also with sociological, financial, cultural, economic and political affairs (Couch, 1990). According to some scholars urban renewal has shifted to urban regeneration, 'a comprehensive and integrated vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about a lasting improvement in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change' (Roberts, 2000). Urban regeneration has been highly associated with the symptoms of economic and urban restructuring, urban decline and its complexities, and therefore has integrated visions of social, spatial, environmental and economic improvement into urban transformations accomplished through public policy, management and planning (Couch and Fraser, 2003). However, these notions must be inquired further considering the fact that current urban renewal practices continue to focus mainly on physical aspects (Priemus, 2004; Bonneville, 2005). In addition attention must be paid to theorists and scholars who have implied different visions about the urban process here in question. For instance, Castells (1983) has associated urban renewal with the urban and social changes undertaken when new urban meaning is produced by the dominant class in a given society which has the institutional power to restructure social forms, and thus cities — according to their own interests and values. His approach has raised new questions, alongside other relevant studies made before (Glass, 1964; Goodman, 1972; Ward, 1976) and after (Marcuse, 1986; Harvey, 2008), in regard to such urban practices and the role of citizens within them. Here urban renewal and regeneration policy in the Netherlands is outlined describing its evolution and the position of the citizens, focusing on the case of Tarwewijk.

Urban renewal before 1974 - housing improvement through massive demolition

In the Netherlands, urban renewal policy dates back to the end of the 1960s, focusing on housing as a key element. The core interest was centred on pre-war neighbourhoods with a large share of private rental housing where landlords were not willing or able to renovate their properties (Priemus, 2004). In Rotterdam demolition for new construction of dwellings and roads was also intended to improve the physical and economic damages of post-war years leaving behind some of the interests of weak resident groups. These actions provoked tenant protests, claiming different housing rehabilitation and development approaches in a context of strong political agitation in Europe and the rest of the world. In Tarwewijk urban renewal programmes did not take place until the 1980s. However many other residential areas in the surroundings were torn down and built up from scratch around this period.

Urban renewal from 1974 to 1993 - building for the neighbourhood vs. building for the market

As a result of residents' opposition to the previous approach the *Stadsvernieuwing* (Urban Renewal Act) was formulated at the beginning of the 1970s and demolition was replaced step by step with renovation. 'Building for the neighbourhood' was the slogan of the urban renewal policy introduced in 1975 (which lasted until 1990). It was oriented towards building and renewing affordable housing through shifting private rental to social housing. The policy was mainly for inner city areas and low-income households. It addressed active participation of tenants without changing the social composition of the neighbourhood (Hulsbergen and Stouten, 2001). 'The approach was based on a coalition between local authorities, tenants' organisations and housing associations' with a high degree of government intervention (Stouten, 1995).

In Tarwewijk citizen engagement and huge transformations were barely seen during this period despite its socio-economic and housing stock decline. Government's attention was focused on other city areas, such as the Bloemhof and Oleanderbuurt, neighbouring areas where housing renewal was linked with social and economic improvement (see Ham and Stouten, 1987). In the case of Tarwewijk, the first formal urban renewal programme was implemented at a small scale in Tarwebuurt addressing once again a demolition-reconstruction approach. The small dwellings, mainly single-storey houses of around 40m^2, were torn down and replaced to meet the new housing standards. This provoked tenant protests against the plans pushing the initiatives to allow residents to get back to their houses after temporary rehousing. This in fact occurred, tenants returned, but only those able to afford the raised rents (Cohabitation Strategies, 2009). After the renewal operations dwellings did not change considerably in form or size, nor in their social composition (Botman and Kempen, 2001). Many properties shifted from private to social rental housing following the 'building for the neighbourhood' ideals. In fact, despite the partial accomplishment of this approach, Tarwebuurt was able to recuperate its position as one of the most desirable areas in Tarwewijk. Today, it remains the neighbourhood with the highest concentration of Dutch inhabitants and social housing (Oosterhout, 2009).

The 'building for the neighbourhood' approach worked with the needs and requirements of vulnerable populations targeted in urban renewal programmes without eviction and with progressive intentions such as the socialisation of housing and democratisation of decision making involving citizens (Stouten, 2010). However, during the 1980s new measures were taken by central government due to the economic recession and cuts in expenditure. Urban renewal initiatives in 'problem areas' were weakened and new approaches towards the privatisation of housing and self-reliance in housing associations were strengthened (Stouten, 2010). The *Town and Village Renewal Act*, supported by the *Stadsvernieuwingsfonds* (Urban Renewal Fund), was launched in 1985 oriented not only towards housing rehabilitation but also urban, environmental and economic improvements. Later on, in 1988, the *Fourth Memorandum on Physical Planning* was elaborated together with an annex the following year towards a market oriented housing provision, deregulation, and a shift of power from central to local government and housing associations. Subsequently, in 1989, the policy document *Housing in the Nineties* was laid down emphasising the importance of decentralisation and diverting policy to the municipalities and housing associations (VROM, 2001). These documents stimulated

growth in the peripheries and an influx of middle-high-income households to those areas. Inner city districts, like Tarwewijk, gradually changed their social composition in the following years (Table 2.1).

In Rotterdam, while some areas were developed in the peripheries with large investments and financing for private housing, central areas like Tarwewijk continued to decline. At the end of the 1980s it was evident that pure economic development strategies had already harmed the social and spatial conditions of some city districts. In Tarwewijk, as it was explained previously, the displacement of economic activities, unemployment, increasing out-migration of natives and the immigration of ethnic minorities, illegal practices, as well as property milking and speculation led to urban and housing decline during this and the following decade.

Responding to the downgrading of inner city districts, the *Problem Cumulatie Gebieden* (Problem Accumulation Areas) programme was launched nationwide in 1986, followed by the *Social Renewal Policy* two years later fostering the activation of the residents and recognising the neighbourhood as an important medium to increase participation via the labour market and social relations (Musterd and Osterdof, 2008). Such approaches promoted opportunities for the long-term unemployed and low educated, improving at the same time the quality of housing and living conditions and positively affecting crime and other social problems (Hulsbergen and Stouten, 2001). The policy accomplished many of its projects however cooperation was mainly between social and governmental institutions, while residents' organisations had a minor role and individual tenants were excluded (Stouten, 2010). Nonetheless this social renewal programme paved the way for the *Grote Steden Beleid* (Major Cities Policy) and its initiatives launched at the beginning of the next decade (Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008).

Urban regeneration from 1994 onwards - neighbourhood approach vs. neighbourhood differentiation

In the 1990s both national and local governments coincided with the opinion that 'in a number of urban districts there was too great [a] concentration of ethnic minorities, low-income groups and unemployed and that a re-differentiation of the housing stock was necessary to bring about a more balanced population' (Priemus, 2004: 231). The *Major Cities Policy* was created in 1994 focusing on the largest cities combining a number of ministries and around 42 subsidy schemes. It was based on three interrelated priority pillars — physical, economic and social — and aimed at long-term improvements with a neighbourhood approach (Kempen, 2000). The physical pillar, which was meant to work in relation with the others, mainly addressed urban renewal in inner city districts, post-war neighbourhoods, and former industrial areas and harbours (VROM, 2007a). Out of this pillar the *Wet Stedelijke Vernieuwing - WSV* (the Urban Regeneration Act) was created in 1997, dealing with the rehabilitation of declining urban districts and turning the cycle of social and spatial segregation. This would be achieved through the diversification of the housing stock, therefore the development of more expensive houses, and the insertion of groups with better socio-economic profiles in deprived neighbourhoods (Kruythoff, 2003; Musterd and Ostendorf, 2008). Besides housing, the policy addressed the improvement of economic, social and cultural amenities to strengthen neighbourhoods (Priemus, 2004). Breaking the housing homogeneity and the different ethnic concentrations was meant to increase the attractiveness of deprived areas (Kruythoff, 2003). In Rotterdam in 1998 as part of this policy the *Strategische Wijkaanpak* (Strategic Neighbourhood approach) was initiated. In the next sections the outcomes in Tarwewijk will be explained.

In the year 2000 new agreements for the next four years were set in the *New Law for Urban Renewal*. This time the number of cities increased from 4 to 30 large and medium sized cities, and the task was mainly for local actors and municipalities, the latter obtaining financial support from the *Investeringsbudget Stedelijke Vernieuwing ISV* (Investment Budget for Urban Renewal). Once again, as in the previous programme, a neighbourhood approach was undertaken with the aim of ensuring market demands for housing in the long-term, stimulating heterogeneous populations, reducing the social rental housing and increasing owner-occupied housing with middle and high-income families. Alongside these new initiatives and endorsing them the Dutch Housing Memorandum *What People Want, Where People Live* was launched for the period of 2000 to 2010, setting out the pattern of housing policy and urban renewal for the coming decade, following the aims of the new urban renewal tactics rooted in the last decade.

Under the provisions of the previous laws, memorandums and programmes, in 2002 an area-based initiative called 56 *wijkenaanpak* (neighbourhood approach) was set in action addressing specific districts. These were selected from the 30 cities targeted in the second *Major Cities Policy* reform to accelerate urban renewal achieving the targets and agreements set for theses districts under the coordination of councils and local partners. In the case of Rotterdam the city district of Charlois was selected, which included Tarwewijk. This programme was followed by the 40 *krachtwijken* (empowered districts) action programme in 2007, where the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment established an agreement in regard to policy on housing, communities and integration for deprived neighbourhoods for a ten-year period. The statement set as an aim to work with residents, civil society organisations and locally active institutions to create the conditions required to revitalise 'problematic neighbourhoods'. In addition a long-term, intensive, cohesive and broad approach was envisioned to tackle problems such as high unemployment and scarcity of jobs, homogeneous populations, run-down housing, deterioration of public spaces, drug nuisance, crime and antisocial behaviour. The main focus of the programme was to shift from districts of attention to districts of empowerment (*van aandachtswijk naar krachtwijk*, VROM, 2007a). In Rotterdam seven districts were targeted defining it as the city with the most deprived districts in the country. Currently a new programme has been established, the *40+ wijken* (neighbourhoods) plan, in districts with an accumulation of serious problems, which are not part of the previous 40 districts earmarked by former Minister Vogelaar (VROM, 2009).

Alongside these area-based initiatives the *Major Cities Policy* has gone through a number of changes. In the period 2005 to 2009 the central topic was 'co-operating towards strong cities' (VROM, 2006). It aimed to reduce bureaucracy, increase transparency and create tailor-made solutions with integrated approaches. The physical pillar addressed environmental quality by improving cultural-historic features, housing for specific groups and spatial conditions for 'attractive social and safe' neighbourhoods. This pillar alongside the social and the economic also targeted citizenship and integration: social care, safety, participation and the stimulation of new means of production with innovative and entrepreneurial approaches. The last phase aimed to restructure not only post-war neighbourhoods but urban districts with one-sided housing, thus stimulating a larger differentiation of housing stock through different projects supported by the Innovation Program for Urban Regeneration. For the 2010 to 2015 term the aim is to improve social cohesion, security and economic vitality of cities through the

engagement, integration and emancipation of ethnic groups. An emphasis on the neighbourhood approach continues for the future (EUKN, 2008).

The goals of the previous area-based approaches are quite ambitious and promising. However, in a paternalist governmental system moving fast towards a neo-liberal one some of the ideals seem quite difficult to achieve in practice. For instance, urban policy targeting low-income residential areas has been associated in the last decade with two contradictory goals to solve the social, economic and physical problems and features related to those areas: on one hand the formulation of area-based approaches addressing citizen participation, and on the other hand the promotion of middle-high-income classes encroachment (Van Kempen and Priemus, 1999). While the first goal implies the mobilisation of current residents to take part in neighbourhood plans together with local planning authorities and private entities, a sort of collectivist and neighbourhood oriented approach, the second goal entails the displacement of a percentage of these residents and the insertion of upscale private housing by the same entities, a sort of individualist and market oriented approach. The question is how these approaches and tactics have been implemented in practice? In the following section the recent urban restructuring policy and approaches of implementation in Tarwewijk will be explained displaying the position of residents in such actions.

3. Recent urban renewal policy in low-income neighbourhoods and approaches of implementation addressing citizen participation

As a response and counteracting the urban conditions of deprived neighbourhoods urban policy has recently evolved in the Netherlands and converged with other Western European countries with a series of key features: a coordination and integration of economic, social and urban policies that were formerly more independent, an increase of area-based approaches addressing urban renewal, a shift from government to governance, a growing use of local urban contracts as policy regulation, and a realisation and encouragement of residents' involvement in urban renewal and regeneration processes at the local level (Andersen and Kempen, 2003; Lupton and Turok, 2004). Each of these underlying policy tendencies implies local and community action — planning, decision making, and implementation — to accomplish urban change. The background and conceptualisation of these policy features in the Netherlands, particularly in Tarwewijk, have been explained in the previous section. Following will be explained the way they have been taken into practice, employing the case of Tarwewijk. Of particular interest is the formulation of area-based approaches fostering residents' engagement in neighbourhood restructuring processes and the current position of the citizens in such approaches.

3.1 Integrated and area-based approaches

Universal programmes to improve the quality of life of the population with non-spatial content or priorities were established by welfare states in Western Europe in post-war years. Policy was based then on collectivist rather than individualist principles, with sectoral and hierarchical organisational approaches rather than crosscutting and place-based ones (Lupton and Tunstall, 2003). However in the last two decades a spatial dimension of deprivation and complex urban problems has been evident, as it was illustrated previously, changing the perspec-

tive of the programmes from non-spatial with emphasis on the well-being of people rather than places, to area-based, created to be implemented in a circumscribed area. These approaches most of the time intend 'to change the nature of the place and in the process to involve the resident community and other interest with a stake in its future' (Lupton and Turok, 2004). In addition and depending on the problems and potential of the area, such initiatives integrate a range of social, economic and physical regeneration activities cutting across the functional responsibilities of government in education, social, housing and urban policy.

Area-based approaches have been employed in the Netherlands, as described above. Most of the times they have attempted to facilitate residents' engagement in different ways. In Rotterdam many residential areas have been targeted to be restructured through the so-called neighbourhood approach. However differences between previous and current urban renewal approaches in regard to residents' position have sometimes been unclear. In the case of Tarwewijk, displacement, demolition and construction have been experienced repeatedly in the area with or without participatory approaches. The enquiry is, how power has been shared with the residents in practice and what have been the outcomes in relation to previous urban renewal approaches?

The most problematic neighbourhood of Tarwewijk, the Millinxbuurt, was nominated as an *Intensief Beheer Gebied* (Intensive Management Area) before the formalisation of today's area-based approaches. Urban renewal was regarded as the remedy to counteract the interrelated problems present in the area. Between 1994 and 1999 private rental houses decreased from 1258 to 1168, as well as the number of owner-occupied units from 481 to 286, while the share of social housing units increased from 176 to 307 (Aalbers, 2006). Most of these ownership changes were carried out through demolition and construction, an approach that caused residents protests and discontent.

The municipality of the city district of Charlois realised that this approach was far from sufficient to solve the growing problems in the neighbourhood and that it was necessary to address residents' dissatisfaction. The different parties involved accepted the fact that physical and social issues must to be addressed in an integrated programme. Thus, in 1997 *de Steering group Millinxbuurt* (Millinxbuurt Steering Group) was initiated by welfare workers and organisations of the municipality, project leaders of the urban planning and social housing department, and the alderman alongside other members. In 1998 the group initiated the Project Plan Millinxbuurt through the Project Bureau Millinxbuurt which opened in the area and was supported by an active core of concerned residents and organisations. Many programmes were organised for the residents including *'Millinx Money Spel'* (Millinx Money Game)*, 'Millinx-soap'* (Millinx Soap) and *'Maak Millinx Mooier'* (Make Millinx Better) (Bruijn and Riemersma, 2003:17). However behind all these initiatives the main agenda remained to be housing renewal as intensive as in previous years with a change in ownership. By 2002 hundreds of units were torn down and constructed, as well as facades and interior spaces renovated. Unwanted people and problems were massively displaced. The solution ended up replacing the 'most problematic' dwellings with the construction of the *Millinxpark* (a park), the redevelopment of the *Moerkerkeplein* (a square), the implementation of the *Millinxbuurtpost* (a post and police office), and the formulation of different security and maintenance teams in the area.

Despite the efforts, the approach did not succeed as expected; the public spaces were fenced and ended up being managed by non-local initiatives, although they were meant to be managed by the residents (Namen, 2009). Physical changes were achieved but no social or

economic improvements were reached. One year after the completion of the plan, in 2003, the neighbourhood was positioned together with other areas of Tarwewijk as one of the most precarious 'hot spots' of Rotterdam (see Bruij and Riemersma, 2003).

The intervention of the Millinxbuurt seemed not to differ much from former approaches where residents, at least the marginalised, did not have a say in the process. The ownership shifts were meant to solve conditions deeply rooted in the neighbourhood and to control housing accessibility through a small share of social housing. However the interventions ended up being in housing rather than social improvement. This approach, undertaken also in other urban renewal programmes in the district as the first phase of the Mijnkintbuurt, intended to attract affluent families (*welgestelde gezinnen*) through different strategies (see next section). However and despite the considerably lower value of the renewed housing, middle class families have not opted to settle down in the district. Actually, around 30 percent of the newly renovated dwellings in these areas are vacant, which is higher than the vacancy average in the district of 20 percent of the total dwelling stock (Deelgemeente Charlois et al., 2008). Nonetheless urban renewal programmes continue enforcing and supporting these approaches to dismantle what is left of the district in order to transform it into a desirable living area.

Considering all these notions the most desirable would be the reconstitution of the district by its own citizens, strongly promoting residents' engagement rather than displacement. And indeed, in response to the previous outcomes different approaches advocating for residents' involvement have been recently formulated, as it was previously explained. The way they have been locally conceived is outlined here.

In 2007 the 40 *krachtwijken* (empowered districts) was launched, formalising and strengthening previous area-based policies and programmes such as the 50 *wijkenaanpak* (neighbourhoods approach). In Rotterdam seven districts were selected for the development of the *Charter Krachtwijkenaanpak Rotterdam* (Charter of Empowered District Approach). These areas included 20 of the 14 city districts with 23 neighbourhoods distributed mainly in the west-central and southern areas. In the south the Oud Zuid district was one of the areas targeted with two sub-municipalities, Feijennoord and Charlois. Tarwewijk was one of the 'empowered neighbourhoods' disclosed in the charter with a strategy for the next ten years to close the gap between the disadvantaged and the privileged areas. In the document the goals for all districts were: everyone counts and participates, people feel safe, enjoy an attractive living environment and the business climate is healthy (VROM, 2007b). The five policy topics were: housing, employment and entrepreneurship, learning and personal development, safety and integration. The plan aimed to reduce the accumulation of problems through the elaboration of arrangements known as community action plans, besides supporting and monitoring the existing programmes formulated in the *Grote Steden Beleid* (Major Cities Policy) and the *Investeringsbudget Stedelijke Vernieuwing ISV* (Investment Budget for Urban Renewal) (VROM, 2007b). One of the key eleven points addressed in the document deals explicitly with citizen participation recognising the importance of residents' engagement in the 'empowered' communities selected. Therefore it compromises to put special efforts in this regard through the following actions: a budget of €2.88 million for Rotterdam's resident initiatives, regular 'consultation' with residents and community organisations about plans and future visions for the districts and therefore the development of a neighbourhood plan through consultative meetings. The document points out local democracy in the city and how in Rotterdam citizens can influence plans through participation, consultation and exchange of knowledge.

After the formulation of this plan, in 2008, the *Charlois Wijkactieplan* (Charlois District Action Plan) was elaborated addressing the improvement of three neighbourhoods, Charlois Oud, Carnisse and Tarwewijk. In addition, this action plan analysed the following key issues: insufficient competition in housing stock and stagnation of urban renewal from the 1980s, neighbourhood attraction of disadvantaged citizens, high rates of mobility making social cohesion difficult, social problems such as unemployment, debt, aid resistance, violence and school dropouts, pressure on the area due to an increase in crime rates, drug nuisance and tension between different ethnic groups, absence of structural fund projects and inadequate recognition of the government addressing social issues with a permanent and solid approach, housing regulations and supporting enforcement, as well as lack of investment from homeowners and housing associations for maintenance. In the case of Tarwewijk the analysis describes key problems related with nuisance behaviour, anonymity and a decrease of the self-regulating ability of the residents. It addresses the presence of room rental occupancy (sometimes illegal) by unreliable landlords in and around the Mijnkintbuurt, as well as the existence of some spots with run down streets, and the lack of green and public spaces (Nicis, 2007).

The plans described above seem to have an understanding of the area in question; policy seems to promote initiatives and plans in the district fostering citizen involvement. However in practice plans have been mostly carried out not by residents but by the real estate sector and the local planning authorities (Vieter, 2009). Analysing the different approaches it is possible to discern that Tarwewijk has been undertaken from the late 1990s onwards by authoritarian urban renewal approaches parallel to those that are participatory. In addition plans and outcomes seem quite similar between urban renewal programmes in the 1990s and the latest, as the Millinxbuurt Approach, previously discussed, the first phase of the Mijnkintbuurt Approach, and the second phase which has just started.

Figure 2.4 Housing renovation in Bas Jungerusstraat (Source: photos by author)

The first phase of the Mijnkintbuurt (2002 to 2009), which included the Dordtselaan (one of the main avenues), planned for the demolition and construction of 550 dwellings and the improvement of 675 units (VROM, 2006) (Figure 2.4). The second phase (2009 to 2020) is ongoing and undertaken as in the first phase by the municipality and Woonstad Rotterdam (50-50). It aims to tackle physical, housing, and social issues in this area known as a second generation of 'hotspots'. The main concern is the over-representation of Polish workers and Antilleans which, according to an analysis made by the parties here involved, create disturbance within the district (Deelgemeente Charlois et al., 2008). In this programme, as in previous ones, part of the population of the neighbourhood is the target to tackle even when the residents are central to the approach. Nevertheless, according to the public-private partnership undertaking this programme, the active involvement of residents is required. And indeed, the formulation of a participatory model is once again one of the first tasks planned to acknowledge the position of owners and residents. The outcome is not yet known but residents' engagement is conceived as follows. The model is planned to be in agreement with active groups of residents, which will form a platform facilitated by the *Organisatie van en door Bewoners Tarwewijk* - OvdB (Community Organisation Tarwewijk). This organisation will collect opinions and provide information. 'Consultation' of the residents is a key to their approach (Deelgemeente Charlois et al., 2008; OvdB, 2008). The project addresses 649 dwellings of which 435 have to be purchased. Out of those 105 will be demolished. The remainder are projected to be purchased by the *Aankoop, Verbeteren en Verkoop* (AVV) (purchase-renovate-sale) approach, which has been used also in the previous programmes (see next section).

Citizen participation has been promoted, however residents' planning, decision making and implementation of the previous urban renewal plans is not clear. Therefore it is critical to inquire further about the differences and outcomes of these three programmes in relation to citizen involvement. What is clear is that urban renewal in the Millinxbuurt excluded part of its residents and displaced others to areas such as the Mijnkintbuurt, the site currently in question. The question is where are the residents who are about to be displaced from the Mijnkintbuurt supposed to settle down this time? The results so far have shown a mismatch between goals and outcomes due to conditions explained in the previous section, such as the implementation of area-based and participatory approaches and the deliberate mixture of households and housing, contradictory actions working in parallel. Vulnerable residents cannot be part of urban and housing renewal programmes when they have been excluded since the beginning and evicted to be replaced by middle income households.

Actions exercising total control over decisions of the neighbourhood have been repeated without dealing with the pressing social and economic issues, but rather with spatial renovation, displacement and criminalisation of unwanted citizens groups, leaving behind a sanitised, alienated neighbourhood with high vacancy rates and segregation. It seems that institutionalised forms of participation, lack of knowledge of urban rights as well as high mobility have prevented vulnerable citizens from taking part in neighbourhood transformative processes (Cohabitation Strategies, 2010).

In mid 2010 the Minister of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment realised that the neighbourhood-based approach has not been sufficient in counteracting the many interrelated problems of Rotterdam South. The Minister expressed that it would be a shame to cut programmes and therefore it was necessary to improve them with a comprehensive approach (VROM, 2010). The story seems to repeat itself once again. The intention of involving citizens

is there, but when it comes to practice, government, housing associations and the real estate sector do not seem eager to open neighbourhood plans to residents. Perhaps real change has not been achieved due to unbalanced governance structures of decision making and disempowering practices of urban renewal. As well as, due to citizens' lack of organisation and knowledge to mobilise and raise their voice between these power structures.

3.2 Governance and decision making structures

In Tarwewijk local urban politics are increasingly organised in partnership with an extended range of non-governmental actors holding relevant resources of their own. Such a trend reflects a shift from government to governance, where the involvement of the state becomes less hierarchical and more facilitating and moderating (Mayer, 1994; Jessop, 1995). Some argue that this form of governance sets an idealised model for the city where common goals are shared and conjoint action produces collective benefits and where institutional arrangements give more power in policy making, administration and implementation to private economic actors and to the civil society (Gales, 1995). Nevertheless, even when these forms of governance promise openness, inclusion and empowerment of excluded or marginalised groups, they may lead in the direction of greater autocratic governance and limited participation of these groups (Swyngedouw, 1996, 2005; Harvey, 2005). This occurs especially when those arrangements are created under an asymmetrical framework, for instance with the state and the free market operating strategically interconnected, as in urban renewal programmes, where ambiguity and imbalance have been found in relation to actors and their economic and political power (Swyngedouw, 2005; Rhodes, 1997; Davies, 2002; Mullins and Jones, 2007). Community partners have fewer resources and political power than public-private partnerships (Van Bortel and Mullins, 2008).Thus tensions tend to arise between such arrangements, especially when dominant partners instrumentalise such networks to strengthen and achieve their interests rather than reaching processes of agreement (Davies, 2002; Bortel and Mullins, 2009). These conditions have lead to undemocratic urban restructuring processes, where mainly housing associations, urban development corporations and the state obtain benefits. According to Harvey (2005) those who have the power to command and produce space possess a vital instrumentality for the reproduction and enhancement of their own power. Thus, considering these facts it is questionable how the goals of area-based initiatives addressing horizontal collaboration to restructure districts such as Tarwewijk can be achieved through local governance arrangements with hierarchical powers.

In Tarwewijk decision making on urban restructuring plans and operations comes from different levels. For instance the *Major Cities Policy* is formulated by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment to be implemented nation wide through the different municipalities. Municipalities are in charge of local implementation of the different initiatives formulated by the state as well as regional and city development strategies. The municipality of Rotterdam currently works with different plans which are developed in close cooperation with the different city districts, public institutions, the private sector and water boards when needed. The Urban Planning and Housing Department and the Rotterdam Development Corporation (OBR) play an important role city wide as well as *Pact op Zuid* (South Pact) in the south.

At the district level the District Development Agency of Tarwewijk (WOM) is the organisation controlling the restructuring of the area working together with the city district of Charlois.

WOM is a public-private partnership integrating three partners with equal shares: Woonstad housing association, AM developer and the local Department OBR. Pact op Zuid also has an important role in decision making.

At the neighbourhood level the *Community Organisation Tarwewijk - OvdB* (Organisation for and by the inhabitants of Tarwewijk) is in charge of the residents' affairs. The city district of Charlois and the city of Rotterdam consult this organisation every two months about ongoing and new plans. At the same time they are in close contact with the steering group of the district of Tarwewijk and other steering groups in each neighbourhood. These steering groups have initiated different working groups with different agendas. A number of residents and religious organisations are also active in the area. Each of these organisations has their own administrative structure and does not cooperate. Some of them are funded by the city district of Charlois (Cohabitation Strategies, 2009).

Based on the analysis of the policies recently implemented in Tarwewijk, the latest urban transformations, and the governance structures of decision making, one could argue that participation in urban renewal processes has been in the form of consultation. Programmes are formulated by public-private partnerships and once finished they are presented to residents. Urban renewal programmes are not formulated by residents, but imposed. Once they are conceptualised, citizens find the means to engage in one way or another, but only if they have not been evicted from the area (Vieter, 2009).

In Tarwewijk in order to accomplish plans a large number of residents have to leave or sell their properties, some in full agreement and some by force — summoned by law or pushed by the enforcement of the purchase-renovation-sale approach — (see next section). A local grassroots group, *Rotterdammers in Actie voor Betaalbare huisvesting-RIA* (Rotterdam in Action for housing), has followed up these procedures helping tenants in other city districts to organise action against displacement. Most of the time, the idea behind these plans is the improvement of the housing stock and the socio-economic composition of the area, however, strategies for renovation are coming from outside and top down, not bottom up from within the neighbourhood. Even the government has stated that urban renewal has been openly authoritarian despite the consultation. A study made by the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment regarding citizen participation in urban renewal operations with projects of the *Innovatie Programma Stedelijke Vernieuwing-IPSV* (Innovation Programme for Urban Renewal) recognised this fact (VROM, 2005). Nevertheless, the second phase of the Mijkintbuurt Approach is starting with similar urban renewal laws and area-based programmes. The neighbourhood has been targeted as an intensive management area for the coming years.

4. Disempowering vs. empowering urban practices

As it was shown in the previous section, area-based approaches in low-income neighbourhoods are increasingly trying to activate residents that have been overlooked and even displaced. However, in some cases the previous urban renewal policies and interventions have resulted in residents' lack of trust and disengagement. In Tarwewijk crime has decreased, housing has been renewed, and streets have been sanitised. However the result has been a neighbourhood that is far from being integrated and perhaps even burdened with a negative reputation due to the public attention on its problems. Within the implemented strategies there

are usually associated practices, which are related with harassment, eviction of certain groups and constant patrol, followed by encroachment of the media and finally drop of real estate values. Public programmes and local plans advocating neighbourhood restructuring through residents' engagement have run side by side with authoritarian strategies of neighbourhood restructuring, both supported and led by the state and the real estate sector.

Plans formulated by public-private partnerships have shown physical solutions to social problems. These plans, far from delegating any sort of power to citizens, have made these citizens accomplices through consultation. 'Consensus too often serves those in power because it requires those who are not in power to accept the dominant ideology and political agenda, posited in seemingly neutral terms as a product of consensual agreement in the public interest' (Angotti, 2008). In order to achieve neighbourhood change new flexible and adaptive models of action must be developed recognising the roles played by conflict, contradiction and complexity in the planning process. Neighbourhood-based planning — decision making, implementation and management — cannot be fixed, rational or linear. Preconceived plans will not be successful. The point of departure should be political strategies since 'community planning is rarely politically neutral at the local level and often addresses city-wide, regional and global political issues' (Angotti, 2008: 8).

In this final section some of the urban renewal practices fostering disempowerment of disadvantaged citizens and gentrification are outlined. In addition, progressive urban practices to be considered towards formulating strategies for neighbourhood plans and programmes are addressed.

4.1 Cleansing, harassment and eviction; tactics of disempowerment and gentrification

Nowadays different approaches, programmes and laws supported by the government are implemented alongside the public neighbourhood action plans. The implementation of these tactics that usually work systematically, tend to produce exactly the opposite of what we could refer to as neighbourhood improvement through residents' empowerment and active participation. The act of setting these instruments in practice does indeed improve the physical, economic and social conditions of the area in question; however it is achieved through the de-activation of the unwanted inhabitants, their eviction and the insertion of an alienated social class. Is then gentrification with residents' consent the main agenda of those governing the restructuring of deprived neighbourhoods? An outline of some of these instruments is presented here to visualise the position of the unwanted and desired citizens that take part in the urban restructuring processes of deprived neighbourhoods.

Aanschrijving (Summon) is a measure enforced by Article 25 of the *Housing Act* where municipalities are able to force owners through a legal order to maintain their property in good condition. Otherwise the municipality is allowed to intervene and buy the property. 'Maintain or sell' is the criterion, a way to improve physically the housing stock and to control illegal practices stimulated by slum landlords as exploitation of undocumented citizens through the subletting of overcrowded and substandard apartments. In Rotterdam illegal practices have diminished. However, a considerable number of innocuous residents have been evicted from their homes without justified reason or notice of future plans.

Aankopen-Verbeteren-Verkopen Aanpak - AVV (Purchase-Renovation-Sale Approach) is an instrument combined with legal orders, expropriation and purchase of property. This approach was launched in 2002 in Tarwewijk specifically in the Millinxbuurt. It was implemented by WOM and its stakeholders with the aim of tackling the urban problems concentrated in the area through a total cleansing. These sorts of interventions have a high cost, need considerable funding and, as was easy to predict, have only helped to move problems to adjacent neighbourhoods. Regardless of the implications and consequences, this approach is being considered once again to be implemented in other areas of Tarwewijk in the coming years.

Huisvestingsvergunning HVV (Housing Permit) was introduced in 2006 through the *Wet Bijzondere Maatregelen Grootstedelijke Problematiek* (Law for Special Measures of Metropolitan Problems). It was first launched in Rotterdam and subsequently nation-wide to deal with the condition of the so-called priority districts. The main aims of the law, which is often referred to as *Rotterdamwet* (Rotterdam Law), are constraining the influx of marginalised groups to specific areas of the city while seducing the well-off groups to stay, as well as to increase the real estate value of such areas. The housing permit in Rotterdam was implemented in specific streets and districts within the city and currently is limited to five districts, including Tarwewijk. In Rotterdam the license is not applicable to people residing in the city for more than six years, the private rental sector, or housing rent above € 647,53 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2006, 2010).

Koop je Huurhuis (Buy your Tenement) is a local campaign in Rotterdam following a programme launched nation-wide to provide starters with private-owned housing (VROM, 2009a). In the case of Rotterdam the idea is to retain recent graduates and middle income families in the city. The Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment is promoting subsidies and working with housing associations, banks and mortgage brokers. The intention is to change the rental culture in Rotterdam indicating that buying is a better alternative. This idea has been communicated massively through different media. The aim in Rotterdam is to sell 7 200 homes, with the purpose to turn rental housing into owner-occupied housing (VROM, 2009).

Figure 2.5 Klushuizen in Tarwewijk (Source: photos by author)

Klushuizen (Job Properties) is a strategy especially targeting areas where poorly maintained buildings and illegal practices are common. The city purchases a large number of run-down buildings which cannot be maintained by their owners and sells them at a bargain price to young people in exchange for the obligation to invest in the refurbishment of the house. The new owner must live in the property for at least three years. This instrument is encouraged even more in the nine 'hot spot' areas of Rotterdam, including Tarwewijk with the aim of attracting a new group of people, mainly those referred to as the creative class (Sour and Reijngoud, 2009) (Figure 2.5).

The previous tactics launched by the government, both supporting and encouraging the real estate sector, have worked to improve run-down neighbourhoods, decrease the most undesirable housing stock, boost the private housing sector, stimulate the banks supplying mortgages, provide the middle classes with different choices of affordable housing, as well as to comply with the agenda of urban and housing policy advocating for social mix. However these tactics do not make room for 'marginalised' people, nor do they complement the area-based approaches advocating active engagement for deprived citizens. The involvement could be 'afforded' by just a share of the population with the right economic and citizen wise conditions. What about the people that did not fulfill the requirements of the Rotterdam Law? According to an evaluation of 6 469 applications for rental housing in the period 2006 to 2009, in the zones targeted by the Rotterdam Law including Tarwewijk, 23 percent were refused or disempowered to continue with the process (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2009). This percentage accounts for around 1 487 applications and probably more than double this number in terms of people concerned, if you count one application per family. By stipulating income from work (including welfare, subsidies and pensions) as the main criteria for issuing housing permits, the weakest social groups are marginalised and housing allocation is used as an instrument to foreclose unwanted groups.

This disadvantaged group of people along with other households that have been discouraged or disabled from buying or renting properties after tabula rasa like urban renewal operations are part of the population that must be included in neighbourhood-based planning as in some of the first area-based approaches. Programmes and practices, such as *Klushuizen,* that were originated in the 1980s and oriented towards immigrants and economically vulnerable citizens have evolved in other directions (see Ham and Stouten, 1987). The interests of public-private partnerships have tended to neglect the value of the marginalised citizens. For instance in deprived neighbourhoods the share of immigrants is high. People from developing and underdeveloped countries are used to living in the absence of support by the state to be housed or to provide public spaces, services and the like. People self-organise. However, in a system with strong governance structures it is hard for them to be part of decision making processes, and therefore to take action. Urban renewal plans that amplify patterns of neighbourhood inhabitation and organisation are rarely seen. Locally based processes and community's economic, social and political knowledge are barely taken into account. Resident organisers and advocate organisations formulating tools and strategies to preserve, improve and empower vulnerable neighbourhoods need to scale up exemplary urban practices and processes locally based and distinguish tactical and strategic allies. Interests of the state, the real estate sector, the residents and advocate urban groups are manifold. Therefore it is compulsory to understand and to be able to manoeuvre between conflicting ideas and processes in urban transformative processes (Angotti, 2008). In the following section some notions of

citizen participation, grassroots and progressive urban practices are outlined illustrating the divergence between citizen consultation and mobilisation in urban renewal.

4.2 Citizen consultation versus progressive, transformative and collective action

Participation has been recognised not only as an instrument to share power but a fundamental component of power, especially in wealthy or high-income communities with consensus among the equally powerful stakeholders for protecting the status quo and preventing any threats coming from outsiders (Angotti, 2008; Arnstein, 1969). Most of the time, households in these sorts of residential areas have the political power to contest unwanted developments and transformations. On the contrary, residents in struggling and distressed communities, as in the case of Tarwewijk, rarely have the political power or courage for resistance. Fear compels vulnerable citizens to consensus. This has been evident in districts in Rotterdam targeted for area-based approaches, which count on a considerable number of illegal immigrants and legal newcomers, ignoring their citizen rights given by their citizenship status. Residents' lack of knowledge about housing allocation systems and tenants rights, alongside their vulnerable position in the housing market — rental sector — have been constraints for taking action. Furthermore, due to the contradictory goals of the area-based approaches, while residents' participation in urban renewal processes is stimulated through meetings, surveys and consultation, residents are relocated for urban renewal purposes through communication with limited room for negotiation.

Taking into account these notions and regardless of the approach employed in neighbourhood restructuring processes the position of vulnerable citizens in these operations have been associated with tokenism. Practices creating the appearance of inclusive procedures with limited inclusion of specific citizens, especially minority or vulnerable groups, have been manifested in Tarwewijk as in other districts of Rotterdam.

Urban and housing renewal programmes have employed interviews, questionnaires, one-way communication meetings, and group therapy through tenants cleaning and security campaigns. According to Arnstein these sort of practices are associated with partial or non-participation of citizens since 'their real objective is not to enable people to participate in planning or conducting programmes but enable power-holders to educate or cure the participants' or 'allow the have-nots to hear and to have a voice... when they are proffered by power-holders as the total extent of participation...but under these conditions they lack the power to insure that their views will be heeded by the powerful' (Arnstein, 1969).

Since at least half a century ago citizen participation has had categorical terms in regard to citizen power. Consultation through surveys, neighbourhood meetings and public hearings has been common since that time, regardless of its insignificant role in making relevant decisions. Unlike real-democracy — the power of people collectively to control the decisions that affect their economic and environmental futures — instruments that are pro-citizen participation tend to react to official plans and programmes rather than encourage people to propose their own goals, policies, and future actions (Arnstein, 1969; Davidoff, 1965). Since then citizen participation in neighbourhood restructuring processes has been mainly organised by external entities. Citizens' organisations have struggled to play an effective role in formulating plans due to extensive government involvement, bureaucracies and inconsistencies of municipal parties and local leaders. In addition the institutionalisation of citizen participation as a required practice in neighbourhoods tends to be totalitarian and highly desirable for political

parties. Neighbourhood plans engaging citizens may be used in different ways and for different purposes: as instruments of political appraisal by political parties or individuals, as devices to increase specific and isolated conditions by welfare, labour and other organisations with special interests, and as platforms for alternative practices of social and spatial development by organisations opposing ongoing plans, policies and authoritarian renewal approaches (Davidoff, 1965). However 'absolute control' is not constructive nor is it possible to achieve (Arnstein, 1969). Public, private and non-profit organisations should not attempt to frame a single plan that represents a specific 'interest' but should 'represent and plead the plans of many interest groups' and even stimulate conflict with each other in order to lead to clearer definition of certain conditions and actions (Davidoff, 1965). In addition it is compulsory to recognise that neighbourhood-based plans may be reached through agreement on key issues, but 'ignoring difference and diversity these plans will perpetuate inequalities in political power and fail to transform individuals and neighbourhoods' (Angotti, 2008). The question here is how could difference, diversity and the multiple interests at play be confronted to produce urban, social and political changes in these neighbourhoods? Neighbourhood planning, as it was previously mentioned, cannot be linear, fixed and serving only limited needs, nor can it be produced and controlled by one group since the city is formed by multiple interest and disciplines.

According to Cohabitation Strategies (2009), social and political changes must come from transformative processes overcoming the traditional division of practices and disciplines by bringing together architecture, urban policy and progressive planning with a wide range of experts who engage in the city. The cooperative focuses on issues related to the socio-spatial development of city areas struggling with imbalance of power, exclusionary and neo-liberal agendas. Identifying, revealing and amplifying locally based urban practices have been central for this organisation.

Cohabitation Strategies is currently undertaking comprehensive research on Tarwewijk based on five findings — so-called mesotopics; the 'financialisation' of the district, the public-private housing system, the counterfeit democratic participatory processes, the cultural differences of inhabitants, and the appropriation and control of the urban space by national and local governance structures. These conditions reflect both the urban realities of the district and provide a synthetic bridge for the diverse fields of research the organisation intends to work with. The research approach investigates the segregation of the district in economic, social, political and spatial terms. It orients an action-research towards a strategic design of urban practices that could allow an alternative urbanisation recognising the existing constrains of the neighbourhood and its nature. Thus, a socio-spatial transformation constructed by democracy, neighbourhood alliances and the empowerment of localised socio-economic exchanges (Cohabitation Strategies, 2010).

The cooperative has formulated and hopes to develop a cohesive general working framework contrary to mainstream perspectives of urban planning, which provides physical answers to social, economic and political questions; to current governance structures, which pretend to delegate power to citizens but retain total control; and to academic perspectives on urbanism, which uphold the tradition of formalist decorative production and the modernist traditions of an imaginary non-conflictive city.

The research framework of this project, which is thoroughly relational, recognises that processes of urbanisation are a manifestation of the political-economy and social contention of the area. It emerges from a critical and practical engagement of partner institutions, lo-

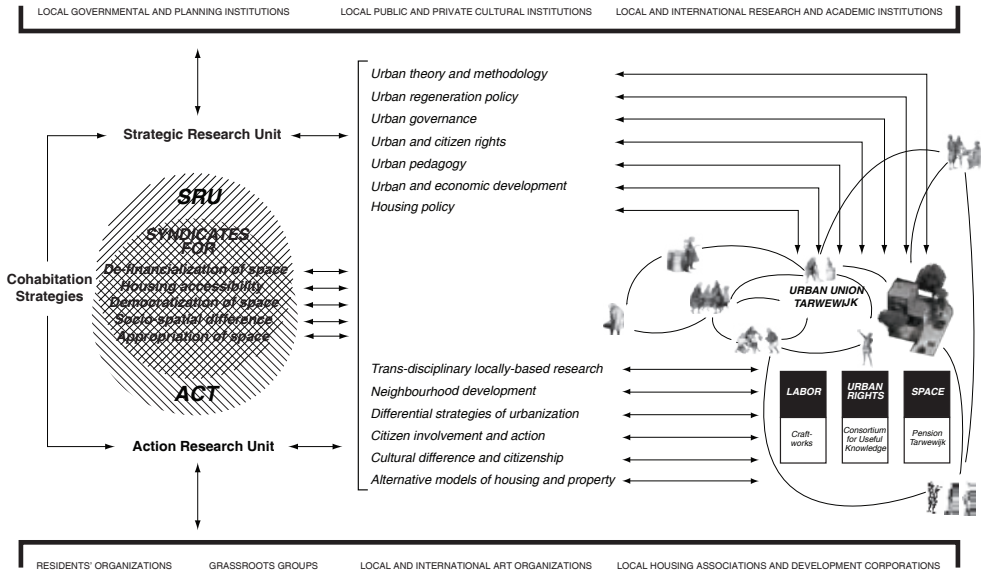

Figure 2.6 Urban Union Tarwewijk research framework developed by Lucia Babina, Emiliano Galdofi, Gabriela Rendón and Miguel Robles-Durán, co-founders of Cohabitation Strategies, and specialists from different disciplines working in the district (Source: Cohabitation Strategies)

cal communities, and public-private partnerships responsible for the district restructuring processes. Cohabitation Strategies aims to mediate the work of the different research teams and partners through the following two methodological imperatives (Figure 2.6). Firstly, relational constructions of research composed by different entities, collapsing the autonomy of disciplinary stances taken on specific research topics into a common trans-disciplinary assemblage to address Tarwewijk in a unitary and cohesive way. Secondly, taking into account the previous research, designing of cohabitation strategies, trans-disciplinary and reproducible urban strategies such as socio-economic processes, urban policy pilot programmes, new property and housing models, etc. (Cohabitation Strategies, 2010).

Finally the projects' research framework has been developed to operate in different but interrelated projects in the district based on de-financialisation of space, housing accessibility, democratisation of space, socio-spatial difference, and appropriation of space by citizens. These projects are planned to be elaborated over time through the formation of an urban union, which intends to work similarly to a traditional labour union. 'Urban Union Tarwewijk intends to address issues that will help local inhabitants to access and stimulate opportunities to economic activities; to understand and debate local public policies; and to define possibilities of shared uses of space.' Its general objective is 'to empower a number of local inhabitants to continue with the services once the project arrives to completion. The Urban Union Tarwewijk is intended as the first step towards the establishment of a self-managed network of people that will independently carry on the departments of urban rights, labour, and space as a permanent resource for the neighbourhood' (Cohabitation Strategies, 2010).

5. Conclusions

This chapter responds to some of the enquiries of the book, exposing that the formulation of policy oriented towards the generation of active citizenship and the deregulation of urban and housing renewal procedures are not the only factors to improve collective responsibility over neighbourhoods and housing solutions, at least not in low-income neighbourhoods with complex problems as is the case of Tarwewijk. The study explains how policies fostering residents' involvement and other policies related with housing provision and allocation, with ideals grounded in decentralisation, deregulation and privatisation, contradict each other. While area-based policies and approaches fostering citizens' 'voice' are formulated in order to restructure deprived neighbourhoods through social, economic and physical transformations, conflicting policies are enforced promoting public-private partnerships to take over urban and housing transformative processes, fostering 'choice' through gentrification and sometimes displacement. Grassroots strategies for urban and housing improvement have not been an easy task to achieve by some groups, especially immigrants and low-income citizens, which most of the time have neither 'voice' nor 'choice' in urban renewal processes. Thus, acknowledging the complexities of these sorts of neighbourhoods —the policies formulated and taking place, the structures of governance and decision making, and the citizens' constraints and opportunities in urban restructuring processes — it is quite important to seek alternative ways of action-research with interdisciplinary perspectives to envision how the city can make room for 'all' people.

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3. Neighbourhood Design Ateliers, Social Innovation and Sustainable Development

Edward Hulsbergen and Paul Stouten[1]

'Les personnes faibles ne peuvent être sincères.'
François de la Rochefoucauld, Maximes et réflexions morales, n.316

1. Introduction

Design ateliers are used by planners and urban designers as intensive sessions to work towards new ideas, specific results or deadlines. If well organised, they bring together a variety of relevant actors, including those who have to live with the consequences of the urban interventions. They are problem as well as opportunity oriented, and they produce practical outcomes, or decisions that can be translated into design interventions. The variety of actors is important, on the one hand to include all kinds of knowledge and skills, on the other hand to prevent one-sided interest dominance, which seems to be a hallmark of many urban regeneration developments. In this way design ateliers can be seen both as tools to stimulate social innovation and active citizenship, and forms of social innovation. With this chapter we intend to counter-balance 'participation pessimism' by offering examples of ateliers in the Netherlands which emphasised the contributions of users.

The design ateliers we studied in the Netherlands are similar to the *charrette* studios found in some countries like the USA and the UK. 'Charettes […] are solution oriented and collaborative and involve a cross section of community stakeholders who have an interest in a specific development project'.[2]

Design ateliers in our view are important approaches for lasting urban development in neighbourhoods. Sustainable development in present day urban renewal districts seems a hot topic. Definitions of sustainability in urban planning and design (urbanism) are wide-ranging.

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2 Source: http://www.thecharrettestudio.com. Here five key steps are distinguished: understanding the opportunity, bringing the appropriate expertise to the table, engaging key stakeholders, encouraging creative thinking, working fast.

In short: flexibility in the urban fabric to respond to changes over time; maximal contribution of the city to biodiversity; minimal burdening of the environment by use and material (pollution), local and global; prevention of unnecessary use of water, energy and materials; and also, something that could be called *dearness*, a caring and personal investment oriented attitude and action to maintain and continuously improve the living environment. This last view on sustainable development is of particular importance in this chapter, as it focuses on the participation of residents and users in the planning and (re)design of urban living conditions.[3] Design ateliers might be a good tool to focus existing yet dispersed involvement. Participation in this form might also stimulate the interest of residents in their own neighbourhood, together with a broader understanding of the relevance of good spatial-functional organisation of the city on various spatial scales. Moreover, neighbourhood ateliers might offer opportunities to obtain information about the use-value of buildings and the built environment as perceived by those who actually live there or by others with local interests who will eventually have to live or deal with the consequences of urban interventions.

2. The changed and changing context of urban regeneration

The context of urban development, renewal and regeneration has been changing drastically since the end of the Second World War. These changes are strongly related to the rise and erosion of the post-war welfare state, and can be characterised as follows (Mingione, 2004; Paugam, 2007).

All post-war welfare state models in Western Europe rest on three supporting pillars:

- full employment; the diffusion of stable family-wage occupation particularly for adult males;
- the nuclear family with married parents; and
- the regulatory monopoly of the nation states.

During the second half of the twentieth century the pillars of each model disintegrated as a consequence of economic and demographic changes. The transformation of the labour market and mass, long-term unemployment raised new social questions about inequalities between generations, between gender, and between nations, in connection with international migration and inequality of space. The concept of social justice changed and required a rethinking of solidarity as a multidimensional ambition. New societal questions emerged concerning family life, education, discrimination, participation (of all kinds of social groups in society) and the role of the built environment in solving inequality problems. Permanent stable jobs with standard contracts started to decline and at the same time ‘flexible’ forms of employment increased. The number of (married) women with (part-time) jobs rose. The focus of the new employment balance shifted to two-income households. A wide variety of household forms, with greater proportions of one and two person households, replaced the hegemony of the nuclear family ideology. National control of the welfare economy has become a complex

3 Context specific studies of sustainability may show what is being sustained, at what scale, by whom, for whom and which institutional mechanisms are being used (Krueger & Gibbs, 2007:1-13).

ensemble of different regional and local combinations of public and private agencies, which have to deal with an increasingly diversified demand for social support and social integration.

Nowadays social innovation seems a necessary tool to tackle (old and new) urban problems (Houterman and Hulsbergen, 2005; Drewe, Klein and Hulsbergen, 2008). It seems also unavoidable as a means to fill in the gaps left behind as a result of insufficient social-economic policies. Related to social innovation is the occurrence of a variety of local actions and scenarios to diminish or solve social exclusion and increase social integration. In relation to participation Kimberlee (et al., 2008) developed a typology of socially creative strategies as networks arising from social movements with a strong protest orientation, NGOs or community-based development organisations, local government institutions, and socially innovative individuals. The question is what the role of 'participation' can and may be.

3. Whose city?

Neighbourhoods and districts cope with the needs of spatial and social interventions to meet new demands caused by changes in the city and region of which they are a part. The persistent continuation of urban problems in certain neighbourhoods and districts demonstrate the failures of 'the market' and the limitations of the supposed trickle-down of prosperity to all population groups, especially in the so-called problem areas. In recent years, top down housing market interventions in the Netherlands often involve the demolition of existing stock followed by newly built housing, frequently targeting residents that are wealthier than the present inhabitants of the district. These interventions with additional higher priced housing are meant to stimulate the change in position of these areas in the urban housing market. However, the effects on the most vulnerable and deprived residents underline the limitations of this supply-driven approach (Hulsbergen, 2007). How can actors of change get informed about needs in neighbourhoods and districts? An initial answer is to confront a supply approach with a demand orientation. The most obvious way is to ask the users (Stouten, 2010).

Urban renewal, revitalisation or regeneration is not the privilege of a single actor or stakeholder. The city is a playing field of many: policy makers, developers, architects and urbanists, a variety of businesses, scientific disciplines, and not to forget residents. The power to intervene may differ to a large extent, as do the observable effects of interventions. The most theatrical interventions are the eye-catching ('flagship') projects, which are developed to seek prestige and to demonstrate confidence in the urban and regional economy. Less impressive spatial interventions can be found in housing, for instance, to improve living conditions for less affluent households, sometimes generating spin-offs related to other issues. 'Physical development can lead regeneration in less dramatic ways. For example it may be that the most effective way of beginning to mobilise community development in poor housing estates is to begin by improving the physical condition of housing itself' (Jeffrey and Pounder, 2000:94). Community development is in this view an important aspect of regeneration. Jeffrey and Pounder do not explicitly stress sustainability, but the context of their views is a specific definition of urban regeneration: 'comprehensive and *integrated* vision and action which leads to the resolution of urban problems and which seeks to bring about *lasting improvement* in the economic, physical, social and environmental condition of an area that has been subject to change' (Roberts, 2000:17; italics EH/PS). With *lasting* improvements we not only enter the

world of good initial quality, but also of investment oriented attitudes and actions to maintain quality by upholding appropriate standards over the course of time, in other words sustainable development. This assumes that users have enough reasons to take care, to contribute towards maintenance, because they experience the value of the present living conditions, or because they want to be sure that real user-valued products and services will continue to be delivered.

4. Who cares? Which values should dominate, where and when?

Ongoing care, dearness towards the living environment, might be an important foundation for lasting improvements. If residents and other users care (and dare) then places and spaces will be cherished and maintained. This is a strong statement. It opposes questions like: 'Can ordinary people be trusted to use their heads in the conduct of their own affairs, or is superior wisdom needed? […] Industrial capitalism has […] placed its trust in men of wealth and power, the formally educated, and the experts' (Pal, 2008:16). Times seem to have changed. 'The contemporary literature on planning theory, however, has come to recognise almost universally that the scientific mind – or the planner-as-expert, applied to practical affairs, cannot be trusted to itself' (Pal, 2008:16). This is not about distrust in science or planners, but about the principle of subsidiarity: the willingness to place decision making at the lowest competent level; decision making as close as possible to the people who have to live with the consequences (compare the European Charter of Local Self-Government, 1985; http://conventions.coe.int/Treaty/EN/Reports/Html/122.htm).

If residents are left out of planning and decision making concerning the changes in their environment and the problems they perceive in their neighbourhood or for whatever reason do not appreciate the top down interventions, even potentially good interventions may be doomed to fail. 'Single sector, single-agency approaches have been proven to have major limitations in trying to tackle the social, economic and physical problems found in many urban areas' (Carter, 2000: 37). Much knowledge for solutions lies locally within the neighbourhood. Therefore, a strategic framework includes 'a bridge between "top down" and "bottom up" approaches' (ibid: 42). This major lesson in urban renewal and regeneration seems hard to put into daily practice while efforts to reinvent top down wheels are often the focus. Why is this so?

For lack of systematic evidence, our experiences give rise to the following possible explanations. A first one might be the widespread top down nature of urban policy and plan preparation. Secondly, urban complexity, time span and funding might play a part, as well as ideas about efficiency, where participation of users is seen as a waste of precious time. Thirdly, mutual absence of trust might occur. In a stereotyped way this can be portrayed as follows. On the one side, authorities doubt the capacity of users to handle multifaceted urban problems and assume a lack of interest at the urban scale, even if these citizens have to cope with urban complexity in their daily lives. A common complaint of institutional organisers of urban change is that users are not future-minded enough and only think in 'NIMFY' and 'NIMBY' terms ('not in my front yard' or 'not in my backyard'). On the other side, residents and other users criticise authorities who: do not really listen, mainly are busy with their own self-imposed interests, use wrong definitions of problems and responsibilities, see their neighbourhood simply as a pawn in the urban play, and thus form an obstacle for solutions.

Finally, an explanation of a different nature may be found in the observation that aims and available resources are being combined too early. It often takes a lot of time to re-direct public (financial and personnel) means and to organise new budgets for new means; there is in the beginning always a lack of tailor-made resources to connect to the aims. In this view the management (*regie*) of the regeneration is not overly top down but rather unable to respond with flexibility and efficiency. This is worsened by compartmentalisation (*verkokering*) in the horizontal and vertical organisation of the municipal organisation and the miscommunication or even non-communication amongst these various departments. An example of this last view is offered by Gooijer & Te Velde (2005). Based on their experiences as architects in urban renewal, they argue that aims and resources have to be clearly separated. And because no two areas are the same, it is crucial to define in a given area the specific connection between social and spatial-functional aspects. The problems in a district, and their possible approaches and solutions need to be analysed and discussed in close cooperation with residents, entrepreneurs, education workers in the district, and formal social institutions. Then it becomes clear that solutions are put to the fore which will actually solve the district's specific problems, and that there are problems for which the present means are insufficient.

Almost always the present composition of the population in a 'problem area' is seen as unbalanced, far from a well-balanced 'ideal neighbourhood'. Pursued changes in population composition (social-economic status, ethnic origin, etc.), even if not openly stated, become clear in proposals to change the proportions of dwellings in favour of ownership, dwelling types and dwelling size to attract new, especially middle income households. Even if the means are legal, this practice might lead to undesirable conflicts, when present residents and future residents are played off against each other. Interventions in the neighbourhood to attract new (better off) households should also benefit the present population (Houterman and Hulsbergen, 2006).

Another important theme is the mutual connection of social and spatial problems. During the last decade it has been fully emphasised in both the press and a great number of research publications that exclusively spatial measures have failed to stop deterioration. Nevertheless, social and spatial problems seem hardly connected in the practice of urban renewal regarding the quality of housing, shops, businesses, and recently public space. Indeed, due to urban renewal a high degree of improvement in housing and urban environmental quality has been realised (ABF, 2002; Stouten, 2010). However, it should not be neglected that, concerning the integration of social-cultural, economic and environmental aspects, there are few successes. Physical-spatial interventions can improve the living environment in a neighbourhood, but not in themselves realise the necessary conditions for the improvement of the socio-economic position of its residents, or at least not for the original residents (Kempen, 2007; Stouten, 1979). For instance solving unemployment is dependent on developments beyond the spatial borders of the neighbourhood. This takes us back to the title of this section: whose values dominate urban development and its consequences at the local level? And who dominates the local interventions? Who cares about what?

Care for one's environment can take many forms: from simply putting stray rubbish in the garbage bin, to designing and building. Lasting dearness and good use regarding one's own living conditions is not the only component of sustainable development, but it appears to be a crucial one. As locations differ — socially and spatially — tailor made approaches are required in order to include dearness into the practice of sustainable improvement. This might be a rea-

son why participation has been studied for decades and has generated an abundance of participatory approaches. Finally, local democracy is supposed to be a key issue in sustainable development. This raises important questions regarding how to get the different interests and requirements of a variety of residential groups to the fore. Also questions emerge concerning the elimination of vertical and horizontal compartmentalisation in governmental organisation. For instance the European Commission argues that it is important to implement strategies for sustainable urban development which improve social cohesion and solidarity and result in necessary institutional changes (European Commission, 1999; for cohesion and solidarity, see also Paugam, 2007).

The following assumptions are derived from the discussion above. Firstly, bottom up is vital as a counter weight and information source for top down planning. Secondly, design ateliers, characterised by 'doing', are opportunities to get residents from different cultural/ethnic backgrounds working together on improving their living area and living conditions, while simultaneously stimulating active citizenship and even empowerment for all residents alike. Thirdly, nowadays, the variety and quantity of experience with ateliers is large enough to take stock.

5. Design ateliers and context

In this chapter we focus on the phenomenon of residential participation in local design ateliers. Ateliers occur in all manners and measures. A simple keyword such as *ontwerpatelier* (design atelier) provides hundreds of links via any internet search engine, regarding responses of residents to designs by professionals and designs by residents themselves, on various spatial scales from housing to landscape and the environment to infrastructure. We are especially interested in bottom up activities, as such and in relation to top down ways of planning. A bottom up activity can be an initiative on its own, one sided, but it can also be a form of participation amidst a wider whole of partaking, or even be integrated in a partnership. Often the expectation is that strengthening the local level with (new) partnerships will result in initiatives that better respond to the local demands (Houterman and Hulsbergen, 2006). A design atelier can be a suitable instrument to study a problem from different perspectives, interests and fields of knowledge, to explore new solutions and increase administrative support. An atelier aimed at redeveloping a neighbourhood may be more successful in achieving tangible results than an atelier regarding plans on a larger spatial scale like a province or region (i.e. Randstad; Levelt, Van Diepen and Argiolu, 2007). Experiences with projects in the 1970s and 1980s where residents' approval or participation was required or institutionalised showed the significance of demand-oriented strategies in urban renewal (Stouten, 1979; Lijbers and Stouten, 1989; Stouten, 2010). Moreover, the open debate on socio-spatial issues to reshape urban environments in relation to environmental sustainability contributes to clarifying the effects on disadvantaged groups, and to getting their interests to the fore. In other words, planning and designing urban revitalisation on various spatial levels should include questions about who benefits and who loses from particular interventions and their processes (Keil and Desfor, 2003). The effects physical changes have on the social composition of a neighbourhood or area must be taken into account.

What explains the current interest in design ateliers? Is this a new hype? Is it a logical next step towards furthered urban governance and a more democratic society, towards subsidiarity

(placing responsibility at the lowest capable social-spatial scale)? Could it be an action to get better information on consumers' appreciation? An explanation might be the acknowledged complexity of urban development and renewal and the intensified debate on its sustainability, deepened by concerns of justice and equity (Krueger and Gibbs, 2007). In the mid 1970s many cities faced increasing unemployment. The traditional industrial urban economy shifted and cities became centres of services and consumption, particularly in the end of the 1980s. Also the long-term environmental issues of maintaining and improving existing urban districts were recognised. Strategies were developed with emphasis on mixed use and higher density (Couch, Fraser and Percy, 2003; Ravetz, 2000). Societal relationships changed also in other respects. Traditional theatres of politics became less the exclusive terrain of the politicians (Beck, Giddens and Scott, 1994). The central government's rhetoric became increasingly disconnected from the resources and institutional powers needed to implement the policies. Also populist politicians influenced the social relations, arguing 'people know best' ('people' usually not specified) and assuming the support of a neutral scientific technocracy (Swyngedouw, 2007). Cities of Europe lost much of their autonomy and became agents of the government to put national policies into practice and to legitimise territorial management defined by the State (Kazepov, 2005). Disconnection in policies went (and still goes) hand in hand with shifts in money streams towards new aims and interests (Hulsbergen and Stouten, 2001). Moreover, societies and thus also their urban regeneration activities are influenced by international developments and initiatives. The European Union formulated and supports a number of aims for sustainable urban development and renewal, including integration, inclusion, decrease of deprivation, good urban management, participation, etc. (European Commission, 1999; Drewe, 2008). On the global level too, as in the Millennium Declaration and other declarations concerning cities and urban settlements, urban growth and environment, partnership, social inclusion and cohesion are put forward as themes to be considered (UN-Habitat, http://www.unhabitat.org/). All the above form pieces of the puzzling context of neighbourhood and city design ateliers, together with the increased educational levels of residents and users with many different cultural backgrounds and lifestyles, and therefore often different needs or preferences.

'You need a story to displace a story. […] Living on our planet, today, requires a lot more imagination than we are made to have. We lack imagination and repress it in others.'
N.N. Taleb, 2007, The Black Swan. The Impact of the Highly Improbable,
Penguin Books, London, p.xxvii

6. Atelier practices in the Netherlands

We selected approaches which in our view are interesting initiatives of participation and demonstrate variety concerning spatial scale, aims, method and presentation of results. In the background there is the assumption that these approaches add to a body of knowledge about participation in urban planning and design. Yin (1983) connected the term 'case study' to (scientific) testing. The logic behind case studies is, according to Yin, the logic of the experiment, where the case itself is the test of the theory or idea at stake (to be distinguished from the rep-

resentation according to statistical logic, where large numbers and probability are conclusive). In our study we have selected practices which in our view represent relevant professional experience showing what happens with positive effects. The 'test' here is not (the outcome of) a formal procedure, but a description of the approach and the evaluation of effects as they are reported. The 'proof' so to speak includes the judgement of the practitioners and acceptance of the results by one or more stakeholders (at least those who have participated in the bottom up activity).

A thwarting fact, not to be neglected, is that practices are developing; practitioners learn from their experiences and revise, looking back to what has been done and looking forward to the next task. Exact replication of approaches in practice is rare, perhaps even impossible as areas and participants differ. So with Yin in mind, we present the following practices (Table 3.1).

We start with the Resident Housing Workshops (design ateliers) organised by FORUM, Institute for Multicultural Affairs. One of the key focuses includes the participation and empowerment of ethnic minority residents in the Netherlands. FORUM provides a large number of documented experiences in neighbourhoods. Then we describe the approach of Redesign the City in Delft, where a number of ateliers in different locations were organised to develop new ideas about the city's future. After that we portray the approach of experienced offices. The office of Andries Geerse is focused on urban planning and design. The approach of collective commissioning (De Haan; Van Schagen; Tummers; collective private commissioning- *collectief particulier opdrachtgeverschap*) is mainly on the level of building(s), or a single building block and architecture. Next, the focus is on Gouda East: the R&M-atelier, with firstly a follow up of an externally designed structure vision opposing the municipal views; and secondly a KEI-citylab where external specialists were invited to express their views, within the framework of a meeting organised by the formal Steering Group.[4]

6.1 FORUM Utrecht neighbourhood ateliers

FORUM Institute for Multicultural Affairs focuses on, amongst other topics, participation and empowerment of immigrant residents in the Netherlands. FORUM participates in European initiatives (see *Series Housing workshops and FORUM abroad*; in print and on the website http://www.forum.woonateliers.nl. For information in Dutch, see *Atelier box* in print and on the same website. Many publications about the approach and results are available, including DVD's. The *Atelier box* is intended as a toolbox for meeting and cooperation) (Box 3.1). 'The *Woonatelier* [housing workshop] is a practical working method to work with residents — both natives and immigrants — in an interactive way. The method stimulates dialogue and contact between residents mutually and between residents and professionals. […] A *woonatelier* is an intensive route of ten meetings in four months with twelve to sixteen residents guided by an architect and a trainer […] to jointly solve problems or to improve existing conditions in their living environment' (http://www.forum.woonateliers.nl). This is not necessarily only about living and housing, but may comprise a range of topics such as: playing facilities for children, parks and surrounding greenery, access to healthcare, neighbourhood economy for small shop owners and the design of public space.

4 Interviews and summaries by the authors.

Table 3.1 List of design ateliers

	Spatial scale	Method	Results
FORUM Resident Housing Workshops (design ateliers)	Neighbourhood, in various cities, nationally	Activating & empowering residents. Various forms, depending on location and situation. Atelier toolbox for meeting and cooperation	Large variety of information as input for new solutions. Blueprints: preferences and needs of local resident's translated into new urban designs
Redesign the City (Delft, 2007)	Locations, as part of the city	Meetings open to public. Exploration and design of development directions. Sessions on location. Materialisation of ideas	Exhibition. Presentations of results to stakeholders and professionals
Geerse Approach	Location, Neighbourhood Buildings	No fixed approach. Commissioner must have strong vision and position, Visits, workshops, model of area. User participation Commitment to realisation	Practical products. Variety of experiences as input for new situations
Collective Clients approach (De Haan, Van Schagen, Tummers)	Building block	Community based activities. Activate residents to express the user demands on the plan. Focus on functional mix	Modernisation and new housing mixed with other facilities such as health care centre, theatre, different housing tenures. High investment-quality ratio
R&M Gouda East Neighbourhood atelier (2003) including: Structure vision (2007)	Central part of district and district as whole Neighbourhood	Residents' participation Professional support in materialisation of ideas and interventions. Development of vision, argumentation and making drawings	Structure vision, designs, report, Design, report, 10 page executive summary
KEI-city Lab Approach in Gouda East (2008)	Central area, district and cross area-border	Study of all documents in advance by professionals Walking tour with residents and authorities Panel and debate	Findings embodied in report, published on KEI-website

Source: author

Box 3.1 FORUM Utrecht, interview with Rein Sohilait (contact person ateliers) and Chris Veldhuysen, 20 February 2008

Experiences FORUM:

- FORUM has so far organised 17 ateliers, and produced 11 publications. Documentation is available in print as well as on compact disc. (See: http://www.forum.nl).
- A remarkable fact: municipalities usually expect FORUM-activities for free, while public funding for 'participation' projects is available. This money seems to be used for other purposes than the actual participation of residents.
- Subjects: housing, education (*Brede School*, community school), social housing, entrepreneurship with micro financing, etc.
- All ateliers are on the spatial scale of a block or street; the city scale is rarely dealt with. An exception is Malburgen (Arnhem, NL), which is a good example of the FORUM-approach.
- In Den Helder (NL) professionals and users were linked.
- In Angel Town / Brixton (UK) a considerable period was spent on developing a vision for the area.
- In Barcelona (Spain) the ateliers were aimed at Roma and their problems as (redevelopment) nomads. Focus on affordable housing and on integration/segregation.
- In Serbia, Roma were included in designing.
- The R&M design Atelier (Gouda, NL) in support of a neighbourhood initiative (see below).
- A point of departure of Forum's interest in ateliers was the work of the National Centre for Community Work (*Landelijk Centrum Opbouwwerk*), organising participation in large scale projects in rural areas, concerning the so-called railway *Betuwelijn*.

FORUM organises so-called *Mobiele Atelierteams* (FORUM, 2007). Three forms are distinguished:

- *Woonatelier*, with twelve meetings and a programme where residents study problems in their living environment, and explore structural solutions and measures, supported by a professional architect, urbanist or other professionals, including a trainer or advisor.
- *Olympiadeconferentie*: *medezeggenschap in plaats van inspraak* (Olympiad conference: partnership, a say instead of just participation), focused on plans by municipalities and housing associations (physical, social, environmental, economic, e.g. concerning neighbourhood regeneration), to give residents and other stakeholders an equal voice in priorities, perspectives and decision making.
- *Arenaconferentie: meningsvorming over complexe onderwerpen* (Arena conference: development of views on complex topics), to discuss complex subjects with diverse interests, disciplines, points of departure and views.

6.2 Redesign the City (Delft, 2007)

In 2007 'residents, pupils, artists, entrepreneurs, designers, civil servants and businesses from Delft participated in Redesign the City. During different workshops they were challenged to develop their own plans for the city. The result was impressive: five renewal plans for

five locations in Delft, design and implementation of the *showspindels* (cooperation between university students of TU Delft and MBO pupils — middle level applied education students) and new networks and contacts between participants.' (http://www.redesignthecity.eu).

Five locations in Delft, seen as characteristic of the municipality's renewal tasks, were selected for redesign: 1 *Spoorzone* (railway zone and central station), 2 *Wateringsevest* (former industrial area), 3 *Schieoevers* (embankments of waterway Schie), 4 *Nieuwe Langendijk* (degraded inner city shopping street), and finally 5 *De tijdelijke stad* (railway zone south, as a temporary, creative, and experimental area).

The approach mobilised a number of activities around a large programme: in November 2006 it started with Redesign the City Creative Challenge Call, followed by a number of design sessions, which resulted in an exposition and a symposium in December 2007, and finally the placing of the *showspindels* (huge poster presentation) at the beginning of 2008 (Box 3.2).

Box 3.2 DN Urbland, Delft. Interview with Gijsje Jacobs, 18 February 2008

Experiences DN Urbland:

- In Delfgauw (NL), a village vision was developed in 2007 that included a design made with residents of the neighbourhood Graaf Willem II. Every evening about 30 residents and entrepreneurs were present, who were informed about the steps and organisation of the renewal. It showed important to have much material and to 'work with your hands', but also to have knowledge about the political playing field, the margins of manoeuvring and even local gossip (See: http://www.ouddelfgauw.nl).
- Redesign the City (Delft, NL) was organised by DN Urbland, office for urbanism and landscape architecture, with a subsidy from the Creative Challenge Call (Ministry of Economic Affairs, EZ, and Ministry of Education, Culture and Science, OCW). After the workshops the initial planning ideas were elaborated on by DN Urbland in cooperation with various designers and artists. Five workshops (on location, lasting three to four hours) were organised, with a sharp focus on opportunities for the future. The workshops would start with an introduction, followed by an excursion (with different tasks: look around as e.g. tourist, student, or entrepreneur), then a brainstorming session and a design session were held, ending with a presentation. Parallel workshops were held by different groups, and each meeting was dedicated to one area. Each group had 30 to 40 participants: residents, entrepreneurs, students, policymakers, etc., as mixed as possible. The actual participation appeared to depend on the specific subject at hand. Different participants often appeared to have the same idea about the future for the location.
- Means: inspiring maps, expressive references, focusing on the organisation of space. Better preparation gave better results. A major problem appeared to be the 'steering' of the actual renewal.
- DN Urbland also organised various presentations to bring the approach and results of Redesign the City to the attention of a wider audience, among them stakeholders in Delft, and interested professionals in the field of architecture and urbanism.
- Resident's participation is always a difficult matter, as authorities see it is as time consuming and costly. It is necessary to break through such an attitude. (See: http://www.dnurbland.com; http://www.redesignthecity.eu; electronic report available).

6.3 Rotterdam, Andries Geerse Stedebouwkundige BV (Urban Planning and Design Office)

The office takes an assignment only if convinced that feasible ideas of the participants will be put into practice. The principal commissioner (*opdrachtgever*) should have a strong vision and take a clear position (Box 3.3).

There is no fixed approach, for several reasons:

- The phase in the planning process may vary at the moment of first contact. Joining may occur in the beginning, but also can be later in the already ongoing processes.
- People differ per situation; the combination of actors (and their interests) may vary.

The projects tend to start with a search for users (individuals and groups), and then proceed to mobilise user's energy in a constructive way to secure commitment towards realisation. In the beginning the approach is: 'visiting' several times; 'looking around', and 'talking' with

Box 3.3 Andries Geerse Stedebouwkundige BV Rotterdam, interview with Andries Geerse, 22 September 2008

'People know that when they have a good idea, that we will badger to get it realised'.

Experiences

- It started with the key project of a swimming pool (to be closed) in De Baarsjes (1998), where the problem was to increase support of the neighbourhood. From a simple initiative it fully developed, via meetings with a spatial working model. The concept of a simple swimming pool was enriched with new functions, and in the end it was decided to realise a multifunctional complex, including: an open air and indoor swimming pool, also suitable for handicapped swimmers, a festivity hall, a fast food restaurant, a grand café, etc., covered with a green planted roof. To improve the projects' status Erica Terpstra (authority in sporting-world) became chairperson of the committee to realise the Jan van Galenbad (Jan van Galen swimming pool). In the beginning of the project there was a shortage of money, however in due course more (private) parties wanted to contribute and participate and the shortage changed into a more than sufficient amount of money.
- Kolenkitbuurt, Amsterdam (NL) (2001-present). The workshop included day-time sessions with women (14 to16 hours with Moroccan, and 16 to18 hours with Turkish women) and evening sessions with men (who were informed by their wives).
- Veldwijk, Hengelo (NL) (2006). The active residents had moved already; there were no residents to communicate with (the housing association expelled its tenants). Sports proved to be the catalyst. The football club FC Twente had a social vision, and is well-embedded in the region. A developer and local service club became supporters of the project(s). (See: http://www.kei-centrum.nl/view.cfm?page_id=18978&item_type=project&item_id=223).
- Apeldoorn, Zuidelijke Kanaaloever (south canal bank) (NL). This is an example of a process from beginning till end. After three years of quarrels about the area (not about form, mainly about money), a competition was organised. Geerse Office won the competition. The Municipality, as a commissioner, doubted the urgency and Geerse Office organised commissioners and contacts between artists, entrepreneurs, a self-building group and a playground organisation. After 18 months the first foundations were realised for the building projects. (See: http://www.stedenbouwkundige.nl/bureau.html).

those who are expected to have an impact (snowball approach). While this takes time, it provides the information required to prepare for one or two workshops with the principal client, often a municipality and/or housing associations. The next step is to organise a workshop of two or three full days, which includes everyone who wants to participate, to a maximum of 40 participants. The actual invitations depend on the situation, but should include residents and other users, entrepreneurs, and preferably also members of the municipal council. Moreover it is suggested to invite four or five 'free-thinkers'. A balanced participation of interested parties is pursued. During the sessions a variety of subjects are dealt with (opportunities, ideas, finances, and realisation). A physical model of the area is a self-evident and relatively cheap tool; firstly because everyone is capable of working with a model and of expressing ideas by making new parts to put in it, and secondly because not all participants are capable of reading drawings properly. Workshops are only organised when a formal authority, at least the responsible alder(wo)man, opens the session and is willing to receive the results. The content of the workshop depends on the phase in the planning process (developing ideas, defining a future course, decision making, and trend-setting interventions). During the sessions open and clear response is vital, but in the end straightforward and hard comments are decisive, to be sure that every participant knows the role and potential of the other actors.

Organising workshops in this form is demanding work. The organisers need self-assurance, a professional attitude, and conviction that the workshop will be worthwhile whatever the outcome. Full speed workshops are only performed six or seven times per year, to prevent this approach from becoming a routine.

6.4 Collective clients

The first organisations for collective commissioning (*collectief opdrachtgeverschap*) in large Dutch cities were mostly supported by architects (like Hein de Haan, Henk van Schagen, Ineke Hulshof) who have been working in social movements with a strong protest orientation. This form of participation is rooted in the community based development organisations of the 1980s, and residential groups who lived in collective housing units (*woongemeenschappen*). These units are spread all over the Netherlands. They vary according to household composition, age brackets, ethnic backgrounds, and income. There are collective units for the elderly, young singles, one parent families, two-income households, and units with a mix of all sorts of households (De Haan and Tummers, 2007).

In some projects, housing is combined with communal services such as schools and child care facilities. This mixture of working, living and services offers a special quality beyond the project itself. These projects are developed and constructed with the participation of (future) users.

During urban renewal, in the period 1970 to 1990, active participation was stimulated and institutionalised. Residents were given the status of commissioner in cooperation with housing associations. The societal context changed and greater emphasis was put on privatisation. Collective clients became a variety of partnerships: owner-occupiers and/or tenants and/or owners of businesses and/or shops and/or boards of social services.

Collective commissioning arrangements were initiated and supported by municipalities and *Stuurgroep Experimenten Volkshuisvesting- SEV* (National Steering Committee on Housing Experiments). According to the programme of this steering committee, municipalities in the provinces of Gelderland and Noord Brabant and the municipality of Apeldoorn, Almere and

Hoorn supported projects where residents had the role of real estate developer (De Haan and Tummers, 2007; BN/De Stem, 2008). In these types of projects residential collectives can create neighbourhoods according to their own requirements and wishes. A study showed that it is possible to build at a price 20 percent to 40 percent lower than traditional (developer built) projects (BN/De Stem, 2008) (Box 3.4a, 3.4b).

Collective commissioning needs more serious engagement than for instance ateliers concerned with regional matters, such as concerning the *Randstad* in the western part of the Netherlands. The collective commissioning projects mentioned above have been managed in a sequence of atelier meetings focused on the construction of real estate, with a mix of housing in tenure and services. Professional support for resident groups in all phases of the building process is crucial. This kind of support matters in particular during the first step, where initiatives must lead to the formulation of the plan definition, as this phase has a large impact on the quality of the final construction. Processes in which (future) residents have a say reinforce the user oriented value, especially when the investments — including the building costs — are taken into account. A back up partner, for example a housing association, is an important condition to reduce financial risks, and to control the estimates of contractors.

Box 3.4a Project in the Bijlmer

In 1996 Van Schagen Architecten completed a modernisation project in the Bijlmer, a post-war housing estate in Amsterdam. A diverse programme of different housing types was constructed, including apartments with two and three bedrooms, dwellings with small working spaces or room for studios, and student housing. Social housing was partly replaced by owner-occupied housing. Social control was considered and improved: the dead walls with entrances to storage spaces were replaced by ground level housing units. The urban fabric composed of slabs in the form of open honeycombs was changed into closed blocks. (See: Van Schagen Architecten, 2006).

Box 3.4b Project Vrijburcht at Steigereiland/IJburg

The project Vrijburcht at Steigereiland/IJburg in Amsterdam reveals that collective commissioning projects can contribute to housing for a variety of needs and liveability in a neighbourhood (see Chapter 6). The architect Hein de Haan, founder of CASA architects, was initiator of this project (see Chapter 6). He gained much experience in design and building with the participation of all sorts of residential groups: tenant groups, collectives of artists, and squatters (modernised squatted building was legalised afterwards).

The Vrijburcht project shows that collective commissioning can be successful even with complex requirements and flexible plan definitions. The project gives space to a complex programme, with tailor made housing, room for small businesses, a guest house, a children's day care centre, a small theatre, a restaurant and communal housing for mentally disabled children. There is also a parking garage, communal garden and harbour facilities. This project of 52 housing units includes low cost social housing units and a number of owner-occupied housing units. (See: De Haan and Tummers, 2007).

6.5 Gouda East

R&M-FORUM neighbourhood design atelier in Gouda East

The R&M-FORUM neighbourhood design atelier in Gouda East (in 2003; former Stichting R&M Gouda Oost i.s.m. FORUM, Utrecht, en Stuurgroep Wijkontwikkeling Gouda, 2003) is an example of a bottom up activity (twelve meetings, publication, presentations) which was initiated in response to uncertainty in the regeneration plans of the *Stuurgroep* (Steering Group: a cooperation of municipality and housing associations), against the background of the decision by the municipality of Gouda to restructure the district of Gouda East, adopting a so-called 'active neighbourhood approach' (Box 3.5). The aim was to broaden the discussion about the regeneration of the central area of the district. FORUM supported the initiative by engaging a professional architect, and the municipality of Gouda offered personal support and information. After the completion of the atelier, its report was accepted, actually embraced as a form of residents' participation and positioned amidst participation activities initiated by the Steering Group. Recommendations concerned issues such as: dilemmas and daily problems to be solved, more attention to local needs in the functional and spatial programme, opportunities for businesses and local events, and objects of interest (Hulsbergen, 2008).

Structure vision Gouda East (bottom up)

Based on the graduation research of Lisette Rueb (Department of Urbanism, Faculty of Architecture, TU Delft), a second bottom up initiative was launched in the form of a new written and illustrated structure vision for Gouda East (Rueb and Hulsbergen, 2007). As in the R&M workshop, the accepted point of departure was a new district centre to be realised at a location designated by the municipality. The vision included short term and long-term actions to improve the spatial and functional structure in Gouda East (structure, differentiation and safety to be integrated in sustainable development). This vision was adopted by the *Adviesgroep* (Advisory Group for Neighbourhood Development) as well as by the *Wijkteam Oost* (Neighbourhood Team East), but not by the Steering Group. At that time, the definition of the problems and necessary solutions as viewed by the Steering Group appeared far away from the bottom up views.

KEI-citylab Gouda East

On 23 April 2008, initiated by the Steering Group, KEI-citylab Gouda East was organised (concerned with the development model for the central area, the economic aspects concerning shops and other amenities of the transformation, and planning and financial processes). Nine specialists from different disciplines were asked by KEI to give their views. The programme started (after reception and lunch, with selected residents and members of the Advisory Group) with introductions by the municipality and housing association, followed by a walk in Gouda East where the KEI-experts asked questions and discussed issues with the participants. The meeting continued with an indoor citylab discussion. After that, KEI-experts discussed in a closed meeting their views and conclusions. The citylab ended with a public presentation of the advice of the KEI-experts and with a general debate with the audience.

The main conclusions were to broaden the focus on the district centre, to widen the scope beyond the 'borders' of the centre and even beyond the border of the district, to focus on long-term development and to reduce fixation on financial limits, to give (available, unused) space

Box 3.5 R&M/FORUM Design Atelier Gouda East 2003

R&M — a local volunteer foundation — organised a design atelier in 2003 to contribute to the neighbourhood's regeneration at hand, in close cooperation with FORUM (Utrecht).

The general aims of the Design Atelier Gouda East were:
- to bring together residents of migrant and native origin;
- to discuss and study their wishes and needs with respect to the living environment;
- to give the results a form, that could be presented to other residents, the municipality and the (social) housing corporations.

Three organisations were relevant, the local R&M Activity Centre, the nationally oriented organisation FORUM, and the municipality's department Wijkontwikkeling (Neighbourhood Development).

The concept of the atelier was simple: involve residents in contemplating and (re)designing the central part of the neighbourhood. In 2003 (until 2010), the central part was the major issue in the regeneration of the neighbourhood as a whole for the municipality (disregarding the need for integrated improvement of the functional-spatial structure of the district as a whole). In the atelier it was decided to accept the focus on the central part, however without further restrictions.[5]

The method comprised several steps and activities during 12 collective sessions in the auditorium of R&M, and a number of activities by small groups and individuals.
- Start: during the first meeting the atelier tasks were discussed, including home work (to make pictures of characteristic, valuable and problematical spaces and places).
- Next sessions: lectures by professionals from FORUM and the Steering Group, followed by discussion and design activities.
- Final design sessions, and report.

In total, and in varying compositions per meeting and design session, 27 native and migrant residents participated. During the atelier sessions many ideas and possibilities were expressed, and proposals put forward; especially the infrastructure, accessibility and recreational routes were discussed and drawn on maps.

The results consisted of:
- spatial-functional programme concerning connections, amenities/services, businesses, parking, local events, objects of interest, and dwellings; also concerning communication to the residents and potential investors and entrepreneurs, and space for active residents;
- identification of dilemmas with respect to the spatial-functional regeneration of the neighbourhood: the inadequate road infrastructure and insufficient connections with other parts of the city; priority to local interests; attention to the interests of vulnerable and deprived residents, to safety, to the needs for 'green' recreation, and to the return of local services;
- publication in the form of an illustrated report, a series of maps and architectural drawings of possible spatial interventions (Stichting R&M Gouda Oost i.s.m. FORUM (Utrecht) en Stuurgroep Wijkontwikkeling Gouda, 2003). (See: Hulsbergen, 2008).

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5. In 2010 the municipal views on the central part changed. In the plans the supermarkets were relocated to the edge of the district, while the connection with the new social functions (newly built Multi Functional Accommodation) was to be realised by a 'zone'.

to start-up businesses, to concentrate on space for ´checkerboard´ planning, to value and use green and water areas, to cooperate with active residents, etc. For the KEI-citylab report, see: http://www.kei-centrum.nl/view.cfm?page_id=18978&item_type=project&item_id=391.

After this citylab, the Steering Group decided to change plans. From 2009 to 2010, the office One Architecture from Amsterdam made new designs as input for debates with residents in design workshops. The results of these workshops were used for further design elaborations by the office, which continues in 2011.

'…ceux qui avaient lâché la corde, les découragés, les battus, les résignés qui de laissaient aller a vau-l'eau.'

Georges Simenon, 1953, Maigret et l'homme du banc, Presses de la Cité, Paris, p.79

7. Conclusions

Participatory approaches seem nowadays an indispensable part of urban development (not to say hype in the rhetoric of sustainable regeneration) and are complementary to partnerships between already powerful stakeholders. Though in the majority of the urban renewal projects decision making is organised top down, design ateliers seem to be launched more and more, aimed at identifying planning and design problems and at enlarging the awareness of opportunities by including bottom up views. This approach is imperative in preventing obvious mistakes in planning and design, especially in preventing a mismatch between needs and supply in the near future.

The relation between urban policy making and participation is not an easy one. Participation, like partnerships in urban renewal and regeneration, asks for trust and for investments from both sides. But in participation the relation may be (usually is) uneven as a consequence of differences in power to initiate and continue participatory processes, and to control financial means (who pays, decides).

There is a large variety of approaches in practice. Every office offers its own practice, which as such also evolves, based on practical experiences. Though this is at the disadvantage of theory construction (collective learning) on the one hand, on the other this office-practice-led development might be an advantage, as in practice no two situations are similar (spatial-functional, social, and economic). The variety of approaches in present practice seems a vital way to meet the variety of needs. Design ateliers are used as an instrument to involve users (Forum; R&M) or interested parties (Delft), to get a stagnated or deadlocked process on track again (Geerse) or to coordinate the demands of different interest groups in one programme (De Haan, Van Schagen).

These ateliers may have all sorts of shapes and sizes, with regard to composition, duration, spatial scale, and aims. Concerning stakeholders, the composition can be restricted or broad, with or without planning and design experts and designers, municipal services, housing associations, real estate developers, societal institutions, tenants, owner-occupiers, other owners, shop keepers, local entrepreneurs and advisors.

Concerning time, an atelier can last part of a day (Delft; KEI-citylab), a couple of days (Geerse), or a longer period (FORUM, R&M; De Haan, Van Schagen). Concerning scale, the

atelier can focus on a single housing project, a composition of a few blocks, a neighbourhood or the city up to the urban region; possibly connecting several spatial scales. As an instrument it focuses mainly on reaching a consensus. The aims may be diverse: to open a discussion, to raise awareness and interest, to stimulate negotiations between involved parties, to give an example about possible futures, to (ex ante) evaluate existing proposals, to do research by design, or to propose what should be built.

Planners and designers with socially creative strategies are predominantly involved in these projects. Some of them have roots in social renewal projects developed in the 1970/80s. They were acting at that time in social movements with strong protest orientation and in the last decade they have transitioned to a community based development focus. These projects were early birds, and the participatory ateliers succeeded in reaching high quality in relation to the costs. For the empowerment of users it is important to manage the process with a backup partner. In *Vrijburcht* (De Haan) a housing association played that role for the duration of the project; constructed as a mix of functions of low-cost housing, a theatre, a restaurant, community housing for mentally disabled children, day care, and room for small enterprises.

Finally, referring to La Rochfoucauld's *Les personnes faibles ne peuvent être sincères* (the weak cannot tell the truth), participatory approaches need — apart from contents — to contribute to capacity building (in for example, planning, communication, design) of those who have to live with the consequences of urban interventions. Without power it is difficult or even impossible 'to speak truth to power' (Wildavsky, 1979). For instance the say of residents, for example tenants could be legalised in real planning processes (Stouten, 2010). Powerlessness delimits motivation and perception and sometimes enslaves. The only remedy to prevent top down failures in urban renewal and regeneration seems to allow residents and other users to be involved and to have influence on problem definition, plan definition, design and decision making, and evaluation. Whatever the efforts needed in the practice, it is vital to openly include vulnerable and deprived households, as these are the first residents whose interests are 'forgotten'. Especially in the so-called problem neighbourhoods this means, referring to Georges Simenon, to include the dispirited, the beaten, and the resigned that let themselves just flow downstream. Design ateliers might help to turn the tide.

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4. Market Dominance and Participatory Planning in New Housing Developments

Evert Hasselaar[1]

Abstract

Participation of future owner-occupants and tenants is recommended in national policies and wanted by many users, but the practice of participatory design remains poor. This study evaluates different planning processes for new housing developments. The first topic seeks to understand what mechanisms are barriers or stimuli for participatory design. The second topic examines the role of the future occupants and how they are involved in urban and dwelling design. Case studies are presented which demonstrate different steps on the ladder of influence. As illustrated in the examples, the input of occupants can refer to the selection of the location, the housing type and layout, the private-public transitions, parking arrangements, playgrounds etc. Ways of expressing housing preferences range from buying a delivered house from a 'brochure', realising an individual dream house on a preferred plot of land or realising a development by a collective. The concepts of choice and voice are used to formulate recommendations on the interplay between market forces and customers' interests, especially looking at project development for new buildings.

The research questions are: 1. What is the role and position of users in housing developments? 2. What practical examples illustrate different levels of user participation? and 3. How can users have more influence on meeting user preferences? The results are used to evaluate a concept: participatory planning provides better plans, improved social sustainability, a higher quality perception of the neighbourhood as well as technologies that are better accepted and used by the residents. The conclusion is that the present role of the users in new developments is minor and that the positive effects of participatory design reach beyond the interest of mainstream developers. Thus, new strategies are being proposed.

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1. Introduction

1.1 The home and the neighbourhood

In its most basic form, housing provides protection against outdoor influences and is a living and meeting place for a household including friends and family. Besides providing a home, the owner-occupied house is an asset, a means to build up capital and to create a financial buffer for 'later'. Dwellings express the identity and socio-economic status of the household. This status is conveyed both by the dwelling itself and by its neighbourhood. A consumer buys a house on the basis of a limited set of criteria: firstly, the image of the neighbourhood and street, and the identity of the house within this location, then follows the attributes, size and layout, as well as the expression of style, all within financial boundaries that have been stretched to their limits by banks and optimistic perceptions of continuous increase of the financial value of real estate. Many people choose to express their personal taste in the design of the kitchen and the bathroom, in wall and floor surface materials and colours, and in the selection of decorations and furnishings for the house and garden. Thus, the buyer selects a location, type and size of dwelling that suits their taste and financial means and then the interior is changed to suit their individual preferences. The dwelling is a matter of choice, the interior and garden after remodelling is a matter of voice. However, priorities differ among dwellers, and for some people personal expression is less important than affordability or availability.

The perception by outsiders of neighbourhood identity influences the value of a property (Koopman et al., 2008) and the connection a household has to its neighbourhood. Social decline, as evidenced by a range of indicators such as criminal records, vacant shops and poor perceptions of safety and cleanliness, influences the image of a neighbourhood. When decline becomes visible, inhabitants may be inclined to move out while people of lower socio-economic status move in. The ability of the neighbourhood to adapt to decline processes and to keep the vitality of the neighbourhood is a social quality. The concept of social sustainability is frequently used in this chapter. Social sustainability is the ability of a neighbourhood to deal with social and physical problems without losing the perception of neighbourhood quality. The neighbourhood is active and even pro-active in dealing with all kinds of problems and the neighbourhood takes pride in that. Urban planners and architects try to achieve good overall physical quality, but they cannot create this social quality, because community is the outcome of social interactions after the buildings are erected. This chapter does not deal with community development activities toward social sustainability per se, but focuses on new developments, including removal and new construction in urban reconstruction areas. There are, ways to promote bottom up processes and bottom up and top down interactions during design processes. Citizen involvement in planning could improve the client orientation of plans. The question is whether participants can become empowered during the design phase to keep processes going, which is required to shape a vital neighbourhood. Some argue that design solutions and especially new technologies will be better understood and used and that the perception of the neighbourhood quality will also be improved when users are personally involved. Older projects (Spijkenisse, Groene Dak, Eva-Lanxmeer, see case studies) where participatory design processes were followed could provide an answer to this question.

1.2 The changing context of citizen participation in the Netherlands

Participation of future occupants in the design process is viewed as involvement of stakeholders who express their needs for a specific location or project. In a questionnaire or interview the individual is likely to reproduce the 'cultural' paradigm by expressing the dream of the private house with a garden, while a group may discuss the relationships between the houses, the quality of the collective and public spaces etc. In a participatory process people may discover distinctions between their sub-conscious preferences, their first-hand perceptions and their priorities when choosing between conflicting interests. Case studies can give more insight into the different ways of expressing preferences.

The culture of citizen participation has changed over the last 40 years along with transitions in housing policies and the power balance in the production of houses. The shifts in housing policy towards a free market in the Netherlands are reflected in: ' (a) sharp reductions in subsidy outlays, deep cuts in the state housing budget, and the complete phasing out (in 1995) of property subsidies (e.g. subsidies for new construction) in favour of subject subsidies; (b) the fact that the majority of new housing construction takes place in the owner-occupied sector rather than the social rental sector, at the high end of the housing market; (c) the promotion of the sale of social rented dwellings; (d) more independent housing associations; and (e) a general policy attitude geared to freedom of choice for housing consumers and hence a looser rein on the market ' (quote from Cao and Priemus, 2007). Since the mid 1990s the focus has been more on the private sector, ruling out the influence of the social housing associations. In this context and period, the social housing sector has been mainly involved in mergers and copying the commercial developers who were very successful in a period of booming economic growth. Participation has not been an issue in new construction of dwellings. Within this framework, the political context has promoted free market forces, but what happens if the housing market does not function as an open and competitive market? Some preferences may be met while others may not, depending on the local market forces (Figure 4.1).

Participation is re-emerging in reaction to the loss of state supported community services and the need to upgrade urban areas also in social terms. Housing by user-cooperatives has been encouraged since 2000, but is catching more attention now in a period when investors are losing faith in good return on investments in the built environment and when the production of sufficient new housing is a problem.

1.3 'Choice' and 'voice' as research framework

The definitions of choice, voice and participation are given in the introduction of this book. Because the market is not perfect and the providers will select the groups who can pay the best prices, the choice approach leads to greater dependency on market forces, in which the buyer/tenant/customer has a weak position. The Dutch government explicitly uses the concept of voice to refer to various ways in which individuals can have a say in how and where they live (VROM, 2000). Voice is the ability to determine what can be chosen; the power to influence choice in general or to directly realise needs on an individual or group basis. Voice refers to participation and co-governance (Paul, 1992) and to notions of self-esteem, identification, authority and control (Dowding et al., 2000). An approach combining the concepts of choice and voice elucidates how this process is a complex interplay between market forces and customers' interests.

Figure 4.1 Looking at the location of the new house, Pijnacker, The Netherlands (Source: photo by author, 2010)

Problem definition

The market of new dwellings is dominated by commercial project developers. The design process does not involve future users and there is no feedback on how preferences are met in the development process of neighbourhoods and dwellings. This leads to mono-functional urban areas that meet the needs of a narrow group of people: the market parties focus on young couples in their thirties with two incomes and with at least 30 years ahead to pay off high mortgage loans. The elderly, even with good financial situations, are worse off and face a high shortage of housing in The Netherlands to suit their changing needs. Also, this power imbalance between the producers and consumers of dwellings leads to poor quality of delivery. The Dutch union of home owners frequently turns out lists of imperfections in delivery that can total up to 200 complaints for a single dwelling. Some groups of consumers are faced with ventilation systems that make too much noise and are user-unfriendly, causing indirect indoor air problems and associated health complaints, while remediation has to be claimed through court, which is a complex way to gain rights. The market is not open and neither government bodies nor user organisations are able to solve this problem.

Research questions

1. What is the role and position of users in new housing developments?
2. What practical examples illustrate different levels of user participation (from choice to voice)?
3. How can users have more influence on meeting user preferences?

Method

Literature was reviewed concerning citizen participation, the process of project development and how customer preferences are being studied by stakeholders who can influence types of urban development (Noorman, 2006; Kei, 2007; Dammers, 2007). Data was collected through case studies and interviews with stakeholders in the development process. Ten cases were originally selected to represent a range of participation levels, from no participation to occupant controlled development. Six cases are used in this chapter to illustrate increasing levels of citizen participation. The analysis is qualitative. The cases are presented in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1 Cases and data collection

Project	Details	Data collection	remarks
		Action-oriented role of the researcher	
Ronssehof in Gouda	State of the art new development by project developer.	Interview with architect and occupant. Project documentation.	Design contest.
Spijkenisse 'Growth town'	Large suburban development of multi and single family housing and services.	Co-maker of participation procedure, process manager. Interview with housing associations. Site visit.	Example of large scale participatory design process.
Ecowoningen Gouda	Group project led by architect.	Process observation, interviews with architect, site visit.	Sustainable showcase, standard basic design.
Wild Wonen Lelystad	Individual plots in suburban area.	Field excursion, literature on 'Wild Living', documentation on website.	Catalogue housing and architect designed individual villas.
Het Groene Dak, Utrecht	Cooperative development, single- and multi-family, rented and owner-occupied.	Process manager of citizen input in design stage. Field excursion, interview with architect and occupants. Documentation.	'Green' cooperative with high ambitions, support of housing association.
Waterspin, The Hague	Co-housing blocks and services with help of social housing association.	Partner in workshop with stakeholders. Site visit, interviews, documentation.	Eco and co-housing, live-work relationship.

Source: author

2. Results of the case studies

2.1 Occupant preferences and the market

Market study

The first step of any new urban development is to study the dwelling preferences of people in the regional market. Many study methods can be followed to make an inventory of these preferences. Subsequent methods can be pursued in which the users have some kind of control over the production of dwellings that meet their needs. Also people with poor buying or rental power can express their needs, for instance squatters who occupy an empty building or people who illegally use a summer house for permanent living. A common way to study preferences is through a survey that covers a regional market for housing. The union of project developers (Rietdijk et al., 2004) executes a national survey every year. Many local authorities have this type of survey executed every five to ten years. In a survey individuals give answers to questions about their price range, the size and number of rooms, the need for a garage, the building typology and architectural expression, the preferred location near neighbourhood services, the type of area (rural or urban) and the size of the city (Rietdijk et al., 2004). Information is collected on the individuals' current living situation, what reasons they may have for wanting to move and what they can afford. The responses are clustered in profiles, based on age group of the head of household, income level, use of transportation and preference for rented or owner-occupied houses, apartments or single-family dwellings etc. This information is used by local authorities to produce a brief for developers. Many constraints define what is actually being developed: the surrounding area of plots for new developments, the profit orientation of local authorities, the position of the land owner or developer. The survey for preferences reveals the market position of customers and this insight is important to optimise the financial feasibility of a project. In other words, a survey to determine needs turns out to be a study on financial feasibility. This strategy does not increase voice and not even good choice in realising housing preferences for the households looking for a new dwelling. Besides a survey, other ways to study housing preferences and with better attention to the fulfilment of needs are:

1. focus group discussions by people representing the target groups for housing projects;
2. design teams that involve consumers;
3. commissioning and direct influence on designs by users of individual houses or collective developments.

The position of project developers

Large commercial project developers buy land in strategic locations. When cities and villages expand into areas owned by developers, they exert influence to gain the right to develop the sites and sell the commercial services and dwellings. Project developers are often owned by construction firms, and land ownership is a means to claim building rights. Local authorities are forced to cooperate with the developers, most often with a minority vote (for instance in Amersfoort Vathorst, Amsterdam IJburg). Urban planning is still considered 'directive' by the local authorities, however during the planning process the developers cannot stop promoting their own interests.

The role of (large) project developers in the building sector in the Netherlands is crucial for the production of housing, and has been so for a long time (Hasselaar, 1970). There are three major types of developers: the oldest type is often a rather small and independent organisation that focuses on small scale projects of 4 to 20 dwellings or commercial buildings; the second type tends to be large and powerful and is linked to construction firms; while a relatively new type was created by large housing associations to become competitive with commercial developers. Ownership of land where construction of houses is permitted (or will be permitted in the near future) is the key to success for many developers. In almost 90 percent of the housing production, the future occupants are barely involved in the planning process, and only after the plans have been approved, the prices fixed and the execution has been planned for. The users' influence can include additions but mainly concerns the type of kitchen and bathroom appliances.

Quality level and quality control

Designers have to focus on meeting the building requirements and must be selective in how they allocate budgets to space, aesthetic features, robust materials and technical installations. Meeting the basic requirements with the cheapest overall solution has become the priority in the development practice. There is some room for flexibility to fulfil needs beyond the minimum requirements and the developer may try to establish a certain quality profile, for instance, stylish materials and details or green performance. The potential buyers exert some influence through talking with the commercial staff or providers about preferences and value perceptions, but the main influence is the market balance: client orientation towards the best buyers to stimulate early sales of the planned dwellings. When the market is slow, the developer will try to build dwellings in a cheaper segment. In areas with a housing shortage, the priority is on the most profitable dwelling types, however, within the directives on differentiation of dwelling types, prescribed by the local authorities. This practice seems to be quite common and is for that reason considered to be the reference condition for this study.

The dominance of project developers over the local communities in public-private partnerships, and the tight market with large demand for houses has allowed the quality of delivery to drop. When dwellings are delivered to the first buyers, there tends to follow a list of imperfections that need remediation. When the occupants hire experts for measurements, they find points of non-conformity with the *Building Decree* in about 80 percent of all dwellings, while in 50 percent of these dwellings serious remediation must take place: insufficient ventilation volumes, poor air tightness, low acoustic performance etc. (Menkveld and Leidelmeijer, 2010 and BBA, to be published in 2011). These imperfections relate to performance requirements that are not included in market research on occupant preferences. Most often, the developers or constructions firms get away with failures to meet requirements. This again reflects the poor position of users in the design and production of dwellings.

Shift to urban regeneration

The focus of new housing construction is shifting from developments outside the city to urban restructuring. Part of the construction sites come from businesses that move from urban areas to locations near freeway exits, more recently the spacious districts built in the 1950 to 1960 period are being partly destroyed and replaced by larger, more luxurious and modern buildings. Urban restructuring includes demolition of houses and replacement by new ser-

vices or dwellings, as well as the renovation of the existing housing stock. The impact on the community is large, due to the forced relocation of occupants, having to endure a long period in which construction companies make noise, create dust, take parking places, etc. In many reconstruction projects the physical and social measures interact. The neighbourhood may already be disturbed by an influx of immigrants, an increased vacancy of shops or a decline in proper maintenance of the public space. At a certain saturation point after inflow of immigrants or lower income groups, the residing residents may start moving out. Urban policy in these reconstruction areas focuses on 'holding' the affluent groups (Wassenberg, 2007). Commercial developers may limit the interaction of these new blocks with other blocks by applying gated parking lots and closed entrances, while next door people may use the street to relax and meet neighbours. This demands integrative approaches, for which the input from people in the neighbourhood is essential. Without integration in the design stage, integration after delivery may face serious barriers. Socially active people who want to integrate and contribute to the quality of living and working environments need to become involved, because they can promote solutions that support interaction instead of point at potential conflicts by overstating privacy and security.

Table 4.2 Cases sorted in line with increasing influence

Project		Process	Remarks
			Position on ladder of citizen participation
Ronssehof, Gouda	a	Design contest. Combination developer/investor, builder, architect.	Informing of the market, promotion of the house as a product.
Spijkenisse 'Growth town'	b	Cooperation with group of future occupants on design and urban layout.	Placation of future occupants per new neighbourhood.
Ecowoningen Gouda	c	Group of future owners led by architect.	Group decisions and individual variations show voice over total project.
Wild Wonen in Lelystad	d	Self-provided housing, individual design choices.	Individual power over development of private plot.
Het Groene Dak in Utrecht	e and f	Cooperative decides about planning urban and dwelling characteristics, support by housing association.	Delegated group power over urban and dwelling design, cooperative maintenance of court and common house.
Waterspin in The Hague	e and f	Future occupants selected architect and coached design process. Development with help of housing association.	Delegated power. Cooperative maintenance, use of common facilities.

Source: author

The shift to urban restructuring is a boost for participatory or cooperative planning processes. In urban restructuring areas, the role of the developer is more diverse due to the more active role of organised communities and the political debate surrounding these areas, as the local community owns certain buildings or plots of land and infrastructure, giving them more power. The positive and socially active people, in other words the 'super promoters', can make a difference in choosing for a participatory design process.

2.2 Case studies

Six case studies illustrate the role of occupants in urban and dwelling design and which mechanisms are barriers or stimuli for participatory design. The cases are sorted according to increasing level of citizen control (Table 4.2).

The levels of increasing power for the occupants are: (a) surveys, observation and dialogue with customers (the traditional approach); (b) focus groups or participation groups; (c) control through individual commissioning of single private houses; and the highest level of influence on meeting needs is (d) control through cooperative commissioning for a neighbourhood and control of the design of individual dwellings. When (e) cooperative maintenance is organised and the occupants are involved in maintenance and social activities, socially sustainable quality is being formed. The label (f) refers to co-housing. The projects Groene Dak and Waterspin have different services to support co-housing. The case of Spijkenisse (b) is unique, while (c) and (d) are found in many other places but concerning small numbers of dwellings, while these strategies are now becoming more important (Figure 4.2).

Figure 4.2. Map of the Netherlands with case study locations (Source: drawing by John Steenbergen based on maps on Vector-eps.com, 2011)

Figures 4.3 and 4.4 Dialogue with occupants in the neighbourhood about vision for restructuring, Gouda East, 2009 (Source: photos by author)

a. Survey, dialogue and design contest: the traditional approach

A market study is the basis for the local authority to set the brief for the development of individual plots and to decide which strategy should be followed. Some authorities organise a design competition, either open or for a small selection of teams, in other instances a few teams are invited to come with a bid, or the owner/developer comes up with a plan. The design competition is popular for larger developments with ambitious goals. The case of Gouda Ronssehof is looked at from the position of an involved architect and real estate agency (Figure 4.3, 4.4).

Dialogue with customers

Real estate agencies develop a specific view on the market, based on their daily experience with buyers and sellers. Realtors are involved in project development, as intermediates in selling or renting out the property. Their impact on the plan will be reflected in the commercial aspects: how to promote the location, what types of dwellings are appropriate for the target group. When plans are visible, realtors will give advice on the basis of what sells best at first sight and represents the best value. Realtors know how to value well designed brochures that create a nice impression to promote the project (Combinatie Beta, 2006). The decision by a buyer to take an option on a dwelling is often based on location and this type of brochure. This is the choice factor.

Design competition

The local authority takes the initiative for a design competition. The urban directives and requirements for number, sizes, price ranges and other quality requirements are the basis for the design. The performance is stated in directives but leaves substantial freedom for the contestants regarding how to meet the requirements. Sometimes the price offered for the area under development is the main factor for selecting the winning design; often it is a combination of price and quality. The winner will present the best combination of a good design and a strong team that includes the investor, architect, construction firm and some specialised consultants. The design may follow a concept or a vision, based on an idea that is considered to be rewarded as successful and competitive. When the winning team reaches the next phase

of detailing their concept, they are likely to obstruct the participation process: their concept is sacred and cannot be changed. Sometimes the local community will organise an exhibition of equal contestants and use the popular vote in the final deliberation about the winner, but the fixation on a preconceived and rewarded concept makes architectural competitions a barrier for involvement of future users in the design process.

The houses are sold by the developer or real estate agent after the planning phase, preferably before construction. Buyers select a dwelling on 'first come first serve' basis and based on promotional material. The influence after taking an option is limited to items that have become the expressions of individual taste, such as the kitchen and bathroom interiors (Combinatie Beta, 2006). Furthermore, there are obstacles in making changes. For instance, after delivery of an apartment tower in Gouda, a number of occupants wanted to transform a windy balcony into a glazed area. The architect protested against this change of design, indicating that aesthetic quality was more important than user-friendliness. Fortunately the architect's protest was overruled by the local authority (occupant of Ronssehof, 2009).

b. Participation through focus groups and nominal grouping process

Housing preferences can be studied through focus groups (Ruiter, 1964). The interaction provided in group dynamics is an important element of the successful performance of a focus group. Group interaction may stimulate and generate interplay of responses that produce relevant ideas. At the same time, however, it has been argued that group interaction can also be a major disadvantage of focus groups as it may lead to the loss of minority or opposing points of view (Gordon and Langmaid, 1988). Because of different level of expertise, there is the risk of false images and 'therapeutic' communication, rather than cooperation. Observation by the author is that the range of ideas becomes larger, the level of participation in selecting the best ideas higher and that enthusiasm instead of therapeutic communication can become the process-engine. Methods for the nominal grouping process can be borrowed from the Metaplan process (developed for Volkswagen, 1970s) and the Delphi method (Linstone and Turoff, 2002). The Metaplan process opposes traditional board meetings, based on verbal dominance, hierarchy, passive sitting in stuffy rooms, in favour of creative workplaces in which visual clarity, dynamic interaction, participation of all and discussion about a topic before receiving information from an expert are important. The Metaplan technique resembles the Delphi method (Rand Corporation, as described by Linstone and Turoff, 2002), also based on dynamic interaction at a horizontal level and focus on visual communication rather than discussion. The nominal grouping process is described by Gordon and Langmaid (1988) as a process in five stages and fits in these techniques. First, the session moderator presents the topic under discussion and makes sure the participants fully understand the problem statement. The participants are invited to reflect and record their responses on paper. Second, the session moderator presents all items visible to all participants. Third, the moderator makes sure that all responses are clearly understood by all group members. Discussion for the purpose of clarification may take place. Fourth, the relative importance or priority of each item is established by a voting procedure. This is usually done by asking each participant to select five items that are considered the most important and subsequently rank them by assigning points. The nominal grouping technique is thus a structured approach to collecting data whereby the interaction is under strict control of the session moderator. Discussion is kept to a minimum and used only for the purpose of clarification. Nevertheless, respondents may be

Figure 4.5 Presentation of creative brainstorming results: the nominal grouping process as practiced by Ideabrewery in Gouda, NL
(Source: photo by author, 2009)

Figure 4.6 The first participatory design results in Spijkenisse: pilot becomes blueprint of process for 6 000 dwellings
(Source: photo by author, 2010)

Figure 4.7 Street made for play and meet. Result of participatory design procedure, Spijkenisse
(Source: photo by author, 2010)

stimulated by the opportunity of hearing the views and ideas from fellow group members. In this way a list of ideas or attributes with scores of relative importance or desirability may be obtained in an efficient manner. This method is practiced in many variations in different design processes (Figure 4.5).

The Metaplan technique was practised by Werkgroep 2000 in the Netherlands during 1974 to 1990 in dozens of participatory design procedures. The ROMBO tactics practised in The Hague in the Netherlands for stakeholder meetings about sustainable quality of designs is a mix of the Metaplan technique and the Sociocratic tactics (Lustgraaf and Van Veen, 2008). The Idea Brewery in Gouda (NL) has been applying this method since 2007 in creative sessions with 'super promoters' in the city (www.ideeenbrouwerij.nu). The Delphi technique is constantly being improved and redeveloped, for instance recently in the area of electronic expert consultations (Helmer, 1967).

The case study in Spijkenisse for this approach precedes all these insights and developments, but can be seen as a pilot for these techniques. The history of this project dates back to 1973 (Werkgroep 2000, 1976). More than 6 000 houses were built following participatory design in the city of Spijkenisse in the Netherlands, which at that time has a population of 30 000. The new approach to urban planning in this case lasted about ten years. The approach was dynamic and involved different people including urban planners and city officials who were ready to experiment. Experimenting gave a chance for participation and the influence of experimentation seems more important for the built environment than the influence of the participants. An innovative aspect was the choice of architects by the future occupants, based on a long list that was established after project presentations by architects and an exhibition of their work. More design freedom was possible and during the first few years none of the plans was officially presented to the Design Commission, a group of independent architects who are consulted on the aesthetic qualities of the submitted plans. The architects worked for the design team in which the future occupants had the majority and the architects had to meet the group preferences that were the result of the nominal grouping sessions.

The long series of participation projects in Spijkenisse developed into a well oiled participation machine that did not limit the speed of planning and execution and hardly required extra costs. The very first step of the process was to invite interested occupant candidates to register for opting a dwelling. The publicity campaign would cover a large area around Spijkenisse including the city of Rotterdam. The second step was to reward the involvement of the future dwellers in the design process with the pre-allocation of a dwelling. Approximately 60 people planned a neighbourhood for 250 to 350 dwellings. The architect was selected from three candidates by the participants. In six meetings the input from the participants was prepared and presented to the architect. During each session the architect explained how the input was used, and then the next range of topics would be discussed. The planning process and the stepwise discussion and output of the participation process were moderated by independent coaches. The process was facilitated by the local community with readily available expertise on regulations, cost and quality assessment, budgeting and urban planning. The participatory design process would be finished after six meetings over a period of approximately four months. Then the plan was ready for detailing and execution. The participants selected from their group a quarterplan board that would be involved in the final stage of the planning process, the bidding, execution and delivery. The quarterplan board would eventually

become members of the housing board of one of the housing associations (interviews housing association Leeuw van Putten, 2010).

Many occupants showed preference for a simple urban layout with row houses and private gardens, favoured little aesthetic experimentation and demonstrated preference for popular housing types and traditional design. Good examples from areas where people like to live were used, for instance urban layout and dwelling types of the 1930s (Figure 4.6, 4.7). The designs showed long streets with a clear urban layout, surface water would become connected to private gardens, as well as labyrinths of streets and an urban layout that suggested children playing in the streets, occupants tending their gardens etc. The background of the participants led to a reaction against the mainstream of high rise buildings and produced small inward oriented neighbourhoods with a poor connection to the larger scale of the city, due to the fact that the new light rail (metro) to Spijkenisse required high densities in an area of one kilometre around the stations. Some members of the planning teams became social activators in their neighbourhood, or even city council members.

Many original families still live in their large houses, while the children have fled to more exciting places. The participation experience was cut off abruptly when local politics changed from socialist to liberal/conservative orientation. The connection between the design process and the maintenance process was lost and the social quality of these neighbourhoods developed like any other mainstream development project, meaning that after 30 years certain areas are in need of renovation or even reconstruction and show social decline.

c. Group process

The Ecowoningen project in Gouda produced 20 houses for a group of 20 individual investors. The group was initiated and led by an eco-oriented architect, who wanted to live in the development as well. The row of 20 houses led to an individual approach in which a basic design could be modified by each individual resident. The complex was constructed with a mix of brick and lime stone walls, concrete floors and timber frame walls and roofs. Sun rooms were added to a number of houses, some floor plans were extended sideways etc. Maintenance in the first years after completion was done as a collective effort. This co-produced project shows that the process can lead to large, beautiful homes and that higher than predicted investments may happen, while in the end the value of the property exceeds the investment to a large extent. The joint efforts, the input of work to finish the project and the motivation to



Figures 4.8, 4.9 and 4.10 Impressions of ecological houses in Gouda (Source: photos by author, 2011)

realise dream homes has resulted in good value for money. One could say that the profit of a developer is invested in better quality, which pays out for the individual investors after selling their individual houses (interview BEAR architecten, 2003).

d. Self-developed housing and catalogue housing

The seemingly highest level of influence is building a private house on a private plot of land. This leads indeed to a high level of influence on the design of the individual house. The urban design for areas with individual plots tends to stress the individuality and not the collective public space and, due to fenced plots and gated entrances, ignores the transition of private to semi-public and public areas. This effect can be observed in Waterwijk in Lelystad, a large area that was dedicated to small private initiatives (http://www.waterwijklelystad.nl/). Individual developers and small providers developed plots for single households or sometimes more (even 20 households). The area with mainly individual plots resembles the 'gold coast' fringes on the landscape side of developments over the last 50 years, but now spread over a large area, creating a chaotic environment that expresses individuality and remains somehow unfriendly towards the public arena (based on observations by the author, 2009).

For the development of individual plots about 50 percent tend to select an architect, while the other half select a ready-made design from a catalogue. The argument in favour of a catalogue house is the predicted quality: you can choose what you want and will get what you see. The choice range of catalogue houses is improving, because many architects present their successfully executed designs of single houses on their website as an opportunity to be reproduced. Catalogue builders claim that many architects make mistakes, push their artistic views onto the clients and the dwelling is always more expensive than was planned for. The consumers buy a fixed design, but alterations are possible.

e. Cooperative Sustainable housing projects

Ornetzeder et al. (2001) found that important preferences for owner-occupants involved in housing projects are the daylight level, good conditions for their children, larger floor area, also a garden, a green environment and low total cost for housing including energy and maintenance. Most owner-occupants do some minor part of the construction and decoration work themselves. Preparing for decisions that have to be made and doing actual construction work create a great level of pride and satisfaction. Because of this involvement most occupants can deal with complex technologies and maintenance jobs. These pioneers in sustainable building are well educated and enjoy high income levels.

The two cases of Groene Dak in Utrecht and Waterspin in The Hague were very similar in the development process, but developed in different ways and with different expressions, due to the plurality of the actors involved and the adaptation to completely different locations and external conditions. The design process of Groene Dak followed the nominal grouping process, as inspired by Spijkenisse. The design process of similar projects such as Waterspin, and also EVA-Lanxmeer in Culemborg, cannot be understood as one strategy or procedure: many ways are followed, ranging from social protest to hiring external experts and to take over institutions, such as a local district heating company (http://www.eva-lanxmeer.nl/, accessed Dec. 7, 2010). In many complex projects, the development is a growth process, as intricate as the dynamics of society. This is the reason why it is difficult and even not appropriate to fix a process on one of the steps of the ladder of citizen participation or other framework. Any

particular case study presents a variety of techniques used. The best criterion seems to be the level of interaction between designers and occupants.

The first step in these two cases was an initiative by dedicated 'promoters' to start a project and find allies to realise an environment that fit the users, but at the same time became an expression of a social process. Often, the initiative is taken by an architect or creative person who is dissatisfied with the traditional approach and organises this initiative to develop and demonstrate new qualities, for instance sustainable living, combination of work and living, services that are optimal for children to develop, for elderly to stay active etc. Often, as in Groene Dak in Utrecht and Waterspin in The Hague, the initiative attracts active, creative and positive people. This provides the basis for social interaction among equals, a challenging atmosphere that stimulates personal development. It comes with the risk of elitist grouping processes or isolation, but the type of people involved usually create an outgoing, welcoming atmosphere and environment in which the visitor feels accepted in semi-private areas. This quality is both the expression of the housing needs of the occupants and a sign of contrast with the traditional mono-functional areas.

When individuals join in a group, buy a building plot together and share knowledge to select an architect and guide the design process, they will reduce risk, make a cheaper overall solution and fulfil individual needs. More than in the case of 'wild living' a group will pay attention to the connection between dwellings and outdoor spaces, good solutions for parking and storage and layout for individual gardens to create a more park-like organisation.[2] The physical layout and orientation of the buildings (the site plan) encourage a sense of community. Quite often, the private residences are clustered, leaving more shared open space. The dwellings are in a block or face each other across a pedestrian street or courtyard, with cars parked on the periphery. This group process is selective in the profiles of the members, meaning that the end result will reflect the group identity.

In the case of Groene Dak a cooperative of interested future occupants who supported sustainability organised a large number of meetings and projected very ambitious qualities. The confrontation with feasibility came late in the process, which resulted in time consuming negotiation and disappointment. The project was realised with the help of a social housing association that took responsibility for the financing, professional guidance for tendering and execution etc. and took care of the share of social rented houses. There was discussion about the size of private areas, which the buyers would like to optimise (for reasons of added value to individual houses). The private outdoor space was eventually kept small in favour of a semi-public central court where a common house was built to be used for meetings or parties and is rented out for professional use such as dance classes. The complex shows a variety of dwelling types, including co-housing, apartments and single family houses. Eco-toilets and a water saving sewer system, a waste water cleaning (natural filter) bed, bio-ecological building materials and solar collectors were applied. The social sustainability quality developed further, in the course of using the estate (http://www.groenedak.nl/, accessed Dec. 7, 2010). Based on the definition of social sustainability (a vital community that is able to deal with problems and changes without getting into a negative spiral, and with a perception of keeping up the

2 'Wild living' was introduced in 1997 by architect Carel Weeber, who opposed the role of official committees that comment and give advice on the aesthetic performance of plans submitted for a building permit. Wild means: freed from the directives of the Board for aesthetic quality.

neighbourhood quality), that development was based on a neighbourhood committee that continued to involve people in the community in festivities, collective maintenance of the common house and garden. A website was kept up for the community and the many visitors and those interested in the history of Groene Dak supported the positive perception.

f. Co-housing

Het Groene Dak includes a co-housing dwelling and Waterspin has co-housing facilities. Co-housing is a housing community where each household has a self-contained house and people meet regularly in the large communal space (Figures 4.11, 4.12). Co-housing is a way for people to live together so that they can have as much community and privacy as they want. Co-housing members meet regularly to solve problems and develop policies for the community. When people join the group, each person takes on one or more roles consistent with personal skills or interests. Residents manage their own co-housing communities and may also perform work required to maintain the property. For this purpose also professional help from a housing association or real estate agency can be organised. The intention is to create common facilities for daily use and a common house that typically includes a large kitchen, dining and recreation area, children's playroom and laundry, and also may contain a workshop, library, exercise room, and shared guest rooms. The co-housing members of Groene Dak played an important role in keeping up the social sustainability quality. Co-housing comes with a high degree of homogeneity with respect to lifestyle. This homogeneity is already there through self selection by interested new group members, but also develops while being a member of the community, based on social interaction and involvement in community activities. The communities express a social quality that could be perceived as elitist by outsiders, though the community members may try to avoid this, however without giving up their dedicated lifestyle. The social and environmental awareness and 'motivation' to focus on the community seems more important for the idea of 'standing out' than the level of education or the demographics. Co-housing communities have a mix of families with children, singles, elderly etc. The Waterspin is located in an inner city district, and uses an old factory that was going to be demolished for modern apartment blocks. The fear of the neighbourhood that these modern apartments would become an isolated block including anonymous citizens led to the

Figures 4.11 and 4.12 Collective meeting room at Waterspin, The Hague (Source: photos by author, 2010)

initiative to renovate the building and adapt it for housing and studios. This example, but also many other examples presented in other chapters of this book, indicates that co-housing or cooperative housing developments can be part of restructuring areas. Social decline, number of immigrants etc. are no limit for these initiatives and could even stimulate the socially active and positive people to start these 'social project developments'.

3. Discussion

3.1 The level of influence: voice and choice

The ladder of citizen participation (Arnstein 1969) was used in the 1970s to select strategies and clarify the different levels of influence. Because some cases are the product of that discourse, the cases and the inherent planning procedures are placed in this framework. To understand the different forms in which participation is presented, eight levels of participation were arranged by Arnstein in a ladder pattern with each level corresponding to the extent of citizens' power in determining the end product. The ladder followed these steps: manipulation, therapy, informing, consultation, placation, partnership, delegated power and citizen control (See Figure 1.1 in the introduction chapter). However, what seems inappropriate in this ladder from 1969 are the terms manipulation and therapy. Especially in today's new developments these concepts seem old fashioned. The concept of placation is changed for consideration, which seems more appropriate in planning negotiations. Because a more open framework is needed, we reduce the eight steps on the ladder to five steps (Table 4.3).

The (new) bottom level is (1) Ignoring, representing 'non-participation', sometimes a strategy of exclusion. The objective is to avoid influence by other stakeholders. Level (2) Information increases transparency which gives stakeholders better opportunity to respond, however without influence. Under these conditions they lack the power to ensure that their views will be acknowledged. Level (3) Consultancy is simply a higher level of acceptance because the ground rules allow have-nots to give advice, but the power holders continue their right to decide, in other words: non levelled co-operation. This step can be a successful approach in anchoring project proposals with the users involved. Further up the ladder are levels of citizen power with increasing degrees of decision making. Citizens can enter into a level (4) Partici-

Table 4.3 The new Ladder of citizen participation

Steps on the ladder of citizen participation		Relation user-decision maker	Voice or choice
1	Ignoring	Non-participation	Choice
2	Information	Trustful relation	
3	Consultation		Voice
4	Participation		
5	Decision making	Shared power	

Source: adapted by author from Arnstein 1969

Table 4.4 The ladder of citizen participation combined with choice and voice in housing

Ladder of participation	Choice				Voice
	Traditional approach and design contest	Focus groups and participation procedure	Participatory design	Self-developed individual or group housing	Collective development and co-housing
Ignoring	x				
Information	x				
Consultation		x	x		
Participation			x	x	
Decision making				x	x

Source: author

Table 4.5 Qualitative level of influence on preferences

Ladder of participation	Choice				Voice
	Traditional approach and design contest	Focus groups and participation procedure	Participatory design	Self-developed individual or group housing	Collective development and co-housing
	Gouda Ronssehof	Spijkenisse	Gouda Ecowoningen	Lelystad	Utrecht / The Hague
Area (services)	0	+	-	0	++
Area (social equal.)	+	+	+	+	+++
Block type	0	+	++	-	+++
Semi-public/public	0	+	++	0	+++
Parking	0	+	++	+	+
Rental/ownership	0	+	+	0	++
Single/multi family	0	+	++	-	++
Small/large	0	+	++	++	++
Layout	0	-	+	+++	++
Finishing, ind. services	+	-	+	+++	++
Collective services	0	0	0	0	++
Location of dwelling	0	0	0	++	+
Privacy	0	0	+	+++	+
Neighbourship	0	0	+	0/+	++

0 = given characteristic, no influence
\- = influence is possible, but practice does not allow it
\+ = influence is possible, little effect
++ = influence effective in practice
+++ = high level of individual influence on performance quality

Source: author

pation that enables them to negotiate and engage in trade-offs with traditional power holders. At the topmost rung is level (5) Decision making where have-not citizens obtain real influence through shared power.

As Tonkens (2007) points out, there is a huge potential of people who want to become involved as active citizens, but lack the setting to co-produce their human capital (Tonkens, 2010). The attractiveness of becoming part of a committed and vibrant atmosphere and meeting the neighbours in a constructive setting presents a great opportunity for participation. Participation, for that reason, seems not obstructed by lack of interest from the side of consumers, rather lack of perspective from the planners and project developers.

Table 4.4 brings the levels of influence (on the vertical axis) in relation with five major development strategies. In the corresponding boxes the level of influence is valued, based on the case studies. The attention to preferences in Table 4.4 is more gradual and the four cut-off points do not match the different design strategies (five strategies).

Table 4.5 was filled from the point of view of households that are able to buy a new house at a price level that is available in relative high quantities on the market of new dwellings. Co-operative housing often includes a percentage of dwellings that is within reach of low-income households and these projects often show a mix of rented and owned dwellings. Table 4.5 shows diversity in the potential to express and have individual preferences rewarded. The collective functions such as gardens, parking, bike storage and washing facilities make the difference.

Table 4.6 Framework for levels of influence

Framework voice and choice	**Choice**				**Voice**
	Traditional approach	Participation procedure	Participatory design	Group housing development	Collective development and co-housing
Denial	1. developing for the market				
Information		2. level communication			
Consultation			3. participatory planning		
Participation				4. group commissioning	5. Cooperative housing
Decision making					

Choice and voice in preference making can thus be organised in five levels:
1. project developers build for the market
2. user influence through direct communication
3. participatory planning with future occupants
4. group-wise commissioning of individual houses
5. cooperative development for collective housing

Source: author

Figure 4.13 Dinner with neighbours in the public domain, both the result of and the condition for social sustainability
(Source: photo by author, 2010)

Figure 4.14 Social relations between neighbours chalked on the sidewalk, Gouda 2009, The Netherlands
(Source: photo by author)

This table indicates the major differences in preference making. The differences are quite remarkable and indicate a pattern. This motivates the design of a framework that combines the ladder of participation with new development of urban areas. In Table 4.6 the design strategies are combined with the new ladder of influence. It leads to a framework in which five steps can be positioned, ranging from choice to voice (Table 4.6).

3.2 Planning and management processes promoting social interaction

A relation was found between social interaction and the perception of the technical performance of houses in other projects (Bedir and Hasselaar, 2009). This result is based on interviews in low-energy housing projects in Denmark and Austria. Neighbours can help each other with control and maintenance problems, but mainly when this help does not interfere with a housing association or responsible body. The ability to help gives expert neighbours a positive identity, while at the same time keeps up the performance of the dwellings these expert neighbours feel responsible for (Figures 4.13, 4.14). Neighbourhood quality is very important for perceived housing quality. Positive perception of housing quality leads to better acceptance of the technology of the house, better ability to learn how to control systems and more willingness to keep up the maintenance level. This interconnectedness between the neighbourhood and the house is influenced by the social interactions. This connection is believed to work vice versa, meaning that poor housing quality and maintenance and lack of attention may lead to poor use of crucial technologies such as ventilation. There is no evidence for this, but interviews with occupants point at helpful neighbours who act as ambassador for neighbourhood quality. In projects where the occupants are left alone with questions about technologies, installations tend to be switched off (Hasselaar, 2008).

For different reasons, certain user groups feel limited in social interaction or restricted in learning how to use the systems properly. Technically oriented housing managers tend to feel awkward towards handling social processes and avoid direct personal communication and participatory management (Hasselaar, 2008). These two aspects indicate that in practice participatory planning cannot involve the majority of users, but only the socially active people who are motivated to invest time into community actions. The number of active and positive

people determines where a coin will flip: towards a positive perception of all in the community or with too small a number to counterbalance negative perceptions. One active and positive person, however, can make a difference, especially when this person is a 'super-promoter' (Vogelaar, 2009).

Each of the five levels of influence mentioned above refers to a planning process and each planning process seems to have impact on the design outcome. Design competitions produce mono-functional neighbourhoods with interesting urban design and reasonably little difference between social and commercial housing. Related to that, in shopping areas all over the Netherlands we find identical commercial activities that are dominated by large companies. While cooperative housing leads to mixed housing types, it is often in a court layout and with gradual changes from private to public spaces. Many projects experiment with innovations that reflect the values of the users, and for many years a major focus has been on social and ecological sustainability. Often these projects integrate work areas, sometimes even schools. The attention to the larger scale of the city atmosphere beyond the block and street is the dividing line between the different processes. The smaller the group, the better the involvement of all people and the more social cohesion can result from the process.

Examples of participatory processes on a scale larger than 40 to 70 dwellings (most), or 250 to 350 houses (Spijkenisse) are hard to find. The continuum of participation processes from individual houses to the city level and over time is a missing element: when the process stops after the design stage or even after the welcoming of all occupants in a neighbourhood, the social effects of the interactions during the participation process may get lost. The cutting-off of the participation process in Spijkenisse, after some ten years, indicates that bottom up and top down interaction must continue in order to keep the quality of social sustainability.

The social sustainability quality could be fostered by letting a community board organise the maintenance of green areas, for instance by projects to make 'edible parks', by organising festivals and periodic creative workshops to stimulate new initiatives and projects based on the involvement of creative and active people in the neighbourhood.

The effects of different participation procedures do not give clear differences in terms of output, participant satisfaction and optimum number of participants. In this respect we can consider the new participatory development policy of the city of Almere very important in demonstrating new ways of private commissioning.

Certain idealistic concepts of architects or housing associations may not work in practice without proper management for collective facilities in housing blocks: collective bike storage is not used because the occupants are afraid that the bikes will be stolen; playgrounds are avoided because of conflict between young and elderly people; flower gardens are sometimes destroyed; a common room for parties and meetings is not used because there is no neighbourhood committee to manage it, etc. The role of promoters is crucial; however they also need support, even with some small budgets to prevent out-of-private-pocket expenses.

4. Conclusions

4.1 The answers to the research questions

The problem definition indicates that the housing market is not open and neither government bodies nor user organisations are able to solve this problem. The study of literature and case

studies reveal that the present market for new dwellings hardly deals with consumer participation in general or with direct influence of buyers and renters in particular. The power and major role of project developers is the main barrier for a higher level of citizen influence. This power is generously handed over by local communities, who lack the capacity and financial means to present alternative planning approaches.

The first research question is: What is the role and position of users in new housing developments? Users are buyers who can scout the market for available dwellings. In new developments, ready-made designs are presented at fixed prices. The diversity is not high, but the design quality is good in the product range that is offered, apart for the imperfections at delivery. This means that buying a new house is not different from the mainstream market functions, except that a new house is selected from a catalogue. For renters, the influence is negligible, even the housing associations have little influence on the design and quality, because they are likely to take over the development after the design has been established in great detail.

The second research question is: What practical examples illustrate different levels of user participation (from choice to voice)? The practical examples of different ways of commissioning and participation are few in relation to the number of total houses produced, but many in terms of inspiring examples of planning procedures for new working/living places. Each project reveals many interesting motives for preference making and different levels of user participation. The projects have their own identity, based on the history, the problems they faced and the people involved. This varied performance makes it seemingly impossible to define a framework and to discover certain strategies. However, when more cases are reviewed and studied, a clear distinction in each context of participation becomes visible. On the basis of these varied examples five levels of participation can be identified for new housing developments: 1. developing for the market, 2. level communication, 3. participatory planning, 4. group commissioning, and 5. cooperative housing. Group commissioning and cooperative housing are now in focus, being stimulated by the central government and being organised by local communities such as Almere and The Hague. Participatory planning is still a scarce phenomenon in new developments and level communication seems realised only in small communities and for small projects. The major role is still for the developers.

The third research question is: How can users have more influence on meeting user preferences? There is not one preferred strategy, but to know what occupants want and to give users the opportunity to exert their experience can be achieved in many ways. Direct communication and pro-active neighbourhood interaction will have an impact on the social quality of a neighbourhood. This means that personal involvement is important, for instance commissioning by groups or cooperative development by collectives (Figure 4.15). Participation procedures have a difficult position: the procedure requires that one party initiates and facilitates the process. Because this party is either the local community or the developer, this role is not core business and more important, the process is likely to stop after the design is ready. A joint facilitator paid by the future occupants provides a basis for a permanent process. However, process management cannot be taken over by professionals: this must be a bottom up movement, where a professional can stimulate initiatives and support contact between active citizens and local departments or the authorities.

The concept that was presented in the introduction was: participatory planning provides better plans, better social sustainability and quality perception of the neighbourhood and technologies that are better accepted and used. The study is not an intervention study, meaning

Figure 4.15 Creative discussion about items and actions for tenant involvement, Amersfoort, 2010
(Source: photo by author, 2010)

Figure 4.16 Gradual transition between private garden, semi-public collective garden and public area, Culemborg
(Source: photo by author, 2008)

that it is not possible to evaluate effects of cases with and without direct participation. But the level of interaction is clearly different, as is the focus of developers on user quality as different from market value. We can conclude that participatory planning results in plans that occupants want and feel very happy with. The interaction with the community is likely to be larger than in commercial developments, at least the ambition to make a vital (socially sustainable) community is higher. Identity and 'ownership' of the environment is a key to positive perception and good caretaking. We can rationalise these effects, however the effects were not measured and cannot be validated.

4.2 The conditions and benefits of participatory planning processes

New strategies for preference making

The design and implementation of cooperative developments have shown an interactive process between the municipality and future inhabitants, and is often supported by a social housing association, that acts as developer and property manager in the user phase. The involvement of a housing association is the condition for a mix of social rented and owner-occupied dwellings, without distinction in social interaction or status. Environmental awareness of all inhabitants is a key to the project's success. The cooperatives achieve this by providing a continuous supply of information and through encouraging joint responsibility. Work places and even a school (as in De Refter, Ubbergen) are often integrated in the area of the cooperative. Housing is supplied for different age groups and different income levels. High quality semi-public (communal) spaces are preferred over private gardens. Parking is located at the periphery and access roads to the dwellings are for pedestrians and bikes mainly. Permeable pavements and urban water systems (living machine) are examples of sustainable quality. New occupants need to support the performance level, but mainly the collective services such as the laundry room, water treatment, parking location, garbage disposal. Besides these spatial elements that seem exclusive effects of preference making in collective developments, in practice, traditional bottlenecks for people's participation in design shouldn't be ignored. For instance, an architectural design competition is usually presented as a barrier for participation.

However there are ways to overcome this. By starting the participation procedure before the contest, by discussing the criteria for the architectural competition and the evaluation criteria for the jury, users can co-organise the contest. Users can take a position on the jury. After the architect has been selected and starts working on the plans, the participants may become team partners.

Furthermore, the cases indicate clearly that a design process can be an instrument for creating social sustainability, through collective maintenance and management of social processes that make interaction a pleasure to be involved in. Certain requirements must be met, for instance top down and bottom up facilitation must be connected and the process must not stop after the design stage. Continuation in the maintenance phase is essential. This leads to a logical recommendation: in projects that are delivered without user participation, it is possible to support social sustainability by cooperation or giving power to the users on the maintenance policy and execution. The users, who continue active involvement in the user or maintenance phase of estate development, seem to be more motivated to understand and use innovative systems and know more about maintenance tasks. This active attitude is important for achieving good performance of, for instance, energy efficient ventilation systems.

Project developers can profit from participatory planning. A participatory decision making process will initially increase costs and will make the first steps of the project development process more complex. However, after this first investment, the benefits are usually rewarding, quality-wise as well as financially. Once the occupant-group(s) have been formed, their cooperation is almost guaranteed during the entire planning process, putting pressure to keep the total process short. Furthermore, the overall quality of the dwellings will usually be better because of more consumer influence. The energy performance is likely to be higher because the user behaviour component can be taken into account in the design of the HVAC (heating, ventilation and air conditioning) installations. What's more, a participatory decision making process will make local leaders stand out, will lead to more local initiatives and self realisation of ideas into plans. These bottom up processes can pave the road to better social identity and even to more social integration of relative outsiders in the neighbourhood after completion, and to better control and maintenance (Figure 4.16). It seems a matter of choice and preference: an anonymous neighbourhood or a vital community.

Certain conditions for participation must be met at the city community level. Major decisions by others including the local authorities that frustrate the planning should not be made during the participation procedure. Final decisions must be made within a short period after the planning phase and when dilemmas occur the procedure must not have an open end. Social housing associations operate in urban restructuring areas with a broad scope and are innovative process managers. Nowadays, the housing associations tend to give their role to project developers that are linked to them, and do not play a pro-active role toward participatory planning themselves. Nevertheless, housing associations could take a more important role and support bottom up cooperation and co-housing initiatives with their expertise. Many examples of such support are available (Het Groene Dak, Waterspin and Eva Lanxmeer).

All in all, the overall conclusion is: a participatory decision making process has good potential to result in a design that meets the future occupants' preferences with more guarantee than a product dominated approach. Participation will demand extra initial planning efforts but can reduce the financial risk of project developers. Supportive local authorities and housing associations are needed as conditions for the success of such bottom up initiatives.

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5. Possible Futures of Self-construction
Post-structural Reflections on Ten Years of Experimentation with (C)PC

Luuk Boelens[1] and Anne-Jo Visser[2]

Abstract

This chapter gives a post-structuralist vision on private, collective and participatory commissioning in the Dutch building industry. Private commissioning (PC) is a building method whereby the end-user is responsible for the building process itself; collective private commissioning (CPC) when this is done by a self-reliant group of residents, and participatory commissioning (PC) when the end-user is highly involved by the builder or project developer at an early stage. Although these building methods are regular elsewhere, in the Netherlands they represent only 10 percent of the total yearly production. However since the 1990s several reports have concluded that (C)PC could be less expensive, be realised more quickly, meet the wishes of consumers better, improve the architectural standard and strengthen social cohesion. Therefore since 2000 official Dutch policy has been aimed at strengthening (C)PC in the Dutch building industry. Nevertheless we observe that the current political and policy programmes impede (C)PC, rather than strengthen it. Since 1995 the share of (C)PC in Dutch building production has fallen from 17 to 10 percent. We argue that this is due to the fact that the policy programmes, objectives and ambitions, which were formulated from 2000 onwards, are still firmly based on a structuralist perspective. This is empirically supported by an evaluation survey executed by Utrecht University and TNO on behalf of the SEV (Housing Experiments Steering Group) and VEH (*Vereniging Eigen Huis*) that considers the (C)PC experiments carried out under their aegis in the last 15 years. In order to generate more revenue from (C)PC, especially with respect to the present building crisis in the Netherlands, we recommend the adoption of a more focused and post-structuralist perspective. This could be in closer keeping with the opportunities that have been identified empirically — that these forms of commissioning potentially provide for an upgraded and more sustainable housing stock in the Netherlands. Instead of a primarily inside-out approach, a more emphatic change to an outside-in approach is needed in order to give a sustainable perspective to self-organised housing.

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1. Setting the scene

We will first put the theme of this book — the involvement of residents in the developing and building of residential places — in a wider perspective. Until the early twentieth century, and even until midway through the century, residents building their own home, either individually or collectively, was very much the norm both in the Netherlands and elsewhere. It was typical for residents to build homes for themselves or their family members on land that they owned, inherited or purchased, and to spend the rest of their lives there. It was only as the industrial age emerged that forms of collective private housing projects began to appear in the rapidly growing cities, with the construction of residential blocks and sometimes even entire districts which were then sold purely for profit, or rented — at first to the more well-off, and later to the new industrial class and urban immigrants (Casciato *et al*., 1980). There were occasional instances in which enlightened industrialists would take an interest in the living conditions of their workers, whether out of self-interest or reasons of philanthropy (Bollerey, 1977). However, this does not detract from the fact that — as far as can be ascertained from the first records — more than 90 percent of homes being built in the Netherlands were, until the end of the nineteenth century, private (whether their motives were speculative or not). Moreover, the practices of slumlords and the accompanying social and hygiene problems prompted the working class to get organised. They began to set up housing associations, whereby the participants could become eligible for a more acceptable new-built home, through a periodic payment. The first such association was '*De Vereeniging tot het verschaffen van geschikte woningen aan de arbeidende klasse*' in Arnhem in 1851, which was quickly followed by others in larger towns and cities elsewhere in the Netherlands.[3] However, the real boost for these initial forms of collective private commissioning came through financial support for organisations that became available under the terms of the *Housing Act* of 1901 as a result of the economic crisis of the final decades of the nineteenth century and the related workers' uprisings, accompanied by new electoral rights and the first-time entry of the Social Democratic Workers' Party into Dutch parliament. These forms of collective private commissioning were in fact the first examples of what we would now refer to as 'participatory budgeting' (Cymbalista, 2005). Independent housing associations, or housing corporations, were able to use public funds as they saw fit, according to their own ideologies or religious beliefs. So although the private sector still accounted for three-quarters of homes being built in the first half of the twentieth century nationally, more than 15 percent was by then the result of collective private commissioning (CBS, NWR); around 10 percent was built by the government at that time.

After the Second World War, however, the Netherlands was in a deprived state. Apart from the bombing of Rotterdam in 1940, the housing stock had been reduced by almost 100 000, and another 450 000 were damaged. In total, this amounted to more than 25 percent of the overall housing stock. The post-war government quickly designated the housing shortage 'public enemy number 1'. In light of the extent of the problem, the government decided to take a more forceful role in the process of reconstruction; in contrast to Belgium, for example, where the Christian Democrats continued to encourage the construction of homes by the private sector (Herck *et al.*, 2006) or West Germany where, after its experiences with the Nazis,

3 In English 'The Association for the provision of suitable housing to the working class'.

the central government was reluctant to flex its muscles. The location, construction and management of homes became now primarily a task for the national government and local authorities. The pre-war housing corporations were regarded as suitable executive organisations in this process. Although the first post-war governments described this as a temporary state of affairs, as a means of relieving the most pressing needs, the notion that this rebuilding policy was perhaps an ideal way of doing things began to take hold. After all, the government appeared to be highly effective in putting up around 80 000 to 100 000 homes a year, a level previously unheard of. However, as a result of the enormous scale of building work, more professional approach and new allocation rules, the corporations became consequently more and more alienated from their grass roots. The relationship shifted from one between a board and a shareholder-user to a purely businesslike one between a landlord and a tenant. Prospective tenants were hardly interested in a 'living culture', which led to the disappearance of the caring and ideological ethos of the housing corporations. In other words, the corporations were no longer building exclusively for their members — instead, they had become semi-public bodies 'providing a social service for the benefit of low-income groups in general' (Patrimonium, 1966, quoted in Kempen/Van Velzen, 1998). This meant that the corporations became firmly intertwined with the social policies of local authorities and, especially, the central government. And although that intertwining of government and corporate thinking was broken (at least in financial terms) during the new *'public housing policies in the 1990s'* (1989) by State Secretary Heerma, this did not restore the original ideological and collective ethos of the corporations (Klijn, 1995). In fact it was more the opposite. A 'privatisation operation' occurred, in which on the one hand, the government relinquished its public housing role and, on the other, the housing corporations were allowed to start operating more and more as private landlord parties, albeit under the supervision of the government.[4] Moreover, during this same period, more and more speculative project developers and entrepreneurial builders were appearing, resulting in a reduction in the proportion of homes built by collective self-contained organisations to around 17 percent in the mid 1990s, and 10 percent today (WoON, 2009). Next to that, the widespread land use restrictions by the government, the now customary residual financing and the associated complex planning regulations also encouraged these trends. Nowadays in the Netherlands, it seems to be quite normal for consumers to take a passive role and to find a home according to what is available on the market or what corporations allocate.

2. A post-structuralist perspective

Against this historical background, it seems almost anachronistic to advocate again more self-construction at the start of the new millennium (VROM 2001, motion by Van Gent/Duivesteijn). Because of our increasingly network-based society (Castells, 1996-1998), we have become more and more mobile, including on the housing market. Often, when there has been a change in the household, employment or income situation, or even when residents get bored of their house or their living conditions, they change, sell, buy or re-rent houses just

4 This is because it was assumed that the acute housing shortage would be resolved, because the standard of living had improved sharply and that a demand-oriented market would replace the supply-oriented one. In addition, the manageability of government expenditure on housing played an important role.

like any other luxury items. Sometimes, and more often in neo-liberal times, residents even change houses using only speculative means. On the other hand, in the very same network society and its associated individualisation and social fragmentation, scholars also notice an increasing need for a renewed collective self-esteem, and a greater need of people to link with their surroundings (Dowding *et al*., 2000). New types of collective self-construction or even new types of cooperation meet this demand (Curl, 2010). Moreover it is assumed that these forms of collective self-construction could be built more quickly and less expensively — without all the bureaucratic red tape — which would also be more in keeping with the increasingly individual wishes of housing consumers thus leading to improvements in the quality of architectural design (Kuenzli & Lengkeek, 2004). Private and/or collective private commissioning would better resemble a more plural, self-organised and bottom up, multifaceted society.

This argument becomes more fundamental and paradoxical if we place it in a post-structuralist perspective. How could a national government develop effective and sustainable top down policies in order to stimulate bottom up initiatives? Exemption from regulations, promoting experiments, additional subsidies and financial budgets have proven not to be sufficient to turn around the continuous declining share of (C)PC in the Dutch building industry. This raises the question: could this have something to do with the predominant structuralist views of the Dutch government. For structuralists the seemingly chaotic, complex and unpredictable character of social life is something of an illusion. Beneath the visible levels of perplexity of daily life there are 'hidden generative mechanisms'. These 'generative mechanisms' are ordered, organised and patterned by a limited number of elements; structured by specific driving forces. The human subject is of little consequence; meanings and actions do not arise from individuals but from the 'generative mechanisms' which underlie social formations. Analysing and understanding these underlying, hidden 'generative mechanisms' would therefore be sufficient to intervene in, order and structure society accordingly (see for example Smith 2001). And this is exactly what Dutch governments, urbanists and planners did in the post-war era. 'Survey before plan' is an exemplary expression of such a structuralist approach, as the modernist partitioning of various social issues in problems or departments of housing, employment, traffic and amenities, or the promotion of (C)PC in specific neighbourhoods, with marked overall financial resources and supportive measures.

In contrast to the structuralists, post-structuralists assume that the current network reality is much more complex and fragmented, consisting of random, uncertain and unexpected interrelationships. They assert that the structuralists' propositions regarding causal links between rationalised causes and their mostly generalised solutions are no longer valid (Foucault, 1968, 1975; Deleuze and Guattari, 1980; Latour, 1997; Belsey 2002, and others). Rather post-structuralists assume that it is better to analyse the links 'on the surface', the actors and their networks, in order to deal with the specific and context-dependent co-evolutionary developments and transitions that take place in a certain case. This way of thinking has not only become established in the social (Sanderson, 1990; Hodgson, 1993), economic (Berg *et al*., 2000; Boschma and Frenken, 2006) and managerial sciences (Teisman *et al*., 2009), but also in the geographic and spatial sciences (Thrift 1996, Doel 1999, Massey 2005). A crucial factor here is that space is no longer a phenomenon perceived as a platform on which various activities like living, working, playing, gathering etc., take place, but rather as something that is comprehensively related to us and to our actions (Graham and Healey, 1999). Space and all the transitions that take place within it are therefore fundamentally open and continuously

undergoing changes in countless heterogeneous actor networks: human and non-human subjects, institutional contexts, regulations, available resources, path dependencies etc. (Murdoch, 2006). Governments (at which ever level), like urbanists and planners only represent some of the actors and are generally not the principal ones.

Returning to private, collective and participatory commissioning, from the post-structuralist point of view there is need to completely reorient the policies regarding (C)PC. Instead of analysing the needs and expected effects of (C)PC — its general position in society, its goals and proposals within the profession itself (in the Netherlands mostly within the comfort zones of governments and project developers, with or without participatory planning) — an 'outside-in' approach is needed. With this approach, the previously mentioned human and non-human subjects, relevant actors, factors and institutional settings of (C)PC are considered in their specific co-evolutionary and evolutionary networks (Boelens, 2009; Boonstra and Boelens, 2010). These post-structural incentives require a different endeavour and ambition on the part of individual and collective self-construction housing than is currently the case. Because at present, the process by which individuals or collectives build their own home is led by the professional field or the government: inside-out. It was the national government who decided in 2000 — after various professional expert reports — to strive for one-third (C)PC in the newly built housing programmes for 2005 and onwards. It was local governments, who additionally decided, where those (C)PCs should be built and in which form and/or (financial) categories. Furthermore, the government together with professional consultancy firms and/or housing corporations initiated various participatory processes which in turn included some people, but excluded others. Individual or collective initiatives, which popped up by themselves, proved much harder to be implemented; sometimes they were even ignored or considered strange with regard to the regular path dependencies of governments. Take for instance the squatting initiatives in the inner city areas, the free zones in the brownfields of the Randstad or even initiatives of elderly people to develop 'integrated care communities' in order to secure independent living as long as possible. We will return to this later, relating it to the question of the possible future of this kind of cooperative building. But first we will evaluate the formal, inside-out governmental approach to (C)PC, its goals and objectives, in order to develop some recommendations for its possible future.

3. Evaluation of ten years' experiments

This evaluation was carried out in the spring of 2010 by a partnership of the Utrecht University, department Geosciences and TNO (UU/TNO 2010), on behalf of the Housing Experiments Steering Group (SEV) and *Vereniging Eigen Huis* (VEH). At the heart of the evaluation were almost 60 projects with which the SEV has carried out experiments through the years. It was therefore aimed at specifically those experiments, which are not representative of all forms of individual and collective self-construction in the Netherlands. At the same time, it also examined five more or less structuralist suppositions on which individual and collective self-construction were formerly based; that is (C)PC was expected:

1. to be less expensive;
2. to be realised more quickly;
3. to meet the wishes of consumers better;

4. to improve the architectural standard; and
5. to strengthen social cohesion.

The evaluation tested whether the above structuralist goals were attained.

3.1 The experiments and definition of terms

Partly as an elaboration and partly as an extension to the highly ambitious aim in the *Mensen, Wensen, Wonen* (People, their Wishes, Housing) memorandum of the Dutch government in 2001, the SEV initiated or supervised 19 experiments involving private commissioning from 1995 and onwards at locations in the Netherlands where self-construction was not something that happened automatically. Most of these locations were in the Randstad or in the western part of the country, where land restrictions, shortage of plots and the need to build massive housing programmes were very high. However, after several years of experimentation, there were also ever increasing demands among groups of residents seeking to build homes together. This was prompted by ideals like ecological sustainability, by the elderly who wanted to continue living independently as long as possible, or by joint needs, such as parents of children with a disability. In policy terms, they were referred to as collective private commissioning (CPC). No fewer than 32 experiments involving the supervision of the SEV were carried out, predominantly in the Randstad region and the central Netherlands. Nevertheless, these two forms of commissioning — private commissioning and collective private commissioning — did not appear to meet the target of one-third of homes built in the Netherlands. The SEV therefore introduced a third form of commissioning: participatory commissioning. The underlying idea was that the culture in the Netherlands — specifically with regard to construction — is not one of self-building. Yet there is recognition that people should have a greater say in how housing is built. It was for this reason that an intermediate form was created, between consumer-oriented building, private commissioning and collective private commissioning. In the case of participatory commissioning, it was assumed that professional parties like housing corporations or developers would continue to bear the greatest financial risks, but that for the purpose of guaranteeing sufficient demand they would give potential future residents a much greater say in the process and the design of the homes and the surrounding areas. The SEV introduced seven more experiments under this concept, the largest of which was the competition in the Homerus district in Almere (Table 5.1, Figure 5.1).

3.2 Initial assessment and research structure

Initial desk research and first interviews in relation to these experiments quickly revealed that the distinction according to self-build (private, collective and participating) was not as clear-cut in practice as in theory. In some cases, opinions actually differed among the various parties involved. Some regarded the experiments from the point of view of a private party, others as a collective private party or from the perspective of the local government (UU/TNO 2010). [5] For exactly this reason, it was not always clear who launched the original initiative, not least because activities were often taken over by one party from another, or because plans sometimes became part of a larger experiment. In terms of post-structural actor-network theory, the focal actors changed a lot, especially in the initial phase.

5 Unless formulated otherwise, the statements in this section are based on the previously mentioned evaluation research by Utrecht University and TNO.

Table 5.1 Matrix with definitions of private commissioning, collective private commissioning, and participatory commissioning

Term:	Explanation:
Private commissioning	Private commissioning is a building method whereby one or more private parties acquire the piece of land or pieces of land and determine themselves with which parties they wish to construct their home or homes, for their own use.
Collective private commissioning	A form of commissioning whereby a collective of like-minded private parties acquire the piece of land or pieces of land and jointly decide how, and with which parties, the homes, private spaces and sometimes even public spaces are to be laid out and constructed.
Participatory commissioning	A form of commissioning whereby the end-user is involved by the initiating party (often a developer or corporation) at an early stage in order for them to make known their preferences regarding process, the design of the home and surroundings and construction.

Source: SEV / Utrecht University / TNO, 2010

At the same time, it also became clear at first glance that there was little proof to support the process becoming faster or even cheaper, because of a reduction in the number of parties involved due to the removal of an intermediate layer of developers and real estate agents. On the contrary, there was in most cases a correspondingly rapid, and sometimes additional, proliferation of building, supervision and consultancy firms. In certain cases even separate (quasi)governmental organisations were set up in order to streamline the process. The design and building processes of both collective private commissioning and private commissioning were, partly as a result of this, organised in very different ways. It varied from the appointment of one architect and one contractor for the whole project to separate commissioners using their own architect and their own contractor for each building, with an urban planner often acting as supervisor in the latter case. However, there were also intermediate forms, such as the development of a number of basic options from which residents were able to choose: a building shell or a common design for the outer wall and an individual design for the interior layout. And as mentioned before, governments could hardly deal with initiatives which arose from within society itself. Those self-initiating projects were ignored, neglected, or at best considered as experiments ‘parked’ on new-built locations. Moreover, land ownership was not a decisive factor as private commissioning, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning occur on local authority land, land belonging to a project developer or land that the end-users themselves have purchased.

It also became clear that the reasons to start-up a (C)PC were extremely different. Mostly (local) authorities opted for (C)PC when they wanted to meet the wishes of residents more directly in order to bind them more closely to the area or to create a greater level of architectural variation, diversity and even vitality as a means of improving the quality of the district. This is essentially different from the motives of end-users to start-up a (C)PC. They were more interested in creating their optimum dream house or in living with people with whom they have something in common. Sometimes, it was a lack of homes (on the market) meeting the re-

Figure 5.1 Forms of commissioning and overview of the SEV experiments (Source: SEV, editing by Utrecht University / TNO, 2010, redrawn by John Steenbergen)

quirements of the end-users that was the reason for choosing self-construction, while in other cases it was seen as an opportunity to build projects with friends on a more social, ecologic or sustainable basis. Another frequently heard argument was to develop a countervailing power to local authority plans, which were considered inadequate or even contrary to the needs of the specific group or association.

Next to that the motives of the other involved parties — such as financiers, project-developers or housing corporations — also show wide variations. Housing corporations often chose (C)PC in order to improve the social structure, to involve tenants more closely with the area where they live, or to build more affordable homes. This may be because of their ideological backgrounds or simply to experiment in order to jolt their own organisation. Additionally, there were various groups of developers and supervising and consulting firms who saw the market for (C)PC as being possibly lucrative. Private, collective private and participatory commissioning are more and more regarded by them as an alternative to the present day financial, building crises, based on purely market or economic reasons. (C)PC seems to attract the wealthier, higher income households, with sufficient financial means of their own and therefore less dependent on the present day relatively more restricted bank loans.

Finally, the initial exploration also provided a greater understanding of the self-builder target group. A representative survey of 16 experiments had already shown that the private commissioning and collective private commissioning group are composed of a specific part of society (*EnquêteBewoners Nieuwe Woningen*, 2007). Self-builders are more inclined to construct a single-family dwelling and an owner-occupied house, and will often do so in a sustainable way. There are also not many first-time buyers/tenants among self-builders, while families with children are strongly over-represented. Self-builders are often middle-aged, in the 45 to 64 year age range. One notable aspect, finally, is the level of education: three out of every four self-builders have a university degree or equivalent, compared with around 40 percent of the occupants of new-built homes. In spite of this, new groups are also emerging, such as the do-it-yourself homes by starters and collective private commissioning involving the elderly that is causing these target groups to expand.

In light of this variation in type of motives behind (C)PC, as well as the diversity of target groups, a further selection was made whereby the residents and end-users were explicitly asked in a survey about their experiences with and results of self-build, based on six criteria. These related to the type of self-build, the project scale, the initiator, the regional location, the date of completion, and the degree to which the projects concerned new-built or regeneration. At the same time, just over 25 pre-structured in-depth interviews were held for a still smaller selection, involving local authorities, housing associations, supervisors, builders and other relevant parties, which dealt primarily with the processes, institutional frameworks, costs and qualities highlighted by the experiment. On the basis of these interviews, it was ultimately possible to come to the following conclusions in relation to the supposed ambitions mentioned above.

Box 5.1-5.5 Five (C)PC projects up close

Box 5.1 Het Groene Dak Utrecht 1989-1993

Het Groene Dak Utrecht is a collective private commissioning project with 66 homes, a common inner garden and a collective community centre. The result of a personal dream after the nuclear disaster in Chernobyl (1986), this collective with ecologic and autarkic ambitions of a self-sufficient community, expanded in the course of a few years to more than 80 members. Remarkably, the local authorities allocated a location to this green initiative in the immediate vicinity of a motorway in Utrecht. The financing was made possible thanks to a large additional environmental grant, and through extra membership fees for the community centre. Even now, the common inner garden is the setting for a great deal of volunteer work. The project is very much a case of 'granted experimentation'. Without a firm and steady initiator and help from the local authority and the Portaal housing corporation, it would never have gotten off the ground. What it has done, however, is to create a sustainable neighbourhood, not only in environmental, but also in social terms. Original social projects are still evolving, in an effective self-reliant management and a seemingly stable community. Although we have not done representative social research, we have indications that a socially sustainable community has been built. After 17 years about 60 percent of the original participants still live there, with a waiting list for new members. Moreover even some of the second generation residents, born and raised in the neighbourhood, are eager to come back after their university studies to start their own families.

Figure 5.2 Het Groene Dak Utrecht
Source: Photo taken by Joost Brouwers

Box 5.2 De Groene Marke Zutphen 1991-1996

De Groene Marke is a collective private commissioning project with 50 homes, a communal garden and the *Middenhuis* (community centre). It started with the setting up of a cooperative residents' association. With an ineffectual local authority that was unable to decide on a location, the group thinned to just two members. But after a choice of location had been made, and financial support from the Hanzewonen housing corporation had been obtained, the project quickly gathered speed. The cost-price of the project was above average, but then again it was completed without a grant. Here, too, a number of imaginative financial solutions were found, such as a reduced price for the land for the communal garden, the issuing of bonds for financing the *Middenhuis*, volunteer work, contributions by residents and rent. In addition, this was also very much an experimental project that was only possible through the financial and technical guarantees made by the housing association, and the determination of the original initiators.

Figure 5.3 De Groene Marke Zutphen
Source: Photo taken by Joost Brouwers

Box 5.3 Kwarteel, Culemborg 1994/1999-2003

Kwarteel Culemborg is a collective private commissioning project with 24 homes in *ZuidCulemborg* (Culemborg South) that was initiated by a residents' association that was initiated by ten well-educated people, all over the age of 55 (who had known each other from their student days). The aim was to create a social and spatial living environment that would allow them to continue to live independently in their own homes for as long as possible. Initially this group looked at several municipalities in the central part of the Netherlands as sites to realise their vision, but were met without success. Like the two cases described before, this was an example whereby a group of self-initiating residents were confronted with the constraints of path-dependent governments. Therefore some of the initiators backed out, disappointed. Nevertheless the remaining initiators eventually found a possible location in Culemborg, within the ecological EVA Lanxmeer district, which was due to be set up and open for further experiments. Moreover they managed to find new partners, although every member was required to contribute € 5 000 (originally fl 10 000) towards the project. This resulted in a strong level of commitment in advance, at least financially if not socially. In spite of the decision to employ relatively inexperienced architects, the process went smoothly. The most significant bottleneck was that during the run-up to the building work, not all of the 24 apartments in the design had been sold. As a result, De Regie was replaced as the partner by De Principaal, the developer for the housing corporation De Key, given that they were also able to provide financial guarantees.

Figure 5.4 Kwarteel Culemborg
Source: Photo taken by Joost Brouwers

Box 5.4 Waterrijk, Woerden 2004-2010

Waterrijk Woerden is a collective private commissioning project, strongly supported by the government, located in the expansion district in south-east Woerden. Several private commissioning and collective private commissioning experiments have been carried out, behind which the driving force was the responsible city alderman. In addition, the province made a maximum of € 50 000 available for each (C)PC project. However, the ambition was largely driven by a desire to achieve greater architectonic diversity. The plan drawn up by the architecture office West 8 has very rigid requirements with regard to the appearance of the canal houses, and includes a solution for parking spaces inside the residential block. According to those principles, amongst others, the *Inariehof* was developed by a local developer Heijwaal between 2005 and 2009. This approach can be described as an elevated form of 'catalogue building' (in which the owner of a plot of land composes their house according to their wishes using a catalogue). The building firm Nijhuis Bouw has developed two other projects — *Kadewoningen*, largely a private commissioning project, and the *Trentowonen* collective private/participatory project. The latter is a much more sophisticated concept of consumer-oriented construction, in which the individual housing consumer has a large choice of design and construction elements, although they are prefabricated and assembled on site. It consisted of seven development stages, from 'dreaming' to 'completion', which nevertheless did not proceed smoothly as a result of too many experiments being carried out at once. As a result the Utrecht branch of Nijhuis Bouw collapsed because of this project.

Figure 5.5 Waterrijk Woerden
Source: Photo taken by Joost Brouwers

Box 5.5 Velve Lindenhof, Enschede 2006-2010

In a deprived neighbourhood district *Velve Lindenhof* in Enchede, five rental homes have been completed by the De Woonplaats housing corporation, using the latest form of participatory commissioning. From the beginning, the wishes of potential tenants played a major part with regard to the layout of the district, and how they envisaged the quality of life there. From 2008 on the potential tenants were selected, according to their social and rental history. However, the project was stopped halfway through, for a period of six months — the wishes of the residents were too high and not compatible with the pre-conditions. After the break, it was decided to reduce the surface area on which building would take place, but the undertakings with regard to the level of luxury services (atrium, bay window, extra bathroom facilities) remained. Because of the delays in the process and the cold winter of 2009/2010, the project was only completed recently. As far as the future residents were concerned, it was 'a bit much to spend almost three years making choices', although others very much appreciated it and described it as 'playing with someone else's money'.

Figure 5.6 Velve Lindenhof in Enchede
Source: Photo taken by Joost Brouwers

3.3 The costs

The research that has been carried out does not provide a basis for stating that, regarding development costs, (C)PC is less expensive than regular building methods, either in the private or public sector. In fact, it appears to show the opposite.[6] More or less all the (C)PC projects have received an additional grant from the government of one kind or another, or have had their loss-making elements covered by the government or a housing corporation. This was sometimes due to ecological or energy-related objectives, the desire to promote alternative building methods (such as wood-frame construction or building above a protected water catchment area), or the previously mentioned personal motives, aimed at encouraging private commissioning itself. We also note, in general terms, that possible savings resulting from a more direct relationship between the consumer and the builders are often negated (in part, at least) by the need to hire process supervisors or consultants. As already mentioned, the number of parties involved with (C)PC is in many cases not lower and sometimes even higher. Moreover, it appears that any savings that are achieved are often used by the consumer/end-user to enhance the quality of the house itself (more luxurious fittings, better-quality materials, larger rooms, or provisions that will make it easier to enlarge the home at a later stage, etc.). People often push their finances to the limit and an additional round of cutbacks is usually needed in order to ensure the project's completion. This applies not just to the homes themselves, but also to the surroundings (inner gardens, community centres, etc.). However, this also results in housing projects which achieve a greater market value, as highlighted by, among other things, the relatively low turnover of residents, the waiting lists for available homes and the higher asking prices (for sale purposes) in comparison to other homes in the same area.[7]

This is in line with the quick scan carried out in 2006 by the Stec Group, in which they observed that the ultimate housing value of the eleven private commissioning and collective private commissioning projects they analysed was 20 to 40 percent higher than the original construction cost (SEV/StecGroep 2006). This additional value eventually comes to benefit the end-users of collective private commissioning, while in the event that it is rented or sold later during the development or construction of the project it is the housing corporation or project developers who gain. Moreover most residents seem not to be aware of the added value or they do not care, because they have realised their dream house that they do not intend to leave or sell.

Nevertheless, in none of these cases were the financial risks associated with (C)PC borne fully by the commissioning parties/end-users. Often, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects in particular received financial guarantees and even support from housing associations and developers, to compensate for the risk of unsold dwellings or apartments. The potential tenants on the *Velve Lindenhof* participatory commissioning project in Enschede were ultimately not responsible for any risks either. Such risks were shifted onto the shoulders of the housing association (which led in this case to a standstill of the process for about six months). At the same time, the local authorities concerned often covered

6 Referring to the five specified cases, but also backed up by the inquiries in the 16 experiments and the initial studies of the 60 SEV-experiments.

7 http://www.funda.nl, http://www.jaap.nl (analysed April 2010).

Table 5.2: Overview of a number of SEV cases

	Utrecht Groene Dak	Zutphen Groene Marke	Culemborg Kwarteel	Woerden Inariehof	Enschede Lindenhof
Number of homes					
Social sector, rental	40	14			5
Owner-occupied home, with government financial support	11	19			
Non-subsidised	15	17		48	
Apartments			24	4	
TOTAL	66	50	24	52	5
Average usable floor space, in m²	97.5	-	155	192.2	-
Average surface area, in m²					
Areas built on	40.5	-	700	71.3	-
Areas not built on	-	-	-	62.7	-
Communal garden	-	20	24.8		
TOTAL	157.6	196.9	-	134	-
Particulars	Community centre	*Middenhuis* 300m²	Services for the elderly	Indoor car parking	Wishes of rental tenants taken into account
Average costs of homes	In guilders	In guilders	In euros	In euros	In euros
Rental homes					
Costs of land	-	21,475			3,228
Building costs	131,058	121,084			167,800
Additional costs	-	-			8,900
TOTAL	125,000	142,559			179,928
Initial rent/month	598	500			Not yet known
Owner-occupied homes, with government financial support					
Costs of land		32,414			
Building costs	131,058	129,205			
Additional costs					
TOTAL	142,045	161,619			
Non-subsidised /apartments					
Costs of land		73,500	52,206	113,635	
Building costs	131,058	165,668	172,054	202,760	
Additional costs		51,280	22,009	30,000	
TOTAL	174,180	290,448	246,269	346,395	

Extra costs (amenities/garden, etc.)	-	-	24,730		
Average grant per home	11,690	-	11,812	-	2,500
	In euros	In euros	In euros	In euros	In euros
Approximate current average market value	300,000	240,000	500,000	n.a. yet	n.a. yet
Approximate market value of other homes in the area					
Asking price on funda.nl/jaap.nl (April 2010)	265,000 (single-family dwelling, 4 rooms, 82/111)	179,000 (single-family dwelling, 3 rooms, 96/214)	179,500 (apartment, 67m^2)	400,000 (semi-detached, 6 rooms, 150/870)	81,500 (flat, 2 rooms, 55 m^2)
	282,500 single-family dwelling, 4 rooms, 110/114)	209,000 single-family dwelling, 6 rooms, 130/224)	325,900 (apartment, 119 m^2)	295,000 (single-family dwelling, 6 rooms, 126/32)	164,000 (mansion, 120/180)
	275,000 (single-family dwelling, 5 rooms, 100/110)	224,500 (single-family dwelling, 5 rooms, 115/135)	499,000 (apartment, 150 m^2)		249,000 (semi-detached, 6 rooms, 160/320)

Source: SEV / Utrecht University / TNO, 2010

any risks they were facing in relation to collective self-construction by increasing the price of the land. This means that more or less every SEV experiment was 'semi self-construction': a greater say for the end-users, but without full responsibility for the associated financial risks. The risks were usually borne by regular building and private parties. In fact, the risks were higher because these parties were no longer in total control of the process or the end-result. The only risk reduction they faced was that the sale and take-up rate of the homes was often more securely guaranteed. Nevertheless, virtually every private party and corporation involved stated their wish to continue with the experiments — albeit on a slightly different scale or in an amended form — as they believed it offered the potential for serving a new market.

3.4 The pace of the building process

The evaluation gives also no reason to assume that (C)PC would be quicker than regular building projects. The suggestion that (C)PC would have enough support among the residents concerned from the very beginning, and therefore be less susceptible to delays in the issuing of permits, or during the detailing of the plans, has not been evidenced in any of the projects. Although it is difficult to make a direct comparison (after all, every project has its own specific circumstances), there is no reason to suggest the opposite either, especially in the case of

private commissioning. Private commissioning projects appear to proceed more quickly than collective private commissioning or participatory commissioning projects. Leaving aside one or two exceptions, of the private commissioning projects that were surveyed, the average length of time from beginning to completion was around two to three years. In the case of collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects, this is more likely to be three to five years.[8] At the same time, there is little difference between older and more recent projects. Often projects are started from scratch time and again, but then, especially with regard to (C)PC, each situation is unique in its own way. However, small projects are seemingly easier and therefore proceed more quickly.

The reason that collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects take somewhat longer is that the process of forming groups and aligning people's wishes, needs and ambitions, is difficult and time-consuming. In addition, participatory commissioning projects require a clear agreement on the course of action to be taken with the actual commissioning party, often a housing corporation or builder/project developer. Delays occur therefore during the preparatory phase and then often when the details of the plan are being worked out, or when the plots are being allocated, as well as during the inevitable round of savings required to compensate for the original ambitions and expectations being too high. However, in regard to the duration of the construction process, there is no real difference with regular building projects. A collective private commissioning project proceeds more smoothly if the group has been formed in advance, if they are aware of the issues related to building projects, or if a supervisory agency has been hired at an early stage. The latter is no guarantee of speeding up the process.

However, it should be stated in relation to this conclusion that the residents/end-users in collective private commissioning projects are involved in the project at an earlier stage (from as early as the first initiative and sometimes even before an exact programme, location or plan has been decided upon) than would be the case if they simply took up residence in the regular market. In this latter case, the 'preparatory' work is the task of the project developer, in the form of exploring requirements and locations, market and feasibility studies, etc. Some participants in collective private commissioning projects often assume that this has already been carried out, only to be disappointed or even withdraw when they realise how long it takes. On the other hand, some tenants, especially in the early collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects, were able to secure a preferential position and thereby avoid the long waiting lists for social housing.

3.5 Levels of satisfaction

From the survey, it appears that residents want a say in the design and layout of their homes in particular; this is followed by a wish to influence the surrounding area, and then the archi-

8 It is, incidentally, crucial what is measured here. The SEV experiments under review here have mostly been compared to similar buildings in the surrounding area. After all, the experiments often formed part of a larger project. In the research, a comparison was made of building and process times after the process of making the ground ready for construction had been completed. The entire period from the initial decision to build in the area in question, the conceptual development and permit procedure (as used by the NVB (association for developers and building companies)) was therefore largely ignored. Where that was not the case, collective private and participatory commissioning projects sometimes took longer than 10 to 12 years, as compared with the current average of 7.5 years, as calculated by the NVB.

Table 5.3: Overview of the process duration of the private commissioning, collective private commissioning, and participatory commissioning experiments

	Form	Dwellings	Date initiated	Completed	Duration
Reitdiep Groningen	Private C	21	2005	2007	2 years
Schutterstraat Delft	Private C	15	1997	1999	2 years
Volmarijnstraat Rotterdam	Private C	17	2000	2007	7 years
Villapark Waterrijk Woerden	Private C	24	2009	2011	2 years
Trento Wonen Waterrijk Woerden	Private C Collective	62	2003	2007	4 years
Meanderhof Zwolle	Collective	51	2003	2007	4 years
De Groene Marke Zutphen	Collective	50	1991	1996	5 years
Pakhuis Wilhelmina Amsterdam	Collective	98	1998	2003	5 years
Het Groene Dak Utrecht	Collective	66	1989	1993	4 years
Terbregse.nl Rotterdam	Collective	41	1999	2002	3 years
Driehuizerhof Nijmegen	Collective	3	2006	2008	2 years
Bieshof Bladel	Collective	9	2003	2006	3 years
Velve Lindenhof Enschede	Participatory C	5	2006	2010	4 years
Mi Akomo Di Color	Participatory C	38	2001	2006	5 years
Inariehof Waterrijk Woerden	Participatory C	54	2005	2009	4 years
Nieuw Leyden Leiden	Participatory C	124	1999	2009	10 years
De Tip Emmen	Participatory C	10	1997	2009	12 years

Source: Utrecht University / TNO, 2010

tecture and the façade. More than half of those asked stated that they would have preferred to have a greater say in relation to these aspects. Almost 60 percent of those involved with (C)PC projects said that they had experienced problems during the building process, while according to WoON 2009 the figure in the case of regular new-built projects is 22 percent. Problems generally occur with regard to the progress of the building work, the way in which additional tasks are carried out, and work that is not in keeping with the original plan. The construction industry has clearly not yet completely adapted itself to self-construction with its greater variation. The completion stage in the (C)PC case projects produced more problems than with regular new-built projects (72 percent, as opposed to 43 percent) as well. There were fewer problems with private commissioning parties, small and medium-sized projects and projects that were completed before 2001. Despite these difficulties, 80 percent of those surveyed still said they would advise family and friends to build their own home.

In general, people are highly satisfied with the end result. With an average score of 4.3 out of 5, their satisfaction levels with their homes are very high. This is also highlighted by the relatively low turnover of residents in (C)PC projects. Generally speaking, satisfaction is

greater among those in private commissioning projects than is the case with people involved with collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects. The average score of 4.9 out of 5 among private self-builders indicates that the vast majority of people in this group are extremely satisfied with their homes. Nevertheless, there is an important difference here. Satisfaction levels for collective private commissioning projects are often greater in relation to the surrounding area and less in relation to the façade and architectural merit, while in the case of private commissioning projects the reverse is more or less true. This group is also largely satisfied with the layout of their homes. This factor also scores highest for those in participatory commissioning projects.

3.6 Architectural appearance and variety

As may be deduced from the above, the architectural quality and the possibility to sell their home are not really important considerations for consumers/end-users, builders or developers in (C)PC projects. And although it is impossible to exclude the possibility of 'free riders', it is unusual for anyone to embark on a (C)PC project with the aim of creating an attractive street or in order to be able to quickly sell their home. In many cases, this is primarily the objective of the local authority, who sometimes attempts to 'enforce' variation through a visual quality plan or an urban planning supervisor. However, this is more likely to meet resistance from those involved with a successful and smoothly running (C)PC project, rather than helping or encouraging it.

This does not alter the fact that (C)PC projects often stand out in their respective neighbourhoods, or are perceived to do so by the local population. This does not always have to be visible in terms of the architectural quality, but is often expressed in how the houses and their surroundings are used, the organisation of the site, the management and sometimes the levels of energy consumption, management of waste flows, parking, etc. In other words, quality manifests itself in factors other than architecture.

As may also be inferred from Table 5.2, there are indications that the market value and saleability of (C)PC projects are greater than those in the immediate vicinity. This is sometimes because of the outdoor spaces, social aspects or general appearance, but often it is due to the higher quality and additional facilities in the homes themselves. However, the survey suggests that this is often not acknowledged by the owners, or at least, not as of yet.

3.7 Social cohesion

Finally, the assumption that (C)PC projects encourage social cohesion: this is certainly the case according to the results of the evolutionary questionnaire executed in each of the (C)PC projects. There is an emphatic link between projects of this kind and social cohesion; a link that is unmistakably stronger than the average shown in WoOn 2009. As expected, it is strongest in the case of collective private commissioning projects, which of course are initiated by the end-users themselves. But it is also a feature of the other two kinds of projects. There is the odd case in which the group existed before the start of the project, but in most instances the groups start to form only when the projects get underway. For the people involved, this adds value to the projects during the process, but even more so from the time that they take up residence in their new homes.

Social cohesion appears to be strongest where a communal inner garden is present, or other such communal amenities, outdoor spaces, etc. which are managed and maintained

Table 5.4 Overview of satisfaction levels in the case of private commissioning, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning experiments (on a scale from 1 to 5)

Satisfied with:	**Dwelling**	**Architectural quality**	**Neighbour-hood**	**Composition of population**
Form of commissioning				
Private commissioning	***4.6***	4.3	***4.4***	***4.2***
Collective private commissioning	***4.1***	3.8	4	3.8
Participatory commissioning	***4.4***	3.9	4.1	3.9
Size of project				
Small / medium (up to 50 homes)	***4.4***	***4.1***	***4.3***	4
Medium (21 to 50 homes)	***4.1***	***3.7***	3.9	3.8
Initiator				
User	4.3	3.8	4	3.7
Local authority	4.3	4	4.2	4.1
Third parties	4.1	4	4.1	3.9
Housing market position				
Depressed	***4.1***	***3.5***	3.7	4.1
Average	***4.2***	***4.1***	4.3	3.9
Overheated	***4.4***	***4***	4.2	3.7
Date of completion				
Early (< 2001)	4.1	***3.6***	3.9	3.8
Medium (2001-2005)	4.4	***4.1***	4.3	4
Late (> 2005)	4.3	***4***	4.1	3.9
Involved from which phase?				
From the first initiative	***4.5***	***4.1***	4.2	4
Later phase	***4.1***	***3.8***	4.1	3.8
After the building phase	***4.1***	***3.7***	3.8	3.8
TOTAL	***4.3***	***3.9***	4.1	3.9
Netherlands based on WoON 2009				
Self-builders	4.8		4.4	4
All households in the Netherlands	4.3		4.1	3.9

Numbers/italic in bold are significant

Source: Utrecht University, 2010

on a joint basis. In these circumstances the rate at which people move out and move in is extremely low, with around 60 to 70 percent of the original residents still living there twenty years after the completion of the project. In this respect, it seems that the decision to solve the problem of parking inside the block, with a view to maintaining architectural quality, as in the Woerden case, does not enhance social cohesion or discourage people from moving in or out.

According to the questionnaires, the claim regarding social cohesion works both ways. Where it is at its strongest during the project itself, it is often at its weakest with the rest of the neighbourhood or district. In other words and according to the residents questioned, there are some cases where (C)PC projects seem to be perceived as 'different' and 'gated'. Although openness is often guaranteed, some are still regarded as outsiders.

4. Self-construction reviewed and previewed

Looking at the results of this evaluation, self-construction (either participatory or collective) based on the former more or less structuralist and 'inside-out' ambitions are apparently not unequivocally positive. (C)PC projects are not always less costly and completed in a shorter period than regular construction projects — in fact, quite the reverse. At the same time, it appears, with the exception of private commissioning projects, that the average satisfaction levels of residents with regard to the end result may be high, but are not significantly different from those achieved in the regular construction market, according to WoON. Moreover, the ambition formulated by fellow professionals (Keunzli *et al*., 2004) or the government (motion by Van Gent/Duivesteijn 2000, VROM, 2001) to raise architectural quality and diversity through participatory and collective self-construction might be important for local authorities, but does not appear to have much impact on the people concerned, and in some cases even seems to serve as an impediment to the results that can be achieved through self-construction.[9] In spite of the determined efforts by and the support from the government in recent years, the 'inside-out objective' whereby around one-third of the nation's new buildings should be erected on the basis of participatory or collective self-construction by 2005, has not been attained. On the contrary; by the mid 1990s, some 17 percent of the total was realised by private commissioning, while it is now just over 10 percent (WoON 2009). Upon further examination, however, it seems that this is primarily attributable to the fact that peripheral regions like northern Friesland, north(-east) Groningen, Zeeland, south-east Limburg, etc., where self-construction was not unusual in the past, are facing a demographic decline. This suggests the causal links and motives behind people's behaviour are different from what was previously assumed in expert and government reports, and depend on other (cultural) motivations and circumstances.

This does not change the fact that self-construction — in particular forms of collective and participatory commissioning, especially those projects that include the management of the surrounding area — appears to be highly successful in stimulating social cohesion among the residents, their fondness for their homes, inclusion in the local environment, and therefore the low rate at which people move away. Forms of social cohesion of this kind are often directly re-

9 In relation to social cohesion and creating closer ties to the locality, for example.

lated to, or evolve to become, forms of sustainable, ecological and energy-efficient construction, whether of an innovative nature or not. At the same time, it seems that self-construction makes a direct contribution towards adding value to the existing or additional housing stock, even though this is not always the intended effect of those involved. In the case of collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning projects in particular, this relates not just to the home, but can also affect the wider and in some cases social living environment. The *Wallisblok* in Rotterdam, for example, as well as contributing to the value of the housing block, also has a positive impact on the management of the indoor spaces. In addition, it helps to improve the status of the surrounding neighbourhood and adds to the attractiveness of the city itself for starters and evolving households. Nevertheless, it is neither easy nor a formality to get these forms of (C)PC projects off the ground, while existing path dependencies, regulations, and institutional practices are often an impediment. This is highlighted by the fact that an initiative examined in this survey, which was launched by a group of well-to-do friends over the age of 60 for the development of a collective building project that would enable them all to live at home for as long as possible, was turned down by various local authorities, because the initiative did not fit in with their plans or their path-dependent, structuralist ways of doing things. Eventually it was realised in Culemborg, but also here more or less by chance, while the bottom up initiative of elderly people could be linked to an ecological experiment of the local authority. Similarly, the successful initiative in Rotterdam involving new home owners who have to renovate their houses by themselves has not been imitated anywhere else, with the exception of a few homes in The Hague and Arnhem. It seems that this initiative, too, is highly context sensitive.

Against this background, then, there is every reason to replace the more or less structuralist perspective that has so far been used in relation to self-construction with a post-structuralist, or better still, actor-relational one (Boelens, 2009). In other words, instead of using inside-out based objectives relating to the proportion of self-construction in the national building programme — costs, speed, or the diversity and appearance of the architecture — there is every reason to change over to a more outside-in oriented approach, in which a much greater emphasis is placed on using the motives of the relevant stakeholders and shareholders themselves as starting points and objectives. This refers not so much to the project developers or housing corporations, but primarily to the self-builders and other content creators. After all, it would seem that other non-governmental, creative civic and business initiatives, associations or forms of co-evolution (not necessarily only in the housing sector, but also in the fields of small economies, care and cure, energy, autarkic ecology, culture, and education, for example) could certainly be facilitated by means of (C)PC. Bringing about collective and participatory commissioning is therefore not the aim, but at best the outcome of spatial development. The same applies to the hoped-for proportion of self-construction in the total national building programme. There is no need for self-construction in itself, but in the right circumstances, and as long as it is adequately facilitated, it can make an important contribution to the quality of the housing stock and wider living environment. Moreover it could indeed better meet changing and increasingly specific and wide-ranging consumer preferences in a more and more plural society, when left to itself. (C)PC projects in this respect are the result of those self-organising processes, not a policy objective or aim in general.

More than simply promoting self-construction, a greater focus is needed on the institutional contexts, regulations and path dependencies or lock-ins that has a restrictive effect. Because

unlike in other countries, for instance Belgium, Germany, Denmark or some Scandinavian countries where governments, skills agencies and the construction industry seem to be more in tune with individual housing preferences, and unlike in the past when housing corporations seemed to have a much more direct link with their member-residents, such interaction seems to have largely disappeared during the recent post-war reconstruction period in the Netherlands. It is precisely because that period post-war reconstruction is now over (as the present building crisis finally shows) and society has become more empowered, plural and networked, that there is every reason to organise the trading conditions of the Dutch construction industry in a different manner. In more specific terms, this means that because of the expected increase in the number of one-person households and the ageing population, it is possible that the demand for more collective forms of housing will increase. Similarly, it is also possible that more sustainable and energy-efficient types of homes will become more popular as a result of the increasing burden on the environment and the average rise in energy prices. The same applies to the other previously mentioned 'cross-overs', with respect to ideology, culture, care, education etc. This means that (C)PC may take on an extra significance, in an innovative way, for the Dutch construction market; but not in an inside-out programmatic, economic or political sense, but in a more outside heterogeneous actor-relational manner. Obviously depending on the exact situation and the nature of the cases that may occur, in this sense more attention is needed in relation to the following:[10]

- to focus less on costs, process and architecture in (C)PC and more on cohesion and sustainability;
- to direct (C)PC towards restructuring existing stock, not just because the level of new-built will show a relative decline during the next few years, but also because sustainable options in existing areas are currently under-exploited;
- to direct attention much more at individual needs for that part of the market which, for social, care-related or communal lifestyles, lends itself by definition to collective and participatory commissioning;
- to look much more vigorously for other actor networks which until now have not been involved particularly closely with the building of homes (such as the care sector, education, energy, small and medium-sized enterprises and service industries like shopping and minor repairs services, childcare, etc.);
- to look for ways for new neighbourhood development associations or new cooperatives that can provide guarantees (including financial) for this kind of construction or building projects;[11]
- as an addition to that, to see whether new financing constructions are desirable in order to better divide the costs and the benefits of each project according to time and place; and
- to aim for a more cautious urban planning framework and building regulations in relation to self-construction than currently exists. From the evaluation, it appears that too much architectural and urban planning interference actually leads to more

10 For a more specific substantiation, see the previously mentioned research report by Utrecht University and TNO.

11 We would like to point out that this will probably be more complicated, now that the Brussels norm of 33 000 euros for social new-built is approaching. Nevertheless, such forms of neighbourhood-based cooperation would appear to be more and more inevitable.

constraints for real (C)PC and sometimes even to a decline of spatial quality in use or management, as well as to more delays in the process.

In this way, it may be possible to create an innovative, effective and sustainable future perspective for private commissioning, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning, alongside regular consumer practice.

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6. Collective Client Controlled Development of Space
Examples from an Amsterdam Practice

Hein de Haan[1]

Abstract

This chapter introduces several projects that the author has initiated and organised as designer and developer. The projects represent some of the recent practices to integrate inhabitants and users in the design process. Reflections on these different projects will be made, for example positioning the projects within the recent developments of housing, work space and facilities in Amsterdam (Figure 6.15), with recommendations for other self-managed development projects. The review of events and results is based on participants' observations and action oriented research.

1. Introduction

The Dutch housing market is moving from supply-orientation to client-orientation. Some consumers have found ways to gain more power and are becoming more critical and demanding more quality of their homes and neighbourhoods. This shift has come into sight due to the transition from quantity to quality in housing provision. Because people want more influence on the design of their living environment and on the programme in the surrounding areas with public space, work space and facilities, the local authorities, housing corporations, developers and dwellers have started to follow different strategies that could give more power to the clients. According to the projects that will be introduced in this chapter, this power leads to decision making by the users when they develop their own collective buildings with integrated living and working spaces.

By comparing new strategies with traditional development processes for new housing areas, the advantages and disadvantages of the current participatory practices can be highlighted. In the traditional planning system the local government provides building sites, infrastructure and facilities, and the developers build the housing stock to sell or rent. This normally

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leads to mono-functional residential areas with only some basic facilities like schools, shops, etc., which do not contribute to the formation of urban vitality. The paradox then appears between planning and implementation. On the one hand, the city has its *structuurplan* (structure plan) that defines functionally mixed areas with housing, working and public facilities, while on the other hand, the development process ends up with mainly mono-functional neighbourhoods. The reason for this result is that developers like housing corporations tend to develop mainly housing and not a complex mixed city. This has not been very well recognised as a problem, since the spatial quality of the newly built neighbourhoods is normally quite good. However, it is essential to consider the programmatic planning of the urban projects as well to improve the quality of the city. To reach such a goal, it is necessary to have alternative ways of getting people involved in the planning and construction process. This involvement leads in practice to more mixed activities.

Based on several experimental practices, the author defined collective client controlled development (CCCD). CCCD is similar to collective private commissioning, but to acknowledge the specific circumstances of the projects we use collective client controlled development, with emphasis on client control. CCCD follows a relatively simple strategy to produce complex programmes for neighbourhoods, and to provide tailor made designs that meet the demands of the residents. Furthermore, the housing and working spaces can be made more affordable and the financial risk for development can be made low. This will be explained in detail in this chapter, with the recommendation that creating affordable collective living environments with public facilities and working spaces for residents can be reached through participatory planning and design approaches.

2. Predecessors of collective client controlled development

In this section examples of the earlier practices of client oriented development are introduced. These projects represent the roots of the participatory planning and design approaches in the Netherlands since the 1980s.

2.1 Building for the neighbourhood: step by step urban renewal in the Dapperbuurt neighbourhood (1980 to 1990)

In the period of 'building for the neighbourhood', the author and his partners developed projects in direct contact with the future clients, communicating about the design of their new houses. This experience proved to be useful for the later CCCD projects. It was a special period in which the people involved in these projects, in the social rented sector, had much more influence on their living environment than the buyers on the private market. The step by step renewal of the Dapperbuurt neighbourhood was one of these projects, with the key characteristics as follows:

- a step by step renewal process to replace the old building fabric with new buildings;
- demands of the clients (known beforehand) were considered in the design;
- most people moved only once;
- houses and public facilities (schools, market) were kept in use during the process;
- the social infrastructure in the neighbourhood was protected;

- started with building instead of demolition, to keep up the good spirit in the neighbourhood;
- renovated and re-used existing buildings of good quality;
- made contact with the people that are about to be replaced;
- considered the people as partners in the process.

In this project, the residents had the power to influence the urban plan and the design of the building. For example, a group of elderly participants successfully changed the urban plan of their block to accommodate accessible housing around the elevator. The corner of the block needed to be higher than the urban plan allowed for, to make this possible (Figure 6.1). A delegation went to the city authorities and managed to get the urban plan changed. Making the model house at a scale of 1:1 was a very direct way to communicate the conditions of a dwelling that was not yet built. The participants could walk around in their future home, check the space for their furniture, visualise the way the doors opened, etc. Their comments resulted in changes in the design by the architect. The models were built for exceptional layout examples, while more common cases were discussed during an excursion to a housing project with similar typologies. Generally speaking, in social rental housing projects, it is not possible to work completely with tailor made solutions, however groups (like the elderly in the Dapperbuurt project) that ask for the same programme can easily be detected and special solutions can be provided for them.

2.2 Legalising squatted buildings: living and working in social housing- Levantkade 10, Eastern Docklands; Nieuw en Meer 1980

In the Eastern Docklands in Amsterdam a long period went by between the moving out of the harbour activities and new city development. The single story sheds, other vestiges and port operations were demolished early during this period. Urban 'nomads' took over the open spaces, and vacant buildings (offices and workshops) were squatted by people who were in

Clients in model house of scale 1:1
The group of elderly residents that lives in the corner around the elevator

Wijttenbachstraat: 80% of the clients known personally before the start of design, which gave them control over the development

Figure 6.1 Wijttenbachstraat – Dapperbuurt 1981 (Source: Hein de Haan)

urgent need of space. Many of these squatters were artists looking for studios. Levantkade 10 is a well known example of these legalised squatted buildings. The houses of Levantkade 10 had a flexible layout that enabled each unit to accommodate three different types of uses (Figure 6.2):

- three room apartments for one or two people (with one child);
- houses for two independently living people (with 2 addresses);
- houses with a big working space for an artist.

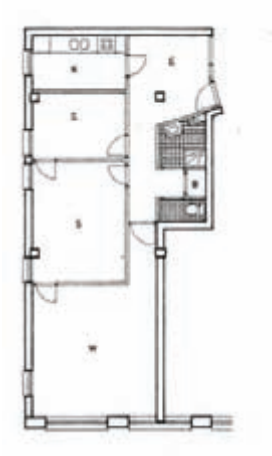
Designing for the legalised squatted buildings is always more complex than for normal housing. Due to the special demands of the target groups, space is needed for working or art production, and in many cases also for cafés and cultural activities. The life styles of these people and the way of cohabitation can fluctuate. For instance, when squatted houses become legalised, people begin to settle down and start families. In the past we designed following a programme that precisely worded the wishes of the clients and consisted primarily of a group-oriented layout. Because of the fast social changes within the group after legalisation (children born, for example), this layout soon became outdated. Creating a more flexible plan has solved such problems, so that the same unit can accommodate three different types of uses (see above). By small adaptations this design can easily follow the wishes of the first generation of users, without restricting the potential for the future.

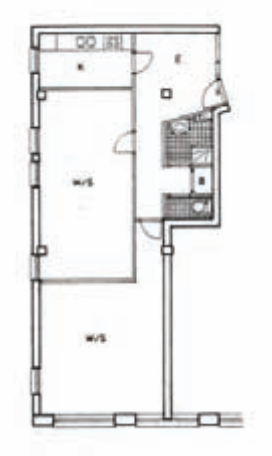
Other examples in Amsterdam are the legalisation of the Nieuw en Meer, Kloveniersburgwal 15-17-19, the Binnengasthuis-panden, Koevoet, Inktfabriek, SHB-gebouw, Wilhelmina, De Oceaan and in Leiden the building Bril. The case of Nieuw en Meer has also proved the possibilities for people to get involved in the functional transformation of existing urban areas. The buildings in this case were originally ammunition storage used by the Dutch Army. The squatters who were kicked out from the Conrad Straat storage buildings in the eastern part of the city centre took the first initiative to squat and use these buildings (1988), mainly for artist work spaces. They received permission from the Ministry of Defence to buy the peninsula where the buildings are situated. The city of Amsterdam intervened in the process and the result was that the artists could buy the buildings for 1 guilder (0.45 EUR) and sign a long-term lease contract with the city for the plots of land. The control over the settlement was organised by a respectable foundation that works together with a union of users. Because of the limited budget a large part of the construction was done by the users themselves. Designs were made to adapt the expansive spaces to accommodate working functions. For example, in order to subdivide the large spaces, extra stairs were placed outside the buildings (Figure 6.3).

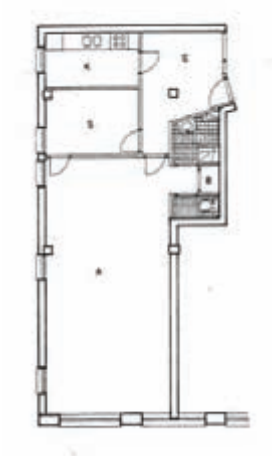
The positive experiences from the legalisation process are mainly related to working with a concept of a flexible layout that can be easily adapted to the individual wishes of the first generation of users and that can be easily changed over the years. This idea has become a basic principle in most of our CCCD projects.

3. Collective client controlled development (CCCD)

After these early forerunner practices of ‘building for the neighbourhood’ and the legalisation of squatted projects, this sections will introduce some of the more recent CCCD projects in which the author was involved.







3 room apartment
Typical dwelling unit: suitable for one (home working) dweller to maximum two cohabiting partners and one or two children.

1 large bed- or workroom
1 small (guest) bed- or workroom
1 kitchen
1 hall / dining room
1 sanitary room
1 house number
1 mailbox
1 doorbell
the bedrooms can be joined together into one large bedroom when the wall is constructed without electrical conduits

HAT G2
Atypical dwelling unit: suitable for two single residents.

2 equal-size living/bedrooms.
1 kitchen
1 hall/dining room
1 sanitary room
2 house numbers
2 mailboxes
2 doorbells

2 Rental contracts

Studio house
Atypical dwelling unit: suitable for one home working dweller.

1 small bedroom
1 studio space
1 kitchen
1 hall/dining room
1 sanitary room
1 house number
1 mailbox
1 doorbell
The plan presupposes sufficient height for the studio space.

1 Rental contract

Figure 6.2 Legalising squatted building: Levantkade 10 (Source: Hein de Haan)

Figure 6.3 Nieuw en Meer, central street between the converted ammunition stores (Source: Hein de Haan)

3.1 Project financing

Projects for collective clients can be characterised by:

- self-managed (cooperative) development;
- development by subscription.

In projects that are financed by the participants (for example Vrijburcht), people pay more and get more security following the different contracts during the preparation period of the project. First the entrance fee, later the financing of the preparation activities (to pay architects and advisors, and a part of the land price, etc.) and a fixed sum for the 'option-to-buy-contract'. The 'option-to-buy-contract' gives the participants the right to develop with the architect their individual houses and work spaces. Together, these three payments form about eight percent of the total price of the house and are considered as a payment in advance that enables the group to finance their development independent from banks or housing corporations. This eight percent covers all costs until the actual construction starts. Sometimes the banks that support this type of cooperative development may help the individual participants to finance this initial investment (for instance Rabobank Amsterdam). At the beginning of the building process the 'buy-and-build-contract' is signed with the building contractor (as in the case of Vrijburcht, in other cases this could be done with the supporting housing corporation). From the signing of the 'buy-and-build-contract', the development process follows the common rules of the Dutch building market.

In the case that the houses in the project are mainly social rented housing, the role of the housing corporation as the future owner of the building will be more significant. For instance, they will finance the development. This is a great relief because the clients (often artists) will lack the financial leverage on their own. However it is not always easy to keep the housing corporations as a partner within the CCCD format, because they may have other ideas about the programme than the group of participants. For instance the general experience of the rental department of the corporation with a certain housing type may be negative, while a participant has individual reasons to choose precisely that type.

3.2 The process and people involved

The whole process of CCCD projects could be defined according to the phases in which different groups of people involved take responsibility for various activities (Table 6.1).

a. the group

The group of participants emerges slowly from the joint individuals that started the project: the initiative group. The participants organise themselves in a foundation, union or cooperative. They elect a board that can make the necessary legal contracts, which is very often supported by professional consultants.

The participants can form workgroups to mobilise more people and to share tasks with the board. These workgroups can for instance deal with:

- financial issues;
- welcoming and introducing new participants;
- website, news and communication;
- sustainability, ICT, installations and high tech facilities in the new building;
- social events, such as parties and opening ceremonies;
- committees for the different facilities: theatre, guesthouse, garden, harbour, etc.

The central idea of all forms of CCCD projects is that the influence of the participants on the project — also in the case of social housing — is maximal.

b. the city authorities

On two different levels there will be contact between the participants and the city officials. On the first level the city will be the partner that represents urban planning and the provider of land. The positive results of the communication about the site can be included in a declaration of intention. To make a CCCD plan successful the urban plan needs to be flexible enough to adapt to the complex programmatic needs. Another possible barrier is the bureaucracy that follows strictly the traditional development procedures (for example in the case Steigereiland IJburg Amsterdam). On the second level the city will represent the laws and building regulations. The design should meet:

- the rules of the urban plan, the building rules (*Bouwbesluit*) including fire protection, energy saving and safety to get a building license;
- the rules of the companies that deliver energy, communications and water.

Since these laws and building regulations were designed for regular building activities, there will be necessary adaptations for implementing CCCD projects.

Of course the rules about safety and fire prevention should be maintained very strictly, but there should be an open door for every proposed activity that makes the urban programme more varied and complex.

c. the architect

The architect should be available and prepared to talk with all the participants about their special demands and possible solutions, as well as the programme and layout of the project. The refurbishment of the house (individual finish, kitchen, bathroom, tiles, colours, etc.) could be defined in a later stage in the contract with the builder. Experience with design and building of housing combined with more complex programmes and knowledge on costs and environmental sustainability are essential for the architect. Experience with CCCD is not necessary; this can be compensated with enthusiasm.

d. the backup partner

Because the elected board of the participants cannot take the financial risk of a housing project, the board normally invites a backup partner to sign a backup contract. In most cases this will be a housing corporation that supports CCCD projects. An inspection of the prices and quality of the houses in the project by the corporation is essential before they step in. The backup partner takes over the houses that could not be sold or rented on the market. For these houses the backup partner behaves like an individual participant. The late buyers take over all costs and responsibilities that the corporation has made for their individual house.

Cooperation with the backup partner can be useful in other issues of the project:

- providing a project-manager and supervisor at the building site;
- financing of some of the facilities;
- supporting the group in an earlier stage with advice, financing and contract making with the local authorities (the case of Almere);
- taking care of the social housing stock in the project (the cases of Vrijburcht and Almere).

e. the advisor

The advisor for building construction makes the calculations on strength, stiffness and stability for every construction that needs a building license. Mostly their work is linked to that of the architect, so there will be no direct contact with the participants. The installation advisor sometimes has direct contact with the participants to select sustainable and energy-saving installations and to decide on the quality of the bathroom equipment (Vrijburcht). They also advise on the application of sun- and wind-energy, on local energy solutions and on heat and cold storage in deep sub-surface layers. Very important in a CCCD project is the role of the cost and quantity surveyor. This person will define in an early stage the construction and additional costs. For adequate financial security it is necessary to keep the estimated total construction costs at the same level for four years, from the start of the process until the building contract is signed (BO1, Vrijburcht). In the case that the contractor is a member of the building team that prepares the project, the cost surveyor will control the price level in the role of assessor and mediator.

f. the building contractor

As stated above, the building contractor can be a member of the building team (WoonKunst-WerK Almere). A positive effect of this cooperation at an early stage is better insight in cost and organisation of the building process. A negative point can be that the contract is difficult to end in case of disagreement on the price for construction works. Therefore the builder will be asked to sign a declaration stating to step out when no agreement is reached and to accept that the client will look for a different contractor. In other cases (BO1, Vrijburcht) three or more contractors are asked for a bid. The winner is selected on criteria such as experience with complex building jobs and ability to deal with many individual wishes from the clients. Usually the contractor with the lowest price will get the job. The participants decide in direct contact with the builder on the refurbishment of the house (individual finishes, kitchen, bathroom, tiles, colours, etc.).

Table 6.1 Short script for CCCD projects

Phase	Stakeholders	Activities
Initiative	Initiative group, city	Look for participants, agreement with city
Definition	Participants, advisors, city	Start team for the project, fit in urban plan, define planning and process, agreement with city to start plan
Programme	Participants, backup partner, architect	Organise financing, define programme, sign backup contract, programmatic sketch
Design	Participants, backup partner, architect, advisors, notary	Detailing of the programme, making of global design, cost calculation, define housing prices, decide on issues of sustainability, design layout for housing and work space, sign ‘option to buy’ contract, preparation of backup partner, decide on cost calculation
Building preparation	Architect, advisors	Decide on materials, decide on installations, define building contract, produce contract drawings
Building	Participants, backup partner, architect, builder, notary	Sign building contract, sign individual buy-and-build-contract, define finishing of each house, building, control the building process
Completion, delivering	Start VVE (union of owners)	Maintenance by VVE, common facilities, commercial facilities
Management, maintenance	Administration office	Financial management, maintenance of the building

Source: the author

3.3 CCCD case descriptions

This section presents detailed information on CCCD housing development projects (Box 6.1-6.5).

Box 6.1 Case 1: het Kameel – Vlaardingen

This project was started by the occupants in 1980 and was the first modern CCCD project in the social housing sector in the Netherlands. The autonomy of the group was strong, so that the housing corporation as the formal owner entered at a rather late stage. The project received the urban renewal award of the province of South Holland. One of the reasons was that it provided work space within the development, which normally was not possible in subsidised housing projects. SEV supported this experimental project (Figure 6.4).

initiative: group Het Kameel
start of process: 1980
completion: 1985
owner: wbv Vlaardingen
builder: de Waal Vlaardingen
architect: CASA, project architect Hein de Haan with Harry Kerssen and Paul Carrée

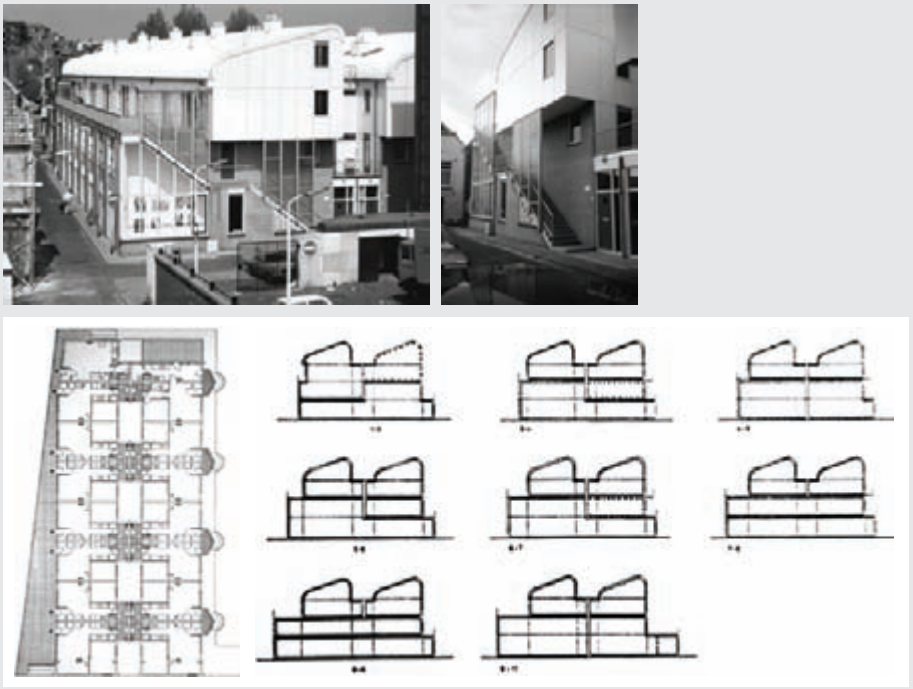


Figure 6.4 The first CCCD project in social housing: 24 working/living units - Landstraat - Vlaardingen - social rented housing. (Source: photos by Piet Rook (left above), Hein de Haan (right above); drawings by CASA architecten)

Box 6.2 Case 2: BO1 – Oostelijk Havengebied Amsterdam

This project received the 'tailor made housing' award from the city of Amsterdam (Figure 6.5).

initiative: initiative group with Hein de Haan
start of process: 1992
completion: 1997
owner: VVE BO1
backup partner: housing corporation Ymere
builder: Teerenstra Heiloo
architect: CASA, project architects Siem Goede + Hein de Haan

Programme:
- 72 houses
- 24 work spaces (dark grey), with a Chinese restaurant
- common house for children and guests
- parking garage
- exhibition window
- common workshop

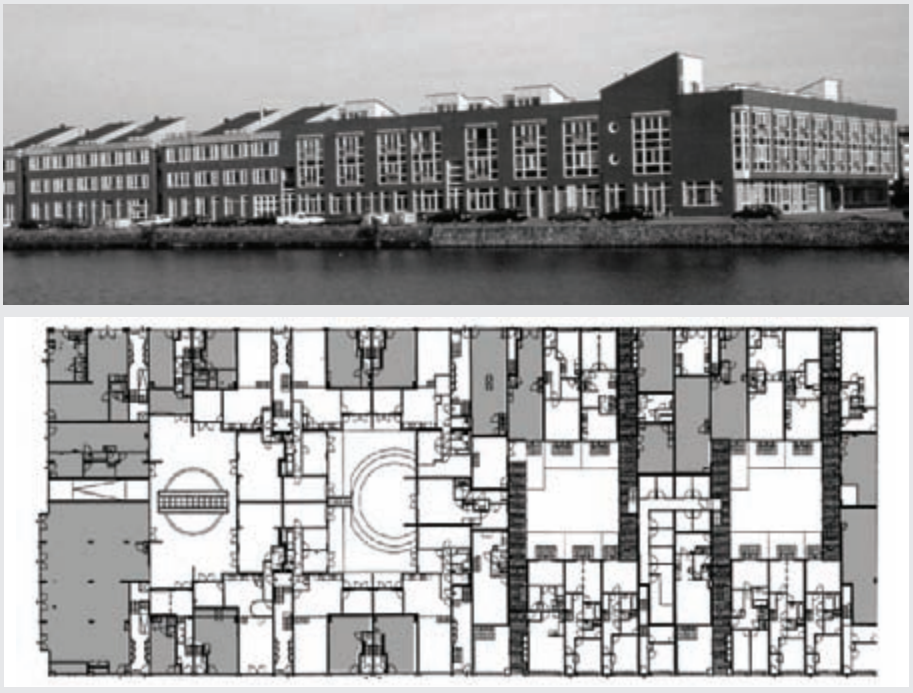


Figure 6.5 BO1 - Oostelijk Havengebied Amsterdam (Source: photo by Mick Palarczyk; drawing by CASA architecten)

Box 6.3 Case 3: Part reconstruction and part renovation – Grubbehoeve Bijlmermeer Amsterdam

The 'Bijlmerbelievers' (Het Parool, 1999) Henno Eggenkamp and Bernadette de Wit proposed to let the occupants take over the apartment building Grubbehoeve, which was intended to be demolished, with the slogan 'Buy Your Own Bijlmer'. The housing corporation then invited Peter Voogt and Hein de Haan to investigate ways to transform the building. The feasibility study resulted in a positive conclusion and the proposal was accepted by the occupants, the housing corporation and the local district authorities. The design by CASA architects (Koen Crabbendam) won the architecture award AMSTERDAM ZUIDOOST 2009.

This project realised a differentiated plan for 313 apartment units, 1200 m² of workspace and 600 m² of facilities in the building.

The facade of the building and the installations were renovated, and most of the apartments (second to the ninth floor) were renovated at low cost (influenced by the clients). More intensive reconstruction was implemented for:

- the tenth floor with studio and roof terrace;
- the ground floor and the first floor, living, working and services were situated here;
- entrances, staircases and elevators.

The reprogramming of the ground floor was essential for the survival of this project.

initiative: group KJEB: Buy Your Own Bijlmer
strategy CC: Peter Voogt en Hein de Haan
feasibility study: Hein de Haan
start of process: 1998
completion: 2007
owner: VVE Koop Je Eigen Grubbehoeve and Rochdale
builder: different contractors for different parts
architect: CASA, project architect Koen Crabbendam

Figure 6.6 Grubbehoeve Bijlmermeer Amsterdam (Source: CASA architecten)

Box 6.4a Case 4: Vrijburcht – Steigereiland IJburg Amsterdam 2006

initiative: group of friends form an initiative group with architect Hein de Haan and start CCCD, selection by the city results in 4 groups, only Vrijburcht survives
start process: 2002
completed: end 2006 apartments, in spring 2007 the project
owner: VVE VRIJBURC
backup partner: wbv de Key (also owner of common house for mentally disabled children, restaurant and children's day care centre)
building contractor: BK Bouw Bussum
architect: CASA, project architect Hein de Haan

Programme:
- 52 dwellings, including 10 low priced
- 16 work spaces
- theatre
- restaurant
- common house for mentally disabled children and house for their caretakers (social rent)
- children's day care centre
- guestrooms
- glasshouse
- common garden
- workshop
- harbour
- sailing school

Figure 6.7 Vrijburcht –Steigereiland IJburg Amsterdam (Source: Hein de Haan)

Box 6.4b Case 4: Vrijburcht – Steigereiland IJburg Amsterdam 2006 (floor plans)

1. workspace and ateliers (16x)
2. restaurant
3. children's day care centre
4. tailor made housing

Figure 6.8 Vrijburcht ground floor (Source: CASA architecten)

1. common house for mentally disabled children + house for the caretakers
2. theatre with guestrooms (can be used as dressing rooms)
3. children's day care centre
4. tailor made housing

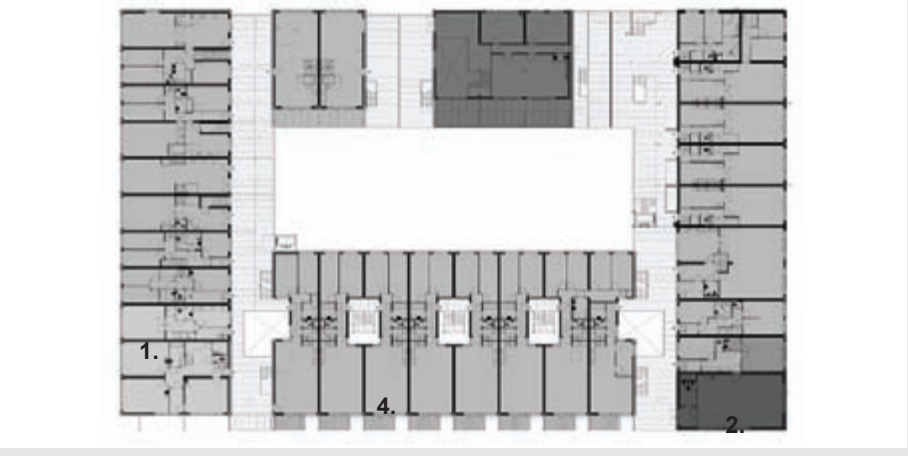


Figure 6.9 Vrijburcht first floor (Source: CASA architecten)

Box 6.5 Case 5: Woonkunstwerk – Cascadepark Oost –Almere

initiative: Citymix, Hans Kuijpers
start of process: 2006
building completed: 2013
owner: housing corporation ‘de Key’ and VVE owners
backup partner: housing corporation ‘de Key’
architect: Hein de Haan A+S

Programme:
- 80 studios
- 4 working spaces
- café/ restaurant
- common assembly room
- children’s day care centre
- skybar
- art gallery
- music rooms
- guest house
- booking office

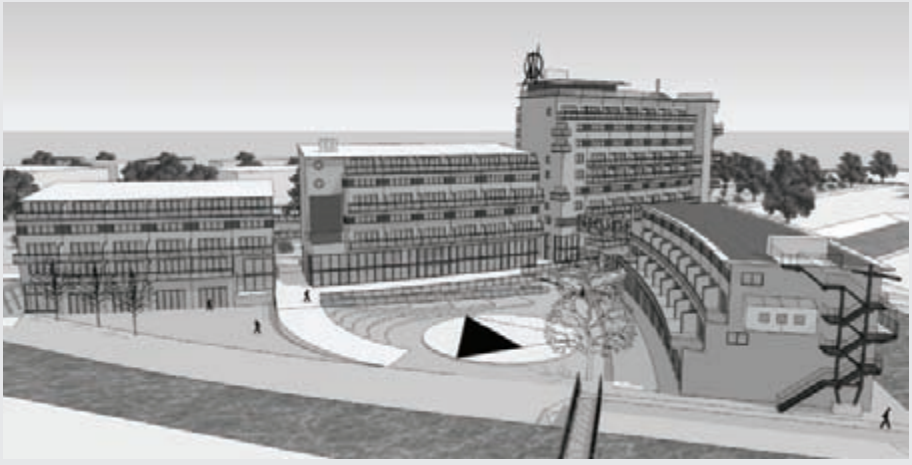


Figure 6.10 Woonkunstwerk – Cascadepark Oost –Almere (Source: Hein de Haan A+S)

3.4 Other development projects related to CCCD approaches

In this section, other types of urban development projects are introduced beyond housing developments, for instance transformations of office areas into functionally mixed urban districts with a higher level of urban vitality. Similar approaches of CCCD development have been implemented in these projects, in order to create user friendly living and working environments.

Case 1: Volkskrantgebouw (10.000 m² living and work space for 270 artists and starters)

The project is developed to provide cheap work spaces for low-income people in the city, especially for the creative groups, since the anti-squatting law has been implemented.

The importance of cheap spaces inside the city should not be underestimated, especially in a city like Amsterdam with art schools and many starting artists who lack the financial means to afford commercial working and living spaces. Moreover, economically viable space is also indispensable for starting businesses and small offices. Affordable space is even more helpful than subsidies or educational courses, as it can enhance survival potential. Therefore such affordable spaces function as an engine for the local economy of a city. Availability of cheap spaces has become even more urgent since the anti-squatting law was implemented. This law has dramatically limited the possibilities for young creative people to experiment with new concepts of living and working in empty buildings.

Urban Resort was founded in 2006 as an organisation providing links between the many empty buildings in Amsterdam and artists or starting businesses in the creative sector that have urgent need for low priced work spaces. This independent foundation is supported financially and logistically by the project group Broedplaatsen of the city of Amsterdam. The founders of Urban Resort have roots in the Amsterdam squatting movement in its early period. Some of them are still active in *De Vrije Ruimte*, the organisation of the many independent

Figure 6.11 Volkskrantgebouw (Source:Hein de Haan)

living/working communities in Amsterdam. Others are long time advisors for these special types of social groups. In 2007 Het Oosten (now Stadgenoot), owner of the former newspaper building De Volkskrant, invited Urban Resort to organise the renting out of this building to artists and starting entrepreneurs. Therefore Urban Resort could influence how this project was organised, with principles similar to CCCD projects, for instance 'autonomy of the group', 'collective organisation', 'mutual support', 'mix of activities' (ateliers, workshops, offices) , 'accessible for everyone' (who looks for working space), and 'open to the public' (exhibition space, short term rental space).

The average price in De Volkskrant is € 50/m²/year, without service costs (approximately € 30/m²/year extra). 25 percent of the spaces have a lower rent level (for example, for artists that just graduated from school); while another 25 percent are more expensive (at commercial price). The businesses using the building are (2008):

- art related 38 %
- creative commercial (like graphic design) 31 %
- services to society (like youth care) 14 %
- media and entertainment 6 %
- handicraft 1 %
- not specified 6 %

Two more projects (Westerdok and De Vlugt) have been founded by Urban Resort since the start of De Volkskrant, and three other projects are to be developed soon, which are De Heining, Omega and Stork Noord. Each project has its independent foundation, under the umbrella organisation Urban Resort Amsterdam, which is also responsible for the development of new projects.

Figure 6.12 the crew of De Vlugt (Source: Hein de Haan)

Case 2: The re-urbanisation of poorly used office areas-Amstel III

The city of Amsterdam has a redevelopment plan for Amstel III, which is an office area in Amsterdam Zuid-Oost, undergoing urban revitalisation. The area has several metro stops connecting to Amsterdam city centre, the A9 and A2 highways connecting to the national highway system, the A10 highway connecting to other regional centres such as Zuidas, Schiphol, future Amstel II business hub, and a newly opened railway station. The ambition of the city is to slowly transform the mono-functional office district into a mixed use district with larger enterprises and densified living, in order to upgrade the district into a vibrant business hub.

The researcher Tsaijer Cheng and architect Hein de Haan proposed 'Amstel III Mixed Use Redevelopment', which is a new strategy that could facilitate mixed use development during the urban re-vitalisation process. Instead of planning urban blocks that will be developed by major private developers only, the goal is to provide a development framework and cheap spaces for small enterprises and urban starters, to mingle with the major large scale developments step by step, thus end up with economical and cultural sustainability. CCCD will be a tool to support this process.

Analysis

The mono-functional office programme in the area leads to a five to eight hour operational time per week, or even less, for the buildings. With the infrastructural connections of Amstel III there is potential to intensify the use dramatically in the direction of a 24 hour economy. The researchers evaluated the following aspects of the buildings:

- existing ground floor connections to the public infrastructure and other link-up possibilities;
- ownership and vacancy;
- building height and amount of floor area;
- infrastructure system for future mixed use potentials;
- installation technique (heating and ventilation) and potential sustainable solutions.

Strategy

A mix in programme and a differentiation in rental price of these buildings were urgently needed, as well as a reorganisation of the public space around them. One obstacle in this development was the price of the vacant buildings which was kept high with the expectation that the demand would grow again in the coming years. Such scenarios are less likely as the end of the lifespan of the installations (in the coming 15 years) is being reached and a serious value drop of the empty office buildings can be expected. During this period it is logical to modify the area, improve the quality of urban spaces, as well as encourage new developments along the main infrastructure lines.

Urban design

The design proposal includes a strict urban framework on the district scale that allows for maximum freedom on the level of the individual lot. This freedom can be filled with CCCD organised projects to insure that there are known clients for the developed spaces and that there will grow an interesting mix of activities.

In the new cityscape, the existing private parking lots have been transformed into public spaces like streets, parks and squares. The urban design introduces new elements as follows:

- shopping street with facilities mainly for pedestrians;
- urban square and park mainly for pedestrians, with entrances to some large scale facilities;
- service road giving access to entrances of buildings and parking facilities;
- green route mainly for pedestrians and cyclists;
- city motorway (Holterbergweg) for cars;
- boulevard: connecting the neighbouring district (under the railroad) and the city motorway.

4. Comparison of types of development processes

Compared with individual housing projects, the aim of the collective projects always extends beyond the scope of housing. It addresses the way people live and how to get projects realised. Within such a framework, several collective housing projects, like Het Kameel in Vlaardingen and Vrijburcht and Grubbehoeve in Amsterdam were introduced in this chapter. The roots of these CCCD projects can be found in the past urban renewal periods in Amsterdam: building for the neighbourhood (1980 to 1990) and legalising squatted buildings (1985 to 2000). In these projects the control of the clients is high. There are also cultural components of CCCD projects, which stimulate creativity and provide opportunities for young people. Examples of such practices are Urban Resort Amsterdam with the Volkskrant building and the development of the Artist village of Ruigoord, considering great demand for low priced spaces for artists, starters in the local economy, and newcomers working or studying in the city.

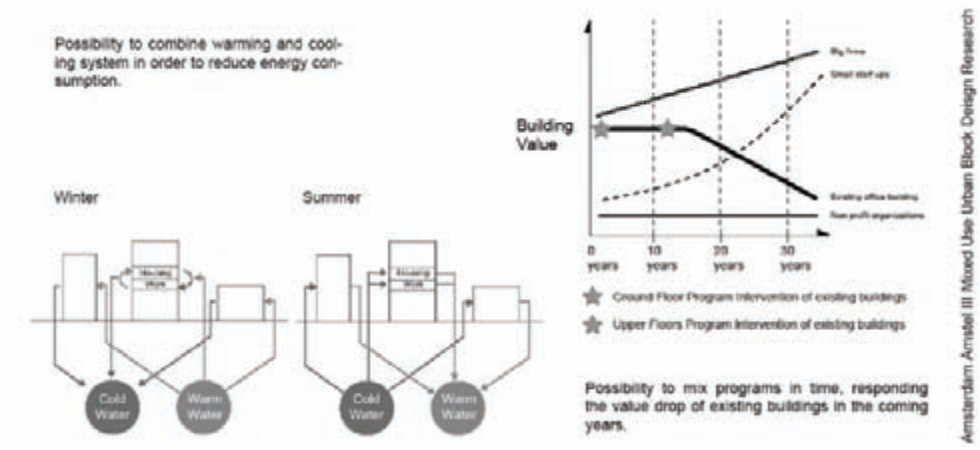


Figure 6.13 Economic and environmental sustainability (Source: Tsaijer Cheng)

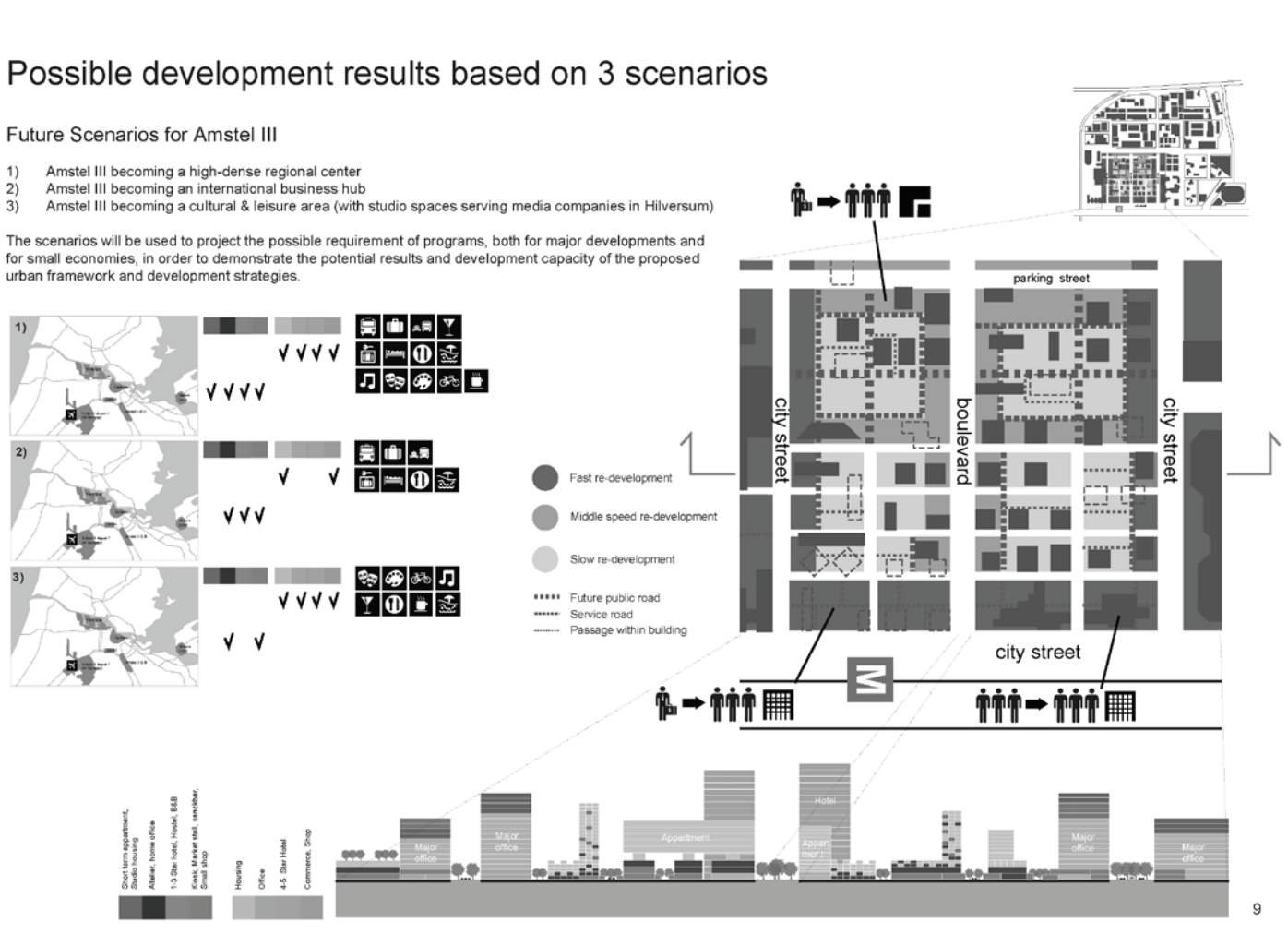


Figure 6.14 Possible development results based on 3 scenarios (Source: Tsaijer Cheng)

These projects are characterised by the following aspects:

- autonomy for the group
- collective organisation
- mix of activities
- solidarity between the participants
- accessible for newcomers
- open to the public.

These development projects are arranged following an increasing influence of the clients on the programme and the design of their living environment, which is rather different compared with other types of development. Several parameters have been used to evaluate the following six different types of development projects. This evaluation is based on the general characteristics of each type of projects. The general results are shown in Table 6.2.

The preliminary conclusion of this comparison is that CCCD projects have the potential to maximise the influence of the residents. Because of the development on cost price (not market price) level, a critical number of units will result in quite affordable housing. This critical mass (starting around 40 to 50 houses) and a relatively high density make it possible to develop common facilities like a theatre, guest house and children's day care centre. Together with the work space, these mixed functions can help to create a lively neighbourhood (see example Vrijburcht). Moreover, it is advised to develop such blocks in the areas that are more centrally located in the newly developed area, since these blocks will have facilities (for instance children's day care) and working spaces developed by subscription that could also serve the surrounding areas. Social housing could be part of these initiatives as well, so as to make it possible for low-income people to join the development process.

5. Conclusions: CCCD and its future

Is it possible to develop a CCCD project? In the Netherlands, the general answer is yes. Some municipalities really try to support these projects (for example Almere, some years ago), while some are not very active. A 'protected' starting of the projects is necessary, which means financial and technical support from the local government or professionals. From the practical point of view, the size of the project is crucial. The project should not be too small, because it is essential to create a certain critical mass (40 to 50 houses) to become economically feasible. Comparing with individual housing developments, a collective project of the right size and typology can save up to 50 percent of the building costs per square meter. Also, 40 to 50 apartments are needed as a basis for sharing the cost of collective spaces in the building that are not for commercial uses, like a theatre, a meeting room or a guest house. However, the project should not be too large either (no more than 80 houses), since the group may take a similar position as the large commercial developers. A back-up contract with a housing corporation is needed to reduce the risk of unsold houses. With this contract, housing corporations will take over the rights and obligations of the potential buyers that do not end up purchasing. Therefore the contract actually works as insurance.

Besides the above mentioned practical experiences with CCCD projects, this chapter has introduced different ways that activists and architects have followed to develop self-managed

Table 6.2 Different development models and performance parameters

	Traditional Development	**Client Oriented Development**	**COMMON CLIENTSHIP** *developer works with client*	**DEVELOPMENT FROM THE CATALOGUE** *variations on existing design*	**INDIVIDUAL CLIENTSHIP** *self-managed development on individual site*	**COLLECTIVE CLIENT CONTROLLED DEVELOPMENT** *self-managed development on collective site*
	TD	**COD**	**CC**	**DC**	**IC**	**CCCD**
Client influence on:						
Typology, layout and refurbishment of the house	- none	+ big	+ big	+ big	+ very big	+ big
Working space, facilities, parking	- none	- none	± possible	- none	- none, except inside the house	+ big
Urban plan	- none	- none	± limited	- none	- none	± possible in early stage
Other parameters:						
Programme decisions	- only market research/ analysis	± client oriented	+ sustainable (client is partner in development)	+ more possible (client is partner in development)	+ more possible (client has initiative in development)	+ much possible (client has initiative in development)
Programme	- one activity, almost 100% housing	± other activities possible	+ more possible (housing combined with other activities)	+ more possible (housing combined with other activities)	± possible, in practice mostly housing (housing combined with other activities)	+ much possible, sustainable (housing combined with other activities)
Development by subscription	- impossible	± possible	± possible	- impossible (outside their own site)	- impossible, except on individual plot (on site)	+ good (project level)
Design cosmetics	± reasonable/good	±reasonable/good	±reasonable/good	± bad/reasonable	+ interesting variety	+ reasonable/good
Affordability	± reasonable	± reasonable	± reasonable/good	± reasonable/expensive	- very expensive	+ good

Source: the author, edited by Lei Qu and Evert Hasselaar

mixed use projects, most of which were implemented in the city of Amsterdam. Figure 6.15, as a conclusion, describes four development fields for the near future.

Building living environments with work space and facilities: new development and renovation

The CCCD new development projects started with Vlaardingen (social rented housing) in 1982, followed with BO1 and Vrijburcht (market housing). During an economic crisis the commercial developers tend to draw back from projects, to reduce the risk of unsold property. A period of crisis presents extra opportunities for the CCCD approach, considering its low risk of unsold property, since all the clients are known in advance. The case of Grubbehoeve (in the Bijlmermeer in Amsterdam) shows some positive effects for urban regeneration, with differentiated intensity of building process, programme and price, resulting in an adaptive renovation process. Such spatial interventions could be an alternative for the large scale demolition and re-construction practices of for instance Amsterdam Nieuw West.

New programme for creating mixed use office areas: renovation and new development

Around Amsterdam there are two million square meters of vacant office buildings. How to deal with these buildings is a major question for decision makers as well as planners and designers. Along with the development process, CCCD as an alternative approach could contribute to creating more diversified and functionally mixed urban areas. CCCD could become part of strategic urban redevelopment plans.

Autonomous creative zones of living and working: new development and renovation

The experiences of the artist village of Ruigoord and Nieuw en Meer show that freedom, independence and autonomy stimulate a creative environment. How the artists and creative workers have built their work spaces is, in certain respects, in conflict with formal planning and design, and therefore gets influenced by the authorities. This deserves special consideration and adaptation in the planning system.

Collective buildings for working, with living space and facilities: renovation

The case of Urban Resort represents the possibilities of providing cheap work spaces in an empty building for creative groups and starting businesses. Support for these low-income groups in the urban renovation projects increases the potential of economic and cultural vitality of the city. Involvement of the participants in the design process is also a method to create affordable living and working environments that meet the demand of the end users.

The case descriptions and the conclusions reflect the role of the author as participant observer and CCCD organiser. The experiences have stimulated enthusiasm and great commitment for collective client controlled development projects. In many ways, the architect works with groups of residents and workers, each with a specific expertise, but always in support of a result that is affordable and respecting the social group, their need for new solutions and involvement in collective management of the living/work spaces. Because of this reciprocity between the discipline of the architect, developer and occupants, the methods followed are not the same as collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning. Here, the

architect plays a central role, becoming a designer-developer at the service of the users of a building.

Because of dedicated social action and overcoming many political barriers, both as an architect and an activist, the chapter expresses pride in what has been achieved. The reaction against commercial developers leads to more than affordable buildings: existing buildings are respected and re-used, living and working are better integrated, and the process is an integrated part of a creative lifestyle with strong dedication to cooperative solutions. In this sense the cases reflect a new culture, in which voice over residential/work spaces is part of a movement toward new ways of living together: positive and creative, sometimes disregarding the rules and governance traditions, because the members of these communities know very well what is important for their community and for society as a whole.

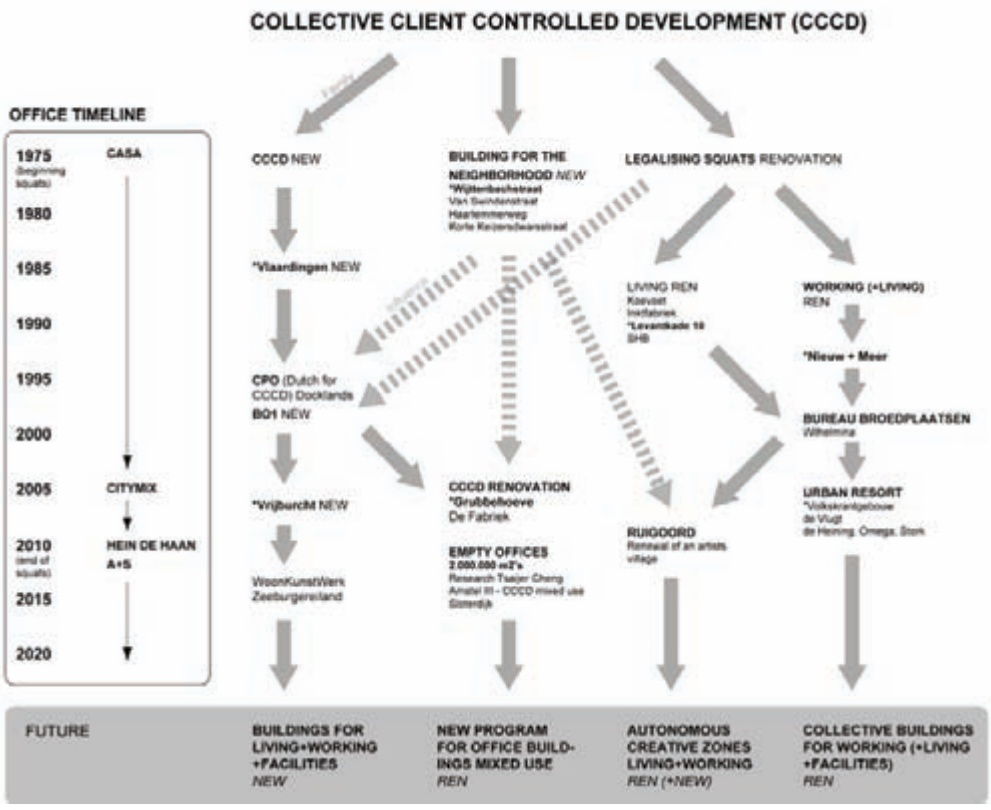


Figure 6.15 the different projects co-developed by the author and the partners (1975-2010) (Source: originally from Hein de Haan, revised by Tsaijer Cheng)

7. Self-managed Co-housing
Assessing Urban Qualities and Bottlenecks in the Planning System

Lidewij Tummers[1]

1. Introduction

Self-organised housing collectives have been (re)appearing in many European countries in the last three decades. A new infrastructure is emerging, where people join efforts to create affordable housing. Although self-organised co-housing collectives have diverse ideological backgrounds, a common factor is the aim for 'alternative' housing models, often with high ecological ambitions or shared spaces (co-housing). This implies a rupture with dichotomies that mark general housing standards such as private-public space, waged-domestic labour, individual ownership-common interest and consumption-production. Dweller collectives still need a disproportional effort regarding the realisation of their housing projects which has an impact on group dynamics.[2] While the context may be different, similar obstacles during the planning process occur, such as a rigid definition of housing standards in building laws, or a lack of understanding or support of planning departments, investors and real estate managers. The difficulties are even more present when concerning co-housing projects. Much time is invested in finding ways to implement sustainable materials and renewable energies, shared installations or mixed use; often against reduced costs. This raises the question how planning systems can be made more accessible for self-organised building groups that articulate specific (co)habitation aspirations.

While in the twenty-first century the conditions seem to be changing, and the role of occupants in the realisation of their housing is increasingly promoted, collective models of housing beyond the construction phase are still regarded as experimental.

The combination of breaking with consumption patterns, both in terms of economy and ecology as well as with gender roles is what makes collective approaches successful as a housing model, as is shown in the cases from the 1980s. At the same time, it is precisely

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2 I use the term disproportional to indicate the time and effort spent on procedures and negotiations to create necessary conditions rather than directly being invested in the social interaction and activities for which the collective was created.

because of these factors that it remains difficult to meet planning procedures and building regulations to this day. There exists an inherent tension between the social models upon which different parties (dwellers groups and institutions) operate (Sandercock, 1998). In most European countries, building laws and regulations are still largely based on CIAM principles of urbanism: the 'functional city' concept.[3] Based on pre-war family and industry models CIAM professionals sought to improve living conditions by separating housing, recreation and labour in different areas connected by circulation zones (Sert, 1944). The original urban model providing typologies for all phases in life developed in the context of CIAM, and was applied most faithfully in areas such as Pendrecht (Rotterdam). Such design principles later became watered down towards homogeneity during the process of industrialisation and the pace of massive post-war building production (Tellinga, 2004).

While current policy in Germany and the Netherlands aims to stimulate citizen initiatives, the operational systems of housing allocation and planning procedures are, as the case studies demonstrate, not yet sufficiently equipped for it. The aim of this chapter is to examine how the operational systems for housing and spatial planning respond to these alternative models of housing.[4] The chapter looks at bottlenecks such as the lack of understanding of the goals or models of an initiative by important stakeholders of the building process; the absence of procedures and models suitable for shared property or collective development; and the complexity of (building) regulations which take a long time to understand. The case studies present early projects that explicitly aspire for ecological environments and social structures beyond the individual households. Analysing the conditions which planning systems, energy-networks and housing distribution provide for citizens to organise and build housing leads to the question: What can be done to embed co-housing models in the planning process? The accessibility of planning systems is important in light of demographic trends which point to increasing forms of active citizenship and diversification of housing demand (VROMraad, 2009).

This chapter consists of three main sections: the first explores co-housing in Europe; the type of projects defined as co-housing; comparing 'collective living' as distinguished from 'co-building' (a joint building process in order to achieve tailor-made housing). These projects are placed in a wider perspective, highlighting some of their historical as well as international context. This section concludes with the urban and housing qualities of the projects.

The second describes two Dutch cases that are representative of co-housing initiatives, and for which spatial-social characteristics and their planning context in the period of initial development are presented. The position of co-housing in planning systems is further explored in the third main section, where some of the bottlenecks in the planning trajectory of co-housing projects are identified and examined through their relations to the housing systems. This section is illustrated with the case of Almere *Homeruskwartier*, where local authorities offer infrastructure for self-builders to make their way through the planning trajectory. Finally conclusions are drawn concerning how to improve the citizens' position in spatial planning procedures and to make building permission more accessible for self-steering collectives.

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3 CIAM: Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne.

4 'The concept of the spatial planning system has been used as a generic term to describe the ensemble of territorial governance arrangements that seek to shape patterns of spatial development in particular places.' (Nadin/ Stead 2008: 35).

2. Defining co-housing

2.1 Contextualisation

In many European countries there is a revival of self-organised housing/living not only in the cities but also in rural areas (Peters, 2005; http://www.selba.org; http://www.reseau-relier.org). Citizen groups who take the initiative to develop a housing project are often motivated by special needs or ambitions regarding their environment (Meijering et al., 2007). Since the 1980s in the Netherlands a number of dwellers groups have clearly articulated these needs and developed new spatial models. The motives were to create protected environments for independent living of people with disabilities (Weggemans cs, 1985), to develop inner city locations for mixed income groups (Groene Dak, Pander, Kersentuin), to create non-toxic sustainable housing (MMWW2, Groene Marke, Franciskaans Milieuproject), to share domestic facilities and recreation (Centraal wonen, Terbregse.nl) etc. Usually the projects show a mixture of these motives.

Every self-organised project has its unique origin and configuration (Kläser, 2006:90). These range from religious to activist origins, born out of the need to create affordable housing in a stagnating market or taking opportunities offered for creative expansion in an abandoned industrial building or shrinking rural village, driven by the wish to create protected or healthy and ecologic environments: the size and scope in the Netherlands alone is varied. Within the projects, the degrees of involvement of inhabitants vary from co-ownership to communal gardens, from hierarchal institutes to new share-economy models. The unifying factor is creating alternatives for standardised, one-household units. Projects may show a mix of row houses with apartments for singles and seniors, and important differences in the housing plans (Sangregorio, 2010).

Or as Kläser puts it, 'Das bauen ist nur ihr kleinste Gemeinsame Nenner': building the accommodation is only the smallest common denominator (Kläser, p. 90). This makes it hard to classify the type of initiatives to be discussed in a more systematic manner. A new network is emerging that promotes self-build and self-managed projects as 'a third way for public housing' (http://www.cohousing2010.org). For the scope of this chapter their definition of 'co-housing' is used to distinguish the initiatives from collaborative planning processes and collective building projects for the realisation of individual dwellings:

> *Cohousing is a type of collaborative housing in which residents actively participate in the design and operation of their own neighbourhoods. Cohousing residents are consciously committed to living as a community. The physical design encourages both social contact and individual space. (http://www.cohousing.org/what_is_cohousing 24 august 2010)*

Co-housing initiatives can be grouped in many ways: along their ideology, the form of organisation, the type of residents, the legal form, mixed uses and so on. The *Bürgerbüro Stadtentwicklung* (Citizens Bureau for Urban Development) Hannover distinguishes the following types of projects in the development of 125 years of local collective building initiatives (Bürgerbüreau, 2009):

1. reaching out of the individual dwelling, creating meeting places in inner courtyards, shared facilities or community gardens;

2. nature oriented: from the garden-city model of the 1920s to the new ecology awareness starting in the 1980s;
3. back to the basics: following the philosophy of architect Tessenow (1876-1950) to 'create the comfortable, necessary and as far as possible enjoyable with simple (architectural) means';
4. integrating housing and working: changing economic models and blurring private-public boundaries;
5. new rise of self-management and plural-generation living;
6. sharing costs: students in a temporary collective living arrangement;
7. the periphery of society: accommodating the vulnerable, squatting and homelessness.

Kläser makes a distinction according to levels of self-organisation: from professional interest via life-situation and plural generation to community building (Kläser, 2006).

Co-housing is a container of a rich variation of architectural and organisational forms. At the same time it is a notion that indicates, across national borders, an essential difference from the public housing sector or the market housing sector: the principle of intentional interaction between residents regarding their environment, and a certain level of direct control over the development and management.

2.2 Historical perspective

This chapter looks specifically at initiatives that were motivated primarily by alternative housing models (in the sense of co-housing) not found on the housing market. This is not to say co-housing is a new architectural model. Citizens have taken initiatives to create alternatives for residency at all times in history. *Les Utopistes* for example, in eighteenth century France, projected their views of a harmonious and fair society in spatial models. They not only described utopian society with different, sometimes equal, gender roles but also went as far as

Figure 7.1 Bergpolderflat 1954 with shop on the ground floor and washing room in the basement (Source: Gemeentearchief Rotterdam)

experimenting with communal living in order to develop the housing model; accommodating for example a group of men separately to learn how to perform household tasks (Poldervaart et al, 2001).

Margarete Meijboom and Frederik van Eden introduced the ideas of Thomas Moore on community living around 1900 in Netherlands. Charlotte Perkins Gilman and Jane Addams (around 1890 to 1920) promoted and designed ideas for central kitchens and the collectivisation of household tasks in a period in which only the houses of the affluent had separate kitchens and individual bathrooms (Poldervaart, 1994; Haydn, 1979/1982/2005).

Some of these models were reflected in the creation of houses for workers, for example the *Woonblok Spangen* (1917) by architect JJP Oud, with a central bath house in the courtyard, or *Bergpolderflat* (1933/34) by architects van Tijen, Brinkman en van der Vlugt with a room for washing in the basement (Figure 7.1).

There is thus an evolution of co-housing from the projection of social ideals to institutionalised housing standards that make use of these solutions to fit the budget and standards of the time. During the post-war reconstruction period, individual apartments and single family houses became the norm (Haydn, 1982). During the 1970s a new wave of alternative proposals rose in reaction to this homogenisation. On the one hand proposals were produced by Dutch architects such as Piet Blom and John Habraken who promoted the choice/voice principle, and sociologists who criticised the idea of the 'one-school neighbourhood'; on the other hand, the period after 1968 showed the loosening of family and (religious) community structures, together with calls for more democracy and participation. Academics and neighbourhood organisations of dwellers protested against relocation to suburbs, and worked together to improve affordable housing provision.

In the Netherlands, this resulted amongst others in a new housing typology: the *HVAT-regeling* (Housing for Singles and Two-person Households Act) introduced in 1975 to make the housing market more accessible for young people.[5] Under HVAT law and subsidy, small units with individual or shared facilities could be built and rented out at a relatively low price. One of the case studies below has made use of this regulation.

The standardisation of housing and suburbanisation was further challenged by the squatter and feminist movements in the 1980s. Housing projects rose out of the criticism of the feminist movement addressing standard nuclear family housing. Housing lay-out specifying for example 'children's' and 'master' bedrooms did not provide room for self-fulfilment of the care-giver. Lack of room in kitchens, bathrooms and storage in practice rendered much of the domestic labour invisible. Alternative projects specifically attempted to cater to the needs of single women, with or without children. In the 1980s women had an even worse situation on the housing market than nowadays. For example, their income was not recognised for mortgages or rental contracts and when part of a (married) couple, their names did not appear in contracts (Watson and Austerberry, 1986). Besides improving women's position on the housing market, the projects offered alternatives for nuclear family housing typologies (Roberts, 1991).

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5 Nota HAT ; Ministerie VROM, 1975, the subsidies existed until 1983, a total of about 70 000 units were built. The nota HAT inspired a diversification in housing policies that made a special regulation superfluous. Noud de Vreeze: Woningbouw, inspiratie & ambities (dissertation TUD) NWR 1993.

Germany has the largest number of women-initiated housing projects in Europe (Schröder and Zibell, 2004). The projects were partly supported by the national government through a program for special target groups, in the same way the HVAT regulation in the Netherlands came into being (Rebe, 1998). Another example of institutionalisation of the initiatives is the *Frauenwerkstatt* in Vienna that led to a series of recommendations for the city planning department and the establishment of an agency developing design criteria for the 'Fair share city' within the local authorities (Kail and Irschek, 2008). As such, the projects can be considered a predecessor of contemporary housing issues such as flexible floor plans, participation of dwellers in design and management, differentiation of household types and rental levels, mixed use and child-friendly environments. Although many projects have some degree of shared space, many would not (self)classify as co-housing. Nevertheless, similar elements can be found in the underlying social model, particularly in challenging gender roles.

The political mobilisation against housing speculation was also performed in a practice of 'alternative' living arrangements. Individual studios grouped around collective spaces took the place of nuclear family arrangements; the separation between private–home and public–waged work spheres became fluid and mixed with active citizenship and social networks (Witboek Kraken, 2009). Out of these projects much of the supportive infrastructure for self-managed co-housing was created, such as in the Netherlands a start-up manual (http://www.vrijeruimte.nl) or an interactive website to match dwellers and projects (http://www.omslag.nl/wonen).

Co-housing projects continue this tradition in the context of the twenty-first century. In time, social emphasis and technology may shift, but the public that identifies with some form of self-chosen community housing does not disappear, on the contrary — there are indications that co-housing is growing.

2.3 International perspective

Germany

In Germany the long tradition of *Genossenschaften* has lead to a large variety of collective ownership of housing, of which only part can be qualified as 'self-initiated/-managed by residents'. The principle of *Genossenschaft* was in the background during the unification period (1990s) but is gaining interest again: the *Co-operatives Act*, first adopted in 1889, was reformed in 2006. There exists a 'generation gap'; both between the traditional and the new *Genossenschaften* which have different models of organisation (Futura, 2009). Traditionally much work depended on volunteers, while nowadays the younger generation is less prepared or has less time available for involvement in this way. The *Bürgerburo Stadtentwicklung* Hannover signals an inherent tension between striving for 'proximity and neighbourhood' which requires small communities, and the rental turning point which begins more or less at 300 units needed to run a staffed office (Burgerburo, 2001).

Nowadays, the new generation of self-organised living is flourishing in Germany as *Baugruppe* (Building-group/collective) which is a generic term for different types of projects or collectives that are run by the residents themselves, rather than by a public entity or private developer. Despite the German tradition of *Genossenschaften*, *Baugruppen* seem to be undergoing similar difficulties during the planning process as their counterparts in, for example, France or the Netherlands (Kläser, 2006; Kompier, 2011). At the same time, some municipali-

ties have developed an urban plan as a framework for self-initiated building. An early example is Tübingen where the *Französisches Viertel* was already constructed between 1993 and 2006. This has served as a model for Almere, NL (see section 4.1).

France

Housing provision in France has traditionally been mostly a public responsibility, whereas developers are more geared to industrial and services accommodation (Kleinman, 1995). In 1971 cooperative ownership was forbidden by law, as part of a programme to restrict the perceived 'surplus' of social housing and promote individual home-ownership, it was made possible again in 2003 to make the housing market more accessible.[6] Together with ecological and solidarity initiatives, the number of housing initiatives are growing. They are constituted primarily of middle-class citizens, who look for affordable, friendly co-habitation models and ecological environments (Denèfle, 2006). Whether there is potential to make the housing market more accessible for low-income groups was the question of the first conference '*Co-operatives de logement, une troisieme vois*?' organised in June 2008 by the ENTPE (school of public engineering) in Lyon (Maury, 2009). The answer is ambiguous: in theory there are a number of proposals to meet the criteria, however the process of implementation is lagging behind. This is ascribed by the initiatives themselves to the 'backwardness' of France in terms of ecological and energy efficient building standards. Nevertheless some municipalities are developing an active policy to accommodate co-housing initiatives. The city of Strasbourg launched a competition in 2009 for ten areas in the city, inviting proposals for self-managed housing with high ecological standards.[7] The urban requirements are 'kept to a minimum' specifying building volume, number of dwellings (between 2 and 20) and parking places (for cars). The potential of each area for additional sustainable qualities such as orientation for solar energy are indicated. The winning proposals should be further elaborated for building permission, upon which the land is sold to the initiators. The citizens themselves aim for a concept of *eco-quartier* or *eco-village* rather than fragmented projects (http://www.ecoquartier-strasbourg.net).

Belgium/Flanders

The Flemish parliament accepted a motion in June 2009 to 'give co-housing a full-worthy place in housing policies, to perform research into the obstacles for a smooth realisation of co-housing projects and to take measurements accordingly' (http://www.cohousingplatform.be/ 17 September 2010). The motion implies co-housing has been at the margin of housing policy, and indicates that co-housing encounters problems with the operational planning systems. The motion resulted in an architecture award for collective housing, which brought to light many realised initiatives of high quality. The evaluation of the projects indicates as important grounds to promote co-housing: the increasing scarcity of building plots; demographic change and the disappearance of the nuclear family as a dominant model; and the potential for sustainability in all dimensions, saving energy and other resources. *Wonen in Meervoud* (Housing in plural) summarised the results in 15 'principles', emphasising the scarcity of land,

6 1972 the so-called 'Loi Chalandon' 2003: Loi Urbanisme et habitat.

7 Délibération du Conseil Municipal du lundi 25 mai 2009 Promotion d'opérations d'habitat innovant : lancement d'une consultation « 10 terrains pour 10 immeubles durables à Strasbourg ». Désignation.

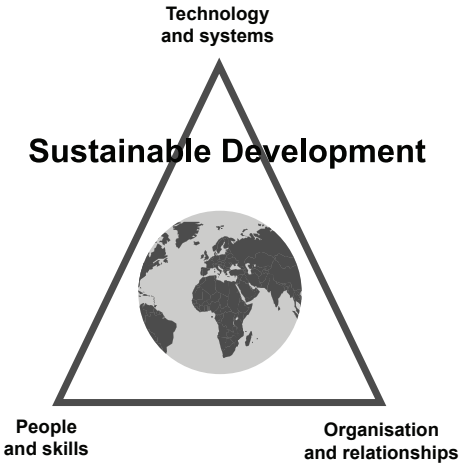

Figure 7.2 Sustainability Triangle as seen by sustinium, 2008
(Source: http://www.sustinium.com, image redrawn by John Steenbergen)

the potential for social interaction and architectural quality for which co-housing is seen as a suitable strategy (Herck and Meulder, 2009). The Flemish *samenhuizen* or co-housing movement itself emphasises as advantages of co-housing the accessibility of the housing market and community living. Nowadays in many cities in Flanders, such as Mechelen and Gent, projects are underway. The presence of a participatory process is now taken for granted, inviting some form of involvement by participants according to their own specific interests. On top of this, most projects have advanced sustainability features or high ambitions in this field.

2.4 Achievements and urban qualities

Many self-managed (co-)housing projects have high ambitions, which can be grouped around aspects of the 'sustainability triangle' — people, planet, profit — of which many interpretations exist, such as social relations, environment and economy (Figure 7.2) or in co-housing project terms:

- *Climate change*: apply clean and efficient energy from renewable fuel, healthy and non-toxic building materials; recycle water and reduce waste. Many initiatives are at the forefront of the use of renewable energy and ecological building materials, as available at the time of building. The collective investment and land allocation allows for larger scale measures such as reed-filter water purification. Whereas there is a general understanding that collective building initiatives have a better ecological performance than the general market, so far this has not been thoroughly mapped or quantified.
- *New economy*: looking at the plans and designs, most projects show mixed use — the integration of workspace, childcare, meeting rooms or public spaces — leading to

new arrangements of private and public space. The underlying social models involve a re-definition of productive (waged labour) and re-productive (domestic unpaid) activities by sharing or outsourcing domestic tasks, for example in sharing a laundry room, a guest room or bicycle/car parking. Many projects create new local economies by including income generating activities, low threshold (outreaching) activities or cultivating the exchange of services and goods. Most of these projects offer shared facilities at close distance, allowing for better time management and task sharing in daily routines like finding a babysitter, or taking turns doing domestic tasks (Haan and Tummers, 2008). The financial models of the projects have the potential to include elements that are not affordable for individuals (music studio or a function room) and sharing space (or cars) makes it less of a burden to the household income. Often, the cooperatives allow for variation in contribution, enabling different income-levels (or income fluctuations) inside the project.

- *Cohabitation*: diversification of apartment layout, shared space besides the individual rooms for example for child-play or meeting and inter-generational living. One of the early co-housing models rose out of the new generation of senior citizens as an alternative to 'homes for the elderly' (Vestbro, 2010). Lending mutual support while living independently of family and the community offers the potential to organise professional as well as informal but non-compulsory care. Searching for a new concept of community, creating accessible and protected environments where residents can find a place regardless of stereotyping leads to breaking with gender stereotypes and roles, and to a different validation of skills. However, Kläser observes that co-housing is not so much questioning the nuclear family as it is building an emotional and materially supportive infrastructure for the stressful life of young families today (Kläser, 2006).

Despite the lack of quantitative information, qualitative research indicates that co-housing initiatives do have a positive impact on the environment in each of these fields. A comparison of Dutch projects has led to a qualification of 'green oases' in the urban environment. In this case 'green' not only refers to the vegetation in or around the projects but also to the sustainability standards of the dwellings as compared to average housing production in the same period (Haquebord, 2009). It seems that all corners of the 'sustainability triangle' are well connected and in balance. Moreover, the *lived* integration of those aspects provides a different perspective from the attempts at integration by policy makers and theorists. The housing initiatives make their space, as it were, 'a trajectory of multiple stories' (Massey, 2005). Through this multi-layered practice, they propose a real alternative for allocating both social and material resources.

Are they thus creating 'safe havens' and inward looking oases for selected groups, or are these qualities also mirrored in the urban environment? What can housing cooperatives really contribute to contemporary urban challenges?

Co-housing differs from 'gated communities' in that it is more outreaching to its environment (Vestbro, 2010; see also chapter De Haan). Its primary aim is interaction, whereas gated communities show a need for protection (Poldervaart et al., 2001; Cowan and Marsh, 2004). The 'green oases' (as the case studies below demonstrate) make their gardens or function rooms accessible to a wider public, for social or educational purposes (Figure 7.3). Outreach-

ing initiatives, such as courses, clubs, cook-ins and playgrounds, not only enhance the liveability of the neighbourhood but also reinforce social contacts with other residents (Timmeren et al, 2007). This is not always easy, since the 'outside' users have not internalised the values and dynamics on which the project is based and may not be familiar with self-management principles. An attractive garden and playground with water and small ecosystems may for example be vulnerable to being polluted or soiled with litter. On the other hand, some of the mixed use functions such as theatres, function rooms, childcare or restaurants, depend on the larger area for (economic) feasibility.

Instead of generating profit, self-managed building processes allow for investment in larger than average dwellings (SEV, 2006) sustainable building materials and clean energy technology. Due to the ambitions and perseverance of participants, many projects show experiments with new materials, built forms or design processes before a wider introduction in the market. Besides, architects and other consultants offer a better service when paid from a communal budget in a joint design process.

Despite this articulation, the housing market is not meeting these needs, and for this reason self-management building and housing associations *(cooperative de logement* or *Baugruppe*) are formed. Thus, building in self-management is not a goal, but a means to escape from narrow social models or destructive patterns of consumption still dominating most of housing production.

Figure 7.3 Semi-public garden, EVA Lanxmeer Culemborg (NL) (http://www.eva-lanxmeer.nl) (Source: photo by Tussen Ruimte 2009)

2.5 Co-housing and citizenship

Besides the practical and financial benefits, collective self-provision of housing also allows for the development of 'active citizenship'. Engaging in a joint (design) process and the eventual sharing of community spaces diminishes anonymity, and lowers the threshold for development and exchange of skills and services (Poldervaart, 2002). Management of the project itself also opens possibilities for those who have difficulties finding a place in the competitive society (e.g. Refter Nijmegen, Emmaus projects). This is not an easy process for collectives; active citizenship is more complicated than consumerism. In many collectives a process of 'gentrification' takes place when former activists start having children and careers (Kraakbeweging, 2009). At the same time the active cores of the cooperatives provide a sheltered space for the more vulnerable members. In doing so the 'in-between' also becomes a 'zone of tolerance' or even the social artefact of the project. In the best of cases it allows for a process of growth, emancipation or independence of the collective's members, who can consequently assume another role or create a new project.

Co-housing residents clearly position themselves on the 'voice' side. They take (and expect) responsibility, not only during the design phase but also after building. Contracts or membership protocols often specify the amount of time to be contributed to the management of the project. This is an intensive, demanding way of living, which implies there must be a strong motive to do so.

As a collective effort, co-housing is different from individual choices for (alternative) lifestyles. The members of the initiatives join forces to create more value in their environment than is possible for each individual member by themselves. Or, as the motto of the German Federation of Housing Cooperatives points out: *Gemeinsam Handeln - individuell profitieren* (act collectively, benefit individually).[8]

The persistent continuity and renewed interest in co-housing projects as well as the additional qualities they provide for urban environments make it worth investigating how the co-housing model can be embedded in planning systems.

3. Two urban co-housing projects in the Netherlands

Rather than profiling co-housing inhabitants and their motives, this chapter aims to look at their position in planning and housing practice. To analyse the architectural as well as social parameters of the cases, it is also necessary to look at contextual aspects such as Dutch national housing policies, local urban planning procedures and planning culture in general, and how they have changed in the course of almost three decades. Zooming in on the small scale project reveals some contradictions between the intentions and practical outcome of housing policies and planning practice in the Netherlands.

3.1 Poortgebouw, Rotterdam (NL): collective housing for more than 30 years

The co-housing model presented by *Poortgebouw*, Rotterdam, serves as an example of a 'first generation' initiative. It is a collective housing project that was first encouraged, conse-

8 'Die Genossenschaftsidee verknüpft das Eigeninteresse des Individuums mit der solidarischen Hilfe für den anderen' wohn-eg.de 7 sept 2010.

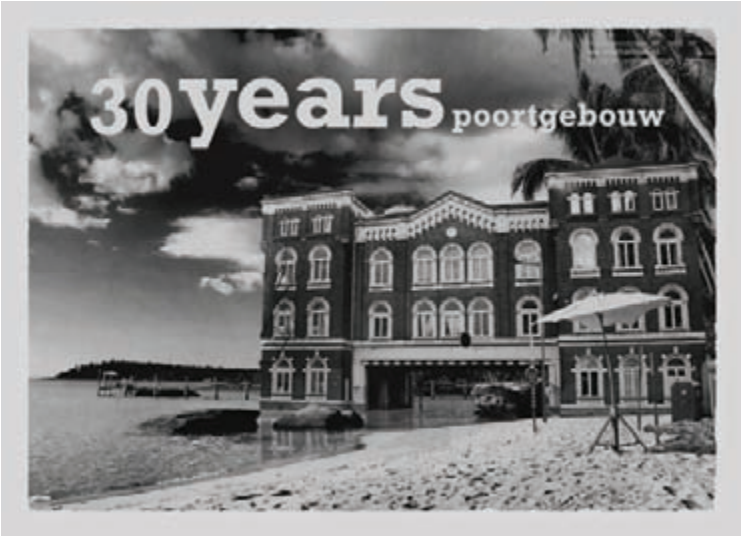

Figure 7.4 Invitation to the 30-yr jubilee of Poortgebouw, October 2011 (Source: Vereniging Poortgebouw)

quently ignored and finally contested by mainstream local policies, and is at present in the process of planning for renovation in a partnership with residents and (new) owner.

The recent history of the *Poortgebouw* is a unique illustration of a social housing project under self-management in the Netherlands. Although this is primarily the result of the efforts of its inhabitants, the *Poortgebouw* is also a product of its time: the sum of both local and national policies, grass-root movements, global tendencies in society and its location in the city of Rotterdam. The 30 years of its existence as a co-housing community present a learning experience on the potential of cooperative housing (Figure 7.4).

The *Poortgebouw* building dates from 1879 and was built as a harbour office during the first south bank expansion of the Rotterdam harbour. Abandoned as such in 1978, it was squatted during a national squatting day in 1980. Finding the premises in good condition and the social-political environment favourable, the squatters decided to opt for legalisation. The squatters formed the *Vereniging* (association) *Poortgebouw* and negotiated a subsidised plan and self-management rental contract based on their model of collective living and collective construction and maintenance to keep rent low. The collective rents under this contract to this day, and has developed into an international artist community (http://www.poortgebouw.nl, 27 January 2011). The building contains 30 units for private use of 25m^2 on average, with high ceilings allowing for extra storage or bed-space to be built. All facilities such as kitchens, showers, washing machines, equipment or bicycle storage are collective, following the philosophy that this promotes the social and creative interaction between residents. The location and nature of the building is particularly suitable for noisy or messy activities, as many of the *Verenigings'* members are musicians, performing artists or artisans. The association further runs a small café with regular concerts, although restricted in its public activities by fire regulations and other limitations on public functions (it therefore functions as a private club). Pro-

gramming is done in collaboration with other Rotterdam associations such as the Rotterdam Improvisation Pool (RI:P), or art-house film producers: initiatives that are otherwise too small to obtain suitable locations, but have a constant audience in town.

Poortgebouw made use of the earlier mentioned HVAT law and subsidy in 1983. The regulations specified dimensions, quality requirements, building costs, rent levels and exploitation norms. Amongst other things a relation between investment and turnout (rent) was established, based on a calculation model with norms for financial efficiency and maintenance. The calculation model also allowed the inhabitants to keep the rent low by providing free labour during the building process and maintenance. Supported by public servants of the Rotterdam planning department, the ownership (as is usual for re-development of public buildings) was transferred to the (then) municipal housing association GWR, including the plan (Hogervorst and Smelt, 1983). As a consequence, the municipal housing association had to comply with official requirements. In the contract between owner and tenant-collective that followed, a division of responsibilities was reached and the normative budgets, especially in the sums reserved for maintenance (respectively: structural, service and repair), were partly transferred to the association.

Since the 1990s Dutch national housing policies have been geared to increase the percentage of home-ownership. One of the planning instruments created for this purpose obliges housing associations to sell a yearly agreed upon percentage of their stock. Tenants have the first right to buy and may have favourable financial conditions. This has affected the *Poortgebouw* collective as it was amongst the first sale-operation of *Woning Bedrijf Rotterdam* (Rotterdam Housing Company, WBR). However, the building was not offered to the tenants but transferred in 2001 to a private developer for ± €450 000, the equivalent price of a penthouse in the adjacent residential area Kop van Zuid. The *Vereniging Poortgebouw* was not informed about the change in ownership until it was non reversible. The private developer aimed to renovate the building for luxury offices although the Rotterdam market has 10 percent long-term vacancy (COS, 2009). After the legally required period of three years, the contract with the *Vereniging* was terminated; in 2004 the collective came under threat of eviction. Contesting the decision of the owner, a court case was launched with a joint effort of the collective and voluntary support of professionals. The court came to a verdict in 2010 and prohibited eviction with the argument that research of both the municipality and the *Vereniging* had proved there was no alternative location available for the collective with its specific way of living. The verdict is significant for the possibilities of co-housing on the real estate market in general. Furthermore, the condition of the *Poortgebouw* building and accounts of the *Poortgebouw Vereniging* demonstrate that the obligatory reservations for maintenance under HVAT subsidy regulations have not been spent for structural maintenance (correspondence between *Vereniging* and owner, May 2010). Both WBR, which after the privatisation was no longer monitored by the municipality, and the new owner, presumably for different reasons, neglected their responsibility. Such flaws in the continuity or follow-up of long-term public housing funding schemes could also be an argument to enhance the voice of tenants, who can signal deterioration from firsthand experience.

Meanwhile the *Vereniging Poortgebouw* developed an alternative renovation plan, demonstrating that upgrading could be done together with the residents, while simultaneously improving the conditions for opening up artistic and social activities to the neighbourhood and the city.

3.2 De Waterspin, The Hague (NL): at the forefront of sustainability

The Waterspin complex, located in the inner city of The Hague, was initiated in 1992 by a group of dwellers, resisting the demolition of buildings on a former water extraction area. They formed an association and developed an alternative plan based on ecological building, self-management and co-housing principles. The effort was rewarded as the unique qualities of the proposal convinced the municipality to support the plan, match the dwellers group to the developer and look for adequate planning conditions. Five years of planning and negotiation followed, during which a mix of renovation and new housing was composed to make the plan financially feasible. The building of the final plan started in 1997, involving the renovation of two buildings and construction of two new housing blocks with 21 social rental apartments, owned by a housing association (Vestia) and 18 owner-occupied houses. Unlike *Poortgebouw*, all units are fully equipped with individual kitchens and sanitary services. Furthermore there are seven cultural-economic units, a meeting room, and a community garden with playground. The community garden connects to the courtyard of another project adjacent to the Waterspin: the former Pander factory, first squatted and then converted to housing in self-management in 1990. The factory now houses 130 people and accommodates a number of social-cultural initiatives and entrepreneurs (Figure 7.5).

Many of the Waterspin initiators in 1992 were already on the waiting list of Pander, and both projects today show a relatively low turn-over of residents. The surrounding historical

Figure 7.5 Waterspin, a combination of renovation and new construction with a semi-public courtyard for play and meeting. On the right side, its predecessor the Pander building (Source: photo by Tussen Ruimte 2010)

urban tissue consists of both privately owned and public housing and small as well as larger commercial units. The Waterspin association does not own the real estate, and residents have individual contracts which mean the housing association determines the rental prices, and the real estate market influences sale prices of the apartments.

The ecological ambitions of the Waterspin translated into the application of sustainable building material and a common installation for washing machines to recycle grey water (which residents are not obliged to use, each apartment also is equipped with a connection for a private washing machine). There is also a shared heating system with geothermal heat-pumps, constructed by the regional energy-supply company when a subsidy became available from a national programme to advance the implementation of new building technology.[9]

The Waterspin collective manages by contract the maintenance of the environment and the technical equipment of the rental and private houses as well as the outdoor space. As in *Poortgebouw*, the residents need to be members of the association, which in *Waterspin* demands affiliation with the ecosystem of its community garden as well as participation in one of the working groups. Participating in this way provides the opportunity to form social networks inside the estate and acquire technical or administrative knowledge and skills. Although there are ups and downs, the association has mobilised sufficient input to remain flourishing since 1998, as became clear during a guided tour with ODE-members in April 2010.[10] At present (2011), some *Waterspin* residents are involved in a new and again advanced eco-project (*Vormidabel*) to be developed in The Hague, sharing their valuable experience in sustainable building and co-housing in the planning process.

The Waterspin project is a typical example of a citizens' initiative built in the Netherlands in the 1990s, of which there exist around 20 with advanced ecological and cohabitation standards. These projects differ from many of the earlier initiatives that rose out of the squatter movement in abandoned estates, not only in ecological (energy) ambitions but also in the technical service level for the individual units. Its residents choose to be part of collective action in various degrees, parallel to being part of a private household.

4. Co-housing, the planning process and housing systems

> *The form and operation of planning systems are embedded in their historical context, the socioeconomic, political and cultural patterns that have given rise to particular forms of government and law. Underlying the contextual differences is the social model. This is exemplified particularly well in some countries where strong state intervention in spatial development was established as part of the postwar welfare state. (Nadin and Stead, 2008: 35, emphasis by author)*

The problems the initiatives are faced with in the process of realisation (design and building) can be grouped in two major issues: the *process* and the *substance* of planning.

Firstly, citizens assume a role in the building process that is not common (Defilipis, 2004; Roberts, 2006). In the Netherlands for example, large and well established housing compa-

9 SEV/Novem Voorbeeldprojecten Demonstration projects duurzaam sustainable bouwenbuilding 1996-2001.

10 ODE: organization for renewable energy (http://www.duurzameenergie.org).

nies provide housing for the rental market and an extensive range of developers offer turn-key ownership housing. Instead of being 'tenants' or 'consumers' in the field of building and energy/water infrastructure, citizens in building collectives become commissioners, co-producers, co-designers and in some cases even (self-)builders. In practice, every project needs to redesign the financial models, forms of (co)tenure, even out factors to recognise differentiated input of all members and so on. Despite the permanent demand, the institutionalised view is that only a minority of residents would be interested in co-housing, and it is not considered a potential 'third way' to a sustainable society (Maury, 2009). There is no structural recognition for this type of active citizenship in current market procedures. Demographic changes make it more likely that the demand will grow (VROMraad, 2009) however co-housing is so far not part of the major housing market surveys.

Secondly, the building initiatives are confronted with the standardised models for housing, services and, separately, industry or offices. The nuclear family household is deeply engrained in the documents and procedures of architecture and planning (Coleman et al, 1996; Tummers, 2010). For example, calculation models for energy performance cannot be applied because instead of the required standard functional rooms ('living/dining/bed') there is a number of 'flex' rooms and a community kitchen. The desire for open, interrelated spaces or shared zones in-between public space and private dwelling makes it difficult to apply fire regulations. Production and consumption of energy (such as wind or solar) is not permitted within the project without intervention of an official energy company. Certain 'industrial' activities (such as carpentry-workshops, child-care, hairdressers) cannot be combined with housing under the vigilant zoning plans.

The question then arises: Which regulations of planning instruments need to change to improve conditions for co-housing?

4.1 Planning process

Kuenzli and Lengkeek treat the consequences of a society with increasingly active citizenship for the creation of housing and urban environments in 'urban jazz' (Kuenzli and Lengkeek 2004). In their view, by departing from the contemporary urban context which is pluriform and contains manifold possibilities, increased participation of citizens becomes a logical consequence for democratic processes. Direct involvement of citizens in the creation and management of housing and the environment has more potential to do justice to both equality as well as diversity. However, Kuenzli and Lengkeek signal that individualist approaches, such as allotment for self-building and regulation free zones, may lead to fragmentation and loss of urban quality. In their view the rise of the 'self-build city' is primarily a challenge to transform the building process, where citizens obtain a new position alongside professionals. Following the *Lefebrian* concept of housing as a form to inscribe in a community, they propose a reversal of the planning process, whereby inhabitants become true 'clients' or 'developers', as the best option to create varied and liveable environments in complex cities (*urban jazz,* Kuenzli and Lengkeek, 2004:45). Herck and De Meulder (2009) express similar views in the 'statements' of *Wonen in Meervoud*: 'housing in plural creates more liveable urban environments' (wonen in meervoud statement 3).

Rather than placing full responsibility on the weakest shoulders, as a solution for social cohesion and urban problems, Kuenzli and Lengkeek plea for new forms of design, regulation, coordination and decision making, steered by models of connectivity and proximity of

Figure 7.6 Almere Homeruskwartier November 2010 (Source: photos by author)

functions for specific activity patterns. A transformation of planning processes is required that involves all parties in defining new roles and new instruments.

Almere's revision of planning procedures

Almere is one of the first Dutch cities to re-structure the planning process with the aim to 'make citizens the primary actor in urban development' as responsible alderman A. Duivesteijn states.[11] As a major 'New Town' in the Netherlands, Almere considers itself a 'pioneering city' with a spirit suitable for innovation, and a tradition in small scale experiments with self-built housing. The generalisation of this policy, transforming the planning process in all of its planned extensions, goes beyond temporary experiments and is also motivated by the wish to 'offer a wide scope of housing models to residents: from catalogue to self-designed' (Duivesteijn in his introduction to the Homeruskwartier). Before embarking on this new development, Almere has been taking a look beyond the borders of the Netherlands, learning amongst others from the city of Tübingen (Germany).

The city of Almere plans to put over 600 plots per year on the market between 2006 and 2015, varying from 100 to 4000 m^2 , with a corresponding price-range. The urban plans aim for much freedom in the design of the dwellings providing 'building envelopes' for the maximal built-up volume. To create different but harmonious environments, thematic areas are defined, such as 'luxury housing' (emphasising architectural quality), 'ecological living' (both in free-standing housing or attached apartments), or mixed use such as in *Homeruskwartier* (quarter) (Figure 7.6), combined with work spaces and services.

In *Homeruskwartier* the urban plan is organised in housing rows with parking on the premises, in the central area with housing blocks that surround an underground parking garage topped with a community garden. For the construction of the parking and foundations, a contribution of €14 000 per dwelling needs to be paid on top of the price of the land.

Around 3000 plots are reserved for moderate income (€22 000 to €36 500/year before taxation) households with home-ownership ambitions. Building costs are maximised to €188 500, with a co-finance, depending on income, from the *IkbouwbetaalbaarinAlmere* (IBBA: I build affordable in Almere) fund. This co-financed share needs to be bought by the residents when their income rises. In contrast with other such arrangements offered by Dutch

11 Expressed in various media such as the website and brochures for self-building in Almere, as well as local TV, in 2009.

housing corporations selling stock to tenants, the houses can be sold on the market without conditions. Next to buying, IBBA subsidises professional financial consultancy in the planning process — a service also offered to but optional for self-funded builders.

The municipality further supports self-building candidates with a programme of seminars, courses and a handbook, as well as a website offering information on experiences and insight in costs and bottlenecks. They 'warn' candidates that building their own house is an adventure that requires much effort but also has a payoff: private clients obtain more space and more quality for a similar budget (Noorman, 2006; SEV, 2009).

Not only individual participating households benefit from this policy: during the financial crisis of 2008 to 2009 the building production by professional developers stagnated, while investments in the areas for self-building continued, albeit to a lesser extent (http://www.propertynl.com/index-newsletter/bouwproductie-almere-bereikt-nulpunt/ 15 October 2010).

As *Homeruskwartier* is still under construction, it is too early to say what this form of self-managed housing contributes to social structures in the neighbourhood. Small-scale projects have shown that going through a joint planning process at least breaks with the anonymity of neighbours and often leads to continued contacts. Indeed, during the process of design, ideas for shared spaces or implementation of renewable energies often arise. In *Homeruskwartier* such options are restricted by the urban framework. Nevertheless Almere is open to co-housing, inviting groups of three parties and more (comparable to the German *Baugruppen*) to present themselves and offering services to find co-builders. So far, the majority of candidates are individual households; co-housing initiatives have been proposed but have yet to start. Partly this may be explained by the existing rules and regulations, the building envelopes and the additional costs attached to the programme. Illustrative of one major dilemma in urban planning is the obligation for each dwelling in Almere to connect to the central heating system provided by the urban infrastructure, at an investment of € 6 000. The heating system, tendered some years before to a major energy company, uses waste-heat from a nearby plant and was an environmental achievement of its time. In practice, considering new developments in 'smart' energy networks, this requirement discourages small scale alternative solutions. Another factor may be the location of this new town which is seen as peripheral and suburban. A citizens' initiative for an eco-village in Brabant, region in southern Netherlands with positive environmental reputation generated a response of 100 candidates in its first three months (http://www.ecodorpbrabant.nl 2009).

4.2 Planning culture and regulations

Almere's policy follows the principle to make residents 'producers' rather than 'consumers' of housing. To introduce private clients to the building process is not self-evident in Dutch building practice: 'governmental bodies, contractors and banks are not yet sufficiently geared to private clients; while people do not realize that building a home is also possible for them' (http://www.ikbouwmijnhuisinalmere.nl).

Besides providing the land, Almere is also working on changing attitudes inside its administration. For example, building inspectors are instructed to work with special contracts and communicate with potential builders.

The German cities of Hamburg, Berlin and München also have supportive infrastructure for small housing cooperatives, in the form of consultancies and networking. This could explain the more than average number of projects in those cities. On the one hand it can be

considered as recognition of co-housing as ‘a third way’. On the other hand the policies are also perceived as ‘gentrification and appeasement strategies’ to channel the local urban and squatter movements (Defilpis, 2004). A closer look into the local circumstances is needed to establish whether policies for self-managed housing are primarily answering to the needs of an articulate financial or cultural ‘elite’, or effectively making the housing market more accessible. More systematic comparison of international case studies could shed light on specific conditions required for planning systems to develop in the direction of what Kuenzli and Lengkeek call ‘urban jazz’.

In a collaborative design process the role of architects and planners changes (Healey, 1997/ 2005). The dwellers themselves have the best understanding of the logistics of their everyday, and combining careful listening with thorough professional knowledge can lead to a more efficient plan. Challenging standard housing typologies demands from architects an understanding of building technology, physics and building regulations rather than aesthetic images. Not all architects find this satisfactory and not all architectural schools equip future professionals for this type of job. In the Netherlands this has already produced a new type of profession: the building coach (or procedure consultant) who guides a group through decision making and ‘translates’ the technocratic planning vocabulary (see for example http://www.ecollectief.com/). Or as Reed (2008:18) states in a more general way:

> *Many of the limitations experienced in participatory processes have their roots in the organisational cultures of those who sponsor or participate in them. For example, although non-negotiable positions are often the result of regulatory constraints, they may simply be the result of pre-determined positions decided at higher levels within the organisation prior to participation in the process, that representatives do not feel able to negotiate.*

4.3 Planning substance

Without supportive policy, the projects initiated by dwellers groups often had great difficulty in obtaining land and building permits. Despite these difficulties, since the 1980s collective forms of living (such as *Poortgebouw*) have been realised in monumental buildings or complexes, proving that self-managed projects provide housing solutions for specific (not catered to) groups and low-cost affordable accommodation. Newly built projects from the 1980s such as *Het Groene Dak* in Utrecht or *MW2* in Den Bosch illustrate that these qualities can be durable.

Pro-active municipalities such as Almere cannot (and do not aim to) escape the national building law, but rather try to make planning procedures accessible for citizens and to find ways to accommodate individual aspirations. At the same time, insertion in the urban tissue and health and safety principles need to be guaranteed for future generations. Established dwelling designs have proven to live up to these standards, which have produced certain implicit design criteria. Related to these models, co-housing initiatives often change the boundaries between private and public, offering for example mixed use, not complying with zoning plan terminology, or mixed income accommodation which does not fit housing allocation criteria. This makes fulfilling the requirements of building permission more complicated. For example, do front doors of apartments have to meet similar criteria when they are on the street, separating a fully serviced unit, or on a common hallway leading to the community kitchen? What are the noise transmission limits for shared studios or children’s (play) rooms forming

part of a jointly managed estate? The allocation of locks, fire walls and steering systems for heating and other installations can be a rational safety measure in one case, while being an everyday nuisance in others.

Co-housing initiatives created a client oriented consultancy infrastructure for themselves: the Amsterdam based association *VrijeRruimte* (Vacant Space, also: free space) for example unites practical advice and shared experience. On their website 'DIY' information is available such as financial models or a fire-regulation and prevention measures guide. Potential co-housing projects can visit existing projects and share experiences at meetings or through digital platforms. Unions or educational centres often offer courses or seminars (Eurotopia, eco-villages/co-habiter, *Werkplaats Omslag*, *reseau-relier*). The *Bürgerbüreau Stadtentwicklung* in Hannover and the organisation *Ecoquartiers* in Strasbourg offer similar services.

Co-housing can also be confronted with conflicting political aims, producing problematic planning or housing instruments. The *Poortgebouw* group for example was confronted with new anti-speculative regulations of the municipality designed to regulate speculation with housing for immigrant workers. Slumlords renting out bedrooms at high prices and escaping housing norms made use of the label of co-housing (*woongroep*) to lower standards of facilities. The new regulation specifies that in order to qualify as co-housing, private rooms must not have a lock on the door. Besides the potential interference of privacy, in a community of 30 artists, the regulation obliges each member to construct a large cupboard to keep costly equipment such as musical instruments or ICT, taking time for every use to unpack and re-install. Whereas in smaller groups this may not be a problem, the scale of the *Poortgebouw* allows them to keep room for try-out performance, band-practice, courses and other vital elements for starters. The consequences were pointed out to the administration, and the regulation — due to its long-standing reputation as a community — has so far not been enforced.

4.4 Housing provision

To increase the percentage of self-managed housing, in the Netherlands since 2001 collective building processes have been facilitated (see chapter Boelens and Visser). The policy of directly commissioned housing (private development or housing in self-management) is unprecedented in the history of Dutch housing policies.[12] This is primarily the result of a neo-liberal social model based on private ownership, however it provides opportunities for client-driven housing. The policy's first goal of collective building processes is to create owner-occupant homes for a wider public. On the side, there is an implicit discourse of social cohesion, especially for projects initiated in run-down neighbourhoods. Home-owners are expected to create more stable environments to protect the value of their property.

In the 1990s the number of projects increased rapidly and led to the installation of a housing association in the Dutch province Gelderland, specialised in self-managed rental contracts: *Woningbouw Vereniging Gelderland* (WBVG). WBVG is the owner of about 20 locations of co-housing and self-managed living. In the yearly report 2009, its director Bernard Smits states: '….the housing corporation should facilitate accommodation in any form: rental, owner-occupancy, co-housing…as a partner for residents who in their turn take care of liveability in their neighbourhoods.' (http://www.wbvg.nl, July 2010).

12 On 16 April 1998 Dutch parliament passed a motion that summoned the government to strive for thirty percent of housing production in some form of self-management.

For the established housing associations to become a partner for co-housing collectives, it will be necessary to reconsider standards of housing design as well as allocation criteria. It is no longer functional to relate the number of household members to the number of rooms, for example, shared spaces have to be taken into account. A recent BBR (*Bundesamt für Bauwesen und Raumordnung)* study *Modelle genossenschaftliches wohnen* identifies four fields of action to update housing associations for contemporary conditions (especially for gender mainstreaming):[13]

1. diversification of the members and inhabitants; for example a mix of generations to ensure continuity;
2. the typology of its real estate; including access to semi-public fluid zones;
3. the models of organisation; ensuring all voices are heard and balancing housing allocation criteria;
4. the embedding within the neighbourhood; stimulating (social) relations rather than fencing 'safe havens' yet protecting the character of 'green oases'.

(Droste et al., 2007, examples added by author)

5. Conclusions

Self-managed initiatives are now starting to provide a substantial alternative to both rental and turn-key buying, and are challenging planning systems. Local planning structures prevent collectives from coming into fruition, as well as they slow down the emergence of new forms of building, housing, use and management of public space. Underlying these practice-oriented questions is the scientific interest to understand how changes of social models are reflected in the operational structures of spatial planning practice, including the academic practice of education and research. The answers need to be sought at all layers of planning; testing the visible and instrumental as well as interrogating the implicit assumptions and local 'unwritten rules' of planning culture and tradition.

Although self-initiated and co-housing projects are qualified as promising by policy-makers as well as residents, other parties such as developers, administrators and builders often remain hesitant or even discourage new sustainable technology and communal facilities to avoid risks for their firms or departments. They are bound to procedures and regulations for building permits and finance that are not adapted to collectives as clients. Besides realistically assessed hindrances, the recent discussions about demand-oriented design and facilitating partnership development demonstrate degrees of paternalism that show little faith in the capacity or durability of residents collectives. Overcoming such attitudes is also instrumental to further the position of dwellers' initiatives.

Networks for co-housing or self-managed housing have meanwhile constructed a body of knowledge that provides useful anchors for up-scaling. Taking into consideration the experiences that self-initiated projects have built since the 1980s will contribute to making planning systems more accessible. Their contribution to urban quality and experimentation with built form remains unrecorded. The full scope of co-housing in its spatial-social characteristics,

13 Models for cooperative housing.

such as location (urban centrality or periphery), land use, (alternative) housing layout, quality and additional services, the application of renewable energy and sustainable building technology, as well as the origins of the initiators (the dwellers) in social, cultural and economic sense has not yet been mapped. This makes it difficult to draw conclusions on the emancipatory and ecological potential which co-housing projects show in practice. Above all, assessing the impacts require tuning into different, contemporary or future-oriented forms of organising living space, a redefinition of what is public, semi public/collective or private.

The German tradition, the relatively young Dutch policy and the changes in Belgian policies to stimulate building initiatives from dwellers groups raises expectations of the place of co-housing in planning procedures. The transformations of planning processes in towns like Tübingen, Almere or Strasbourg demonstrate that a structural embedding of citizens' housing initiatives is possible. The experiences of dwellers as well as professionals that start to percolate into the housing and planning systems are a rich field for further analyses. The transition of the building process from a 'top down structure' to 'resident-managed processes' will require changes in the planning system at cultural, instrumental, legal and technical level.

The *Poortgebouw* case for example illustrates that the legal position of housing collectives is not sufficiently regulated. Apparently, the *Vereniging* (association) was not to be considered as a 'tenant' with rights to become potential buyer. Secondly, it took the courts six years to decide if a collective can be considered to hold tenants' rights, such as the right to be re-housed if inevitable for renovation.

New forms of contracts between residents in the cooperative, between the collective and the professionals are needed, as well as revisions of paragraphs of building law and building regulations that deal with collective space, especially fire-regulations assuring safety while allowing flexibility and openness. The abolishment and re-instalment of cooperative ownership in France provides lessons for the real estate sector to open up its financing and administration structures to collective forms of use and ownership.

Supportive infrastructure for self-managed building and co-housing (instead of having to reinvent the planning wheel over again) is not only relevant to a small group of idealists. The demand in numbers for diversified housing typology and new forms of communities are as yet still unrevealed. However trend studies and housing networks indicate that this demand is likely to grow. Policies that make citizens actors of urban quality also need to look at the implementation trajectories that too often frustrate otherwise enthusiastic and valuable initiatives.

After all, accommodation is a means rather than an end. In the long run residents want to focus their energy on the interaction and activities the accommodations are created for. Or, as Turner wrote in 1972, 'When people have no control over, nor responsibility for key decisions in the housing process, dwelling environments may instead become a barrier to personal fulfilment and a burden to the economy'.

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8. Conclusions

Evert Hasselaar[1] and Lei Qu[2]

1. Call for the new participatory housing approach

1.1 Traditional preference making approaches

Preference making is the activity by which occupants realise their housing needs in the total range of choices, which could have different levels of influence on housing production processes. The authors' interest in this book is in more direct and higher levels of influence. Several cases have been presented which highlight some common themes: occupant groups acting as the cooperative developer, self-management in existing buildings and participation in the design process for a housing area. The role of occupants as buyers of new homes on the market is used as the reference situation, based on preference making that spans the total range of 'choice' on the market to 'voice' over the location, type and layout of dwellings, as well as the surrounding built environment.

After looking into the different case studies, research on housing preferences that optimise commercial market potential can be considered as the extreme expression of the concept of choice. This strategy views the market as open (enough), encouraging developers or authorities to create urban solutions and housing options from the perspective of commercial success: the local authorities need a maximum income from lending building options, while the investors need to minimise financial risk or, in other words optimise profit. This situation has become the status quo in which the authorities and commercial developers have a strong inter-dependent role, especially in agreeing on the directives concerning urban quality, density, building height, housing types and price range. Individual preferences of occupants tend to be materialised in the final stage of the planning process, when ownership is effective and a clear relationship between developer/construction firm and buyer has been established. The individual preferences often relate to the services (kitchen and bedroom), attics and details such as interior wall and ceiling finishes. Housing with minimal services is delivered, so the

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buyer can adapt the house to individual taste at minor cost. Practice shows that one of the first remodelling activities of buyers is to replace the kitchen fittings and the bathroom interior to match individual preferences. To avoid unnecessary waste disposal and the loss of money, houses can be purchased without these services or at least with products that were selected in the position of 'voice'.

1.2 The new initiatives

In urbanised areas in the Netherlands the demand and production of housing is not balanced, with shortages affecting prices and choice options. Good earning power and being young enough to pay off a mortgage before the age of 65 to 70 years (over a period of up to 30 years) leads to a focus on two-income, young couples. This demographic, including the children that will eventually be additions to these young families, characterises the population in new urban areas. Single starters, young individuals and elderly people have less influence on preference making; similarly a large part of the population with medium to low income must resort to rental homes in the housing stock. Most people accept this market focus on young, financially sound professionals as a fact. Only a small number of people that do not or cannot accept this condition will take the initiative to create living and working environments that meet preferences, which are not available on the market. The meaning of these initiatives reaches further than individual preferences: it highlights the type of built environments that are neglected by mainstream housing production. Both the physical expression of these non-mainstream preferences and the social structure of collectively created environments are important. These examples make up the reason for this book: the voice approach is promoted as one way of adding to preference making for living and working provisions that are not yet covered by traditional producers.

A social environment that reflects individual needs can be considered as the highest level of preference making. In order to realise this, users interact with each other to create a community. When occupants want to promote good community performance from the planning phase onwards, they need the opportunity to be part of a process that involves neighbours during the design phase, so that the urban plan — including the public spaces, the buildings and the allocation of houses — can be discussed. When individual preferences match with the preferences of other users, they become group preferences. Many of these group processes have resulted in well functioning neighbourhoods with good physical and functional qualities that are as a fact not commonly found in commercial developments. Examples of functions that are difficult to find in commercial developments are the shared facilities, workshops, semi-private green areas, car free environments, fruit trees in the streets, small scale heat or energy supplies etc. Also, collective maintenance activities that are accepted as normal and that contribute to social cohesion in cooperative housing will not be found in commercial developments. Furthermore, these cooperatives have presented many innovative solutions for sustainable living environments. Tummers rephrases in her article the triple 'P' of sustainable development in a revealing way:

- *Planet:* Many initiatives are at the forefront of the use of renewable energy and ecological building materials. The collective investment and land allocation allows for larger scale measures such as reed-filter water purification.
- *Prosperity*: Most projects show integration of workspace, childcare, meeting rooms or public spaces — leading to new arrangements of private and public space and in

many projects work is incorporated, and sometimes not based on exchange of labour for money.
- *People:* Searching for a new concept of community, creating accessible and protected environments where residents can find a place regardless of stereotyping.

These group processes may increase voice as well as choice of the residents and can be regarded as the means to reach a more satisfying living environment. One of the conclusions of this book is that the involvement of future occupants in the development and design process leads to more variety in the built environment, and to the possibility that some groups will experience more direct responses to their needs.

The case studies reveal that participation in self-creation of neighbourhoods is not for everyone; that a socially active, positive and intellectual group of people will pioneer this field. This does not mean exclusion of less privileged people, but rather a selection based on cultural background, those willing to take care for the environment, and to dedicate time and energy for the community. The formation of a cooperative group is not based on income, race, intellect etc., but indeed this formation selects people who want to be part of this development process.

Critics have asked if self-defined housing and participatory planning can solve segregation and involve minorities and less privileged people. Cooperation and self-defined housing takes place among people of all kinds of cultures and income levels and with all kinds of positions in society. It is not a cure for societal problems, but rather it is taking a voice position in the field of environmental planning and maintenance.

1.3 Changing lifestyles

Another reason for participatory development processes in housing provision is related to the diversified demands generated by changing societal and lifestyle patterns in recent years. Researchers have observed economic and social transformations along with redevelopment and repopulation of cities, which reflect common trends worldwide. The aging population is one of these widespread trends. People in this demographic trend tend to demand smaller homes and more transportation options than younger households. Another demographic trend is smaller households and fewer households with children. While household size is decreasing, the demand for housing units is actually increasing, even with the total population in decline. Moreover, the large amount of immigrants moving to the cities has also brought a multi-cultural dimension to the housing demands, which is a common challenge for cities anywhere in the world. Besides the demographic changes, some global trends also have changed the way people live and thus their housing preferences. For instance, rising fuel prices and financial constraints have reduced the demand for sprawling automobile-dependent locations. While there is growing congestion in the cities, as traffic and parking congestion increases, the value of more accessible, multi-modal locations with alternative modes of transportation tends to increase.

These new trends and demands have made housing preferences more and more complex and individualised; no longer fully covered by the traditional catalogue choices from the market. Moreover, the socio-spatial problems appearing nowadays partly reflect the defect of the traditional housing provision system, which has been unable to maintain the social environment within a community, within this changing urban context. Therefore it is time to invent a

new pillar of the housing provision system, next to income support, inclusive labour markets and equal access to housing, which integrates the main driving force of the society — its people. This pillar is the self-supporting community, consisting of active and creative people who want to share ideas on housing and want to be part of joint activities that improve the social atmosphere and physical conditions in the neighbourhood.

2. Review of the case studies

The question of the book is: What are the conditions under which an increase of people's choice and voice over the places they inhabit contribute to more liveable urban areas? Related to this central question each chapter defined sub-questions, which are:

- How is active citizen engagement formulated in recent urban policy and frameworks of implementation in deprived neighbourhoods?
- What practical examples illustrate different levels of user participation?
- How do market parties deal with participation in the design process?
- How can a sustainable perspective be given to self-organised housing with an outside-in approach?
- How could collective client controlled development meet the demands of the self-help-developers most adequately?
- How can actors of change get informed about needs in neighbourhoods and districts?
- How can users have more influence on meeting user preferences? What are the bottlenecks in the planning system for implementing self-managed housing?

Based on these questions, the case studies presented in this book have shown various methods that have been implemented in planning and design practices in recent years, which have generated quite different results, from social, economic and spatial points of view.

2.1 From 'clients' to preference making

A result is that new strategies as alternatives for market-preference-survey methods are necessary. The traditional study that uses 10 to15 minute surveys to understand housing preferences is too short sighted, and does not reach the customers' conscious demands. Possible alternative strategies are:

1. focus on specific target groups, organise focus group discussions,
2. use ateliers or creative workshops to get input from active people in the communities,
3. organise cooperative housing projects,
4. follow participatory design processes.

The ladder of citizen influence can be reconstructed (Figure 8.1).

Although different target groups can be engaged, increased attention should be given to the vulnerable, whose interests are more likely to be neglected, as they are lacking a mechanism for communication. This refers especially to the so-called problem neighbourhoods in which the people with socio-economic troubles gather in such high concentrations that affluent residents often start to move out. A participatory decision making processes is necessary,

which may lead to a solution that meets the local demands, which could not be fully realised by the regular approaches. The protest movement of the late 1960s has indicated that participatory approaches can highlight the interest of vulnerable groups. Nowadays, socially oriented project development must take place and solidarity with groups other than those who are interested from a speculative point of view must occur. Design ateliers might be a useful method to enhance communication and help to turn the tide towards the 'whole' community. This enhanced cooperation that introduces residents as actors within the process may even reduce the financial risk for project developers. In other words: risk is taken by more people, even when their societal position is relatively weak. Again, this is a matter of taking the voice position of users rather than looking at profit from the perspective of the developer alone.

2.2 Results

The results of the case studies show different ways to increase voice and choice for residents, and most of the approaches bring forms of collectivity and participation to the building/rebuilding of neighbourhoods, which may contribute to improving the level of social cohesion. With these approaches, local residents can benefit from the enhanced social capital and adapt the living environment to their own demands. To a certain extent, this may also contribute to the quality of life. As long as principles for these new forms of development can be supported by policy changes and planning system adaptation, they can be institutionalised as alternative approaches for housing provision.

Projects commissioned privately or collectively by users themselves are not always cheaper than regular projects, both money-wise and time-wise. There is also a potential threat of turning the collective and participatory projects into an aim, instead of the means to meet the changing demands and preferences of consumers. When participation becomes a generalised 'green' hobby, it may generate conflicts with social processes and cultural perceptions in different local communities. One of the dangers of group-wise development is the tendency

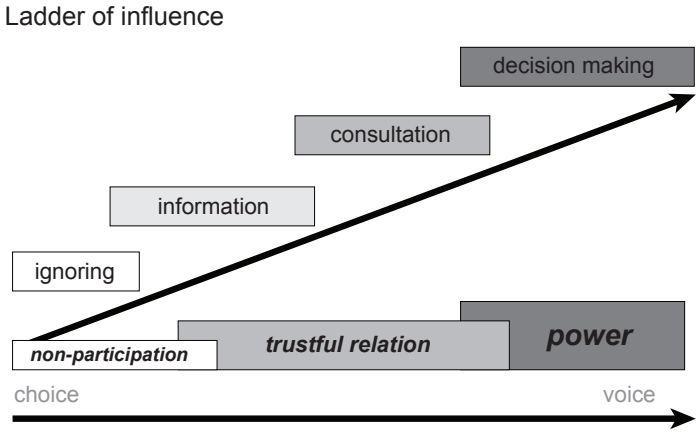

Figure 8.1. New ladder of citizen participation (Source: Evert Hasselaar)

to organise a housing development to be inward looking, disregarding connections to the surrounding areas or the larger scale of the city-quarters. Though this trend does not reflect gated communities, there is nevertheless the risk that people outside the cooperative group will perceive a negative image of an elitist group formation. Some interviews highlight this risk by stating that the cooperative is open-minded and actively attempts to involve the community outside the development in their activities. Nevertheless, the die-hards who outlive the dropouts from cooperative projects may find it sometimes difficult to start the integration and communication process with new members of the group all over again, when people have left after a crisis or a period of standstill. These processes are faced with many difficulties that are not different from other processes in which people have to work together.

3. New roles of the actors

At present, housing market developments focus by and large on new neighbourhoods for a specific section of the population. The balance between demands and products requires diversity and competition between producers (including cooperatives), the individual builders, and the catalogue buyers. In this sense, it is essential to think about the power and roles of the different actors involved, namely, whether or not these should be changed. Examining important stakeholders and how their positions and roles influence matters of choice and voice has led to important findings. Urban restructuring areas, however, show more diverse initiatives.

Currently, design of the newly constructed market housing is scarcely influenced by consumers, since participation is not an issue. The consumers do have choices in the housing market, however, these are mainly catalogue choices determined by market forces. In this case, the consumers have weaker power than project developers, which is the main barrier for a higher level of citizen influence. Nowadays the project developer is indeed an important stakeholder, considering the partnerships with public and private bodies. Due to the fact that land ownership of the construction site is the key to a power position, and the project developers take high risks, they must become large companies that work on many locations and with a large turnover. Their relationship with local communities is intricate: when the community does not own the construction site, they are forced to cooperate with the owner-project developer, who in turn will try to exert influence on the urban design and the differentiation of housing types to minimise risk. In a booming market this will result in high end housing types, for wealthy people, or for groups that are most willing to pay a high price, that represent a low risk for banks loaning money. In a normal market, a developer starts building when about 70 percent of the dwellings have been sold, but the construction of a new development cannot wait too long, because the first buyers can become impatient and may abandon the project. In a slow market the developers are the first to stop production and their role tends to increase the housing shortage in a regional housing market.

When a local community develops a construction site, a design competition is often held for teams of urban planners and architects, together with the project developer and the construction company. The winner provides a plan based on the winning concept, however, that tends to become frozen after the selection procedure. Where the local community takes one further step on the ladder of citizen participation, they may sell individual plots or organise a participation procedure for the development, or invite cooperative groups to propose plans.

These latter strategies may create projects based on participatory planning or delegated control, and cooperative development. A project developer can be a partner in these cooperative developments, based on an agreement that grants the decision making about the plan and investments to the cooperative, while the developer provides expert knowledge on process management for financing and construction. Construction companies build according to the plan of the architect, and follow instructions for materials and details. Many new construction sites for housing are created by a combination of project developer and construction company: the construction company imparts the developer with the purpose of acquiring construction sites or winning positions in design competitions. This allows both the developer and the builder to get work. In this case the consumer has choice, based on what the market of new houses provides and advertises in glossy folders. This is also a kind of 'catalogue housing', except that the house and location are fixed, while a catalogue house supposes a start with an empty plot.

Housing associations also tend to play the role of project developers. In newly developed areas, the number of social rented dwellings decreased from about 60 percent in the 1960s to 1980s to only 20 to 30 percent today. The role of the social housing association has changed: once acting as major developers, now they may take over the houses developed by the commercial developer, or they may involve an associated developer to create projects. To facilitate the creation of development agencies that work for the housing associations, the housing associations have gone through a large reorganisation process during the past 15 years, reducing the number of housing associations by about 50 percent and creating large, amalgamated organisations. One of the driving factors for these mergers has been the quantity of houses and financial position in the market required for a successful project developer role. They are now performing as the social counterpart to the profit oriented developers, providing new social functions in housing areas, which may include the creation of social services such as school buildings or shopping centres. However, they are hardly different from the commercial developers in planning procedures and the involvement of users.

In this context the role of the architect is minimised, serving the developer.[3] Few architects take on a role as a consumer oriented participatory designer. However, many interesting examples show the architect taking on the role of advocate, mediator, or translator of the local demands, for instance in cooperative housing projects. This book highlights many of these examples, where the architects support initiatives for new projects both with knowledge and design work for the cooperative development. Generally speaking, in a collaborative design process, the role of the architect is different compared with the traditional client-consultant. Based on the dwellers' demands and understanding of logistics, the architect will be the partner to support these ideas with their professional knowledge of building technology and regulations, reflected in a highly satisfactory plan.

An essential question to raise is: what is the new role of the public sectors, for example the planning sector and the housing sector? This issue is critical, since these are the actors that may have influence on policy changes, and eventually change the housing system.

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3 In the Netherlands the share of individual built houses is very small: 10 percent, based on private plots and individual selection of an architect, mainly in gold coast areas at the green borders of new developments and in rural areas. The role of architects is dominant in this field, and there is growing competition of ready-designed and built catalogue houses.

Currently there are many challenges for the public sector in relation to the involvement of people in urban planning and housing construction processes, which is mainly due to the above mentioned strong influence from the housing market, and the correlated institutional changes. Furthermore, the concern of the public sector to create liveable urban areas for all the social strata is already beyond the topic of housing and instead related to creating mixed use urban areas with vitality. Therefore more diverse and comprehensive urban development strategies should be provided, focusing on the key issues of integrating working and living, towards mobilising preference making in the housing stock and providing new policies for social revitalisation. On the other hand, it is also necessary to direct different forms of bottom up initiatives (for example private commissioning, collective private commissioning and participatory commissioning, or any other types of do-it-yourself rebuilding/renovation projects) towards restructuring existing housing areas, where solutions for socio-spatial problems are currently under exploited. This can be achieved at the level of individual needs, as well as social, care-related or communal lifestyles. The following section will summarise the necessary innovations in planning, design and development processes, most of which are related to the changes in the work of the public sectors.

4. Innovation in planning, design and development processes

People's participation in urban renewal and regeneration processes requires both trust and investment from the different actors involved. However, in reality the relationship among these actors normally is uneven, due to the existing differences in power (for example, who will pay and make decisions). Compared with the public sector, developers and housing associations, the individual participants or even the local communities are lacking the capacity and financial means to provide alternative planning approaches. Therefore another aim of participatory approaches should be related to capacity building, for all groups including vulnerable groups whose lives will be influenced by planning and design interventions. Here the capacity building mainly aims toward local capacity of individuals and stakeholders to initiate, plan or develop projects on their own. It will enable these users to be involved and have influence during different phases of the planning and design process.

4.1 Formation of the platforms

From the design point of view, the user orientation requires involvement and participation of the residents, which should be based on agreements and dedication of time and effort in the decision making process. Good process management is essential to the success of the projects. This may be realised in different ways, such as creating a network of people who would like to be socially active and are motivated to support the process; organising events in which participants are of equal importance, with level input of ideas and cooperative decision making. Discussion and communication are needed, in which differences in creativity, level of expertise and communication skills should not limit the opportunities for participation, fostering the mutual support of positive ideas. New media and new preferences for social action can be rewarded. Communication strategies have become more dynamic, open ended and based on bottom up initiatives. Blogs, project websites and email traffic has taken over the exclusive professional information channels. The democratisation of information is part of

the democratisation of planning. Input of ideas can have a limitless number of expressions, but still needs to be read, needs to have feedback and translation into expert proposals and feasibility studies. Often, the scale is the local community and the relationship with community experts changes as well, using new media for level communication. Now city communities promote self-realisation, creative community building and interaction with other people as positive social qualities. Participatory planning and cooperative commissioning are illustrations of social actions that have proven to work both in the physical and social context. The present period is ready for up-scaling and dedicated policy orientation, both on the national and on the local level.

Local authorities are in the position to link these processes to urban planning, meaning that the local community is the place to stimulate and facilitate these processes. Architects may take the actual role of facilitator and coach of initiative groups. The traditional developer (new participation oriented types have many opportunities) can become a welcome partner in the coalitions. Before this role becomes realistic, the market domination by commercial developers that exerts power on the basis of ownership of construction sites must be stopped. Only the local authorities as urban planners can stop this. Also, we now see that commercial developers make coalitions with cooperative development groups and consider these groups as an easy way to create projects with guaranteed sales. A coalition with groups of buyers does not guarantee voice. For voice in development process, the rules must change, and the local community must make new rules work, in which the commercial developers deliver services that are paid for by the cooperative.

Boelens and Visser select the following recommendations for the future:

- to focus less on costs and architecture but more on cohesion and sustainability;
- to direct new ways of commissioning towards restructuring existing stock;
- to direct attention to parties ready for collective and participatory commissioning;
- to find other actor networks (such as the care sector, education, energy, small and medium-sized enterprises like shopping, minor repairs services, childcare, etc.);
- to look for new organisations that can provide guarantees (including financial);
- to adapt urban planning framework and building regulations to self-construction.

Brand new ways of cooperation that are emerging from literature can now be valued. Interesting new work methods/strategies that fit in preference making could be:

- Storytelling about activities, houses and neighbourhoods: this can bring the subconscious into the conscious. This is crucial, as our housing activities are repetitive and relegated to the sub-conscious. We can reveal patterns and habits of the subconscious related to housing by storytelling. This means that designers need to cooperate with users to understand their preferences. Just asking is not enough.
- Using the internet or other tools that are available to create social communities that express their preferences and give feedback on planning and other developments.
- Engaging contemporary design methods involving intranet, films, photographs, and input from the community.
- Gathering the opinions of practitioners, for instance building engineers, architects and the developers to involve them in creative thinking, in working with feedback, thus helping them to set out innovative new strategies for design and development.

The core principle underpinning the new strategies is that people want to meet and share in joint activities; they want to be part of a group and to be accepted. The investment of time and creativity in this type of community is very rewarding and subsequently leads to a further investment of time. There is a huge hidden potential of active citizenship that can be mobilised for community development, and this quality in itself is reason enough to pursue integrative design processes that involve citizens.

4.2 Changes in the planning system

The transition of the building process towards a 'resident-managed' structure requires necessary changes in the planning system at different levels. Besides changing the attitudes within the planning culture towards facilitation and partnership, the predominant focus should address instrumental, legal and technical changes in the planning system and building regulations, implying:

- New forms of contracts between different actors are needed, in response not only to the demand for collective forms of ownership, but also clarifying the responsibilities of different parties during the building process, as well as sharing financial risks.
- More cautious planning framework and building regulations in relation to self-construction are also needed, so as to improve the quality of collective space with flexibility and openness, without too much delay in the process.
- Expanding the issue from housing to urban revitalisation is required. One chapter has argued that the large stock of unused office space can be used for live/work purposes. The Volkskrant building case highlights how self-determination of users can become a process of transformation of office functions into integrated live/work functions, meeting the needs of certain professional groups.
- Last but not least, the government can be more supportive for such bottom up initiatives. Starting with professional support from the government could be very helpful for the success of these types of projects, in which the control of the participants on the programme and design of their buildings would be legalised.

5. Context sensitive initiatives and solutions

A common conclusion based on the case studies is that the initiatives are highly context sensitive. The complexity of real life conditions demands various methods to deal with all different types of problems and situations. Therefore, there is a great variety of approaches that can be used in practice. The cases point to a new role of architects and organised consumer groups. New theory construction (collective learning) is needed. Participatory observation and action oriented research are methods that seem to be linked with social and economic experimentation: the involved professionals provide the material for new theoretical explorations. This book presents the results of this research and tries to raise the quality of the evaluation, by connecting theoretical explorations with practical experiences. The authors show a great level of solidarity with occupants but are not mere advocates but rather innovators in the field of housing. Most of the cases prove that there is the need to give users the opportunity to express their demands and exert their involvement in the planning, design and building processes. The motives of the relevant stakeholders or residents can become the starting point.

As a final assertion, a qualitative validation of the hypothesis could state that a participatory planning and design process can be used as an instrument, but not as an aim in itself, for community building, which will ultimately lead to higher social performance and quality of the living environment. However, there is a need for further quantitative research to assess the benefits of the participatory approaches discussed in this book.

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