



# **Inclusive Placemaking for Ageing in Place**

*Rethinking participation in a  
superdiverse city*

## Colophon

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## Abstract

This thesis explores how elderly residents of The Hague Southwest, particularly those with migration backgrounds, limited Dutch proficiency, and intersecting social identities, can be meaningfully engaged in placemaking processes that support their ability to age in place. In a neighbourhood shaped by spatial segregation, political framing of newcomers, and participation models that often exclude the most marginalised, autonomy in later life is far from guaranteed.

Grounded in an intersectional theoretical framework, the study investigates how urban actors can create more inclusive engagement strategies. Ethnographic fieldwork was conducted at four apartment buildings along Lozerlaan, where workshops, informal conversations, and observations revealed key barriers and facilitators to participatory inclusion. These included language and literacy gaps, mistrust, internalised disempowerment, and the need for culturally sensitive, low-threshold engagement.

The research produced four actor-specific communication products: booklets for Haag Wonen, architects, municipal planners, and residents. Rather than offering generic guidelines, these booklets function as invitations to reflect on roles, responsibilities, and the meaning of “residents” in a superdiverse city. A spatial design proposal for the Cirkelflat illustrates how fieldwork insights can be translated into architectural interventions that promote ownership, pride, and social connection.

This thesis ultimately argues that placemaking should be understood not as an aesthetic exercise, but as a relational and political process rooted in care. In times of growing polarisation, inclusive placemaking offers an opportunity to centre everyday experiences, redefine institutional roles, and design urban futures from the perspective of those most often left out.

Keywords: Placemaking, ageing in place, inclusive participation, Den Haag Zuidwest

## Motivation and positionality

Almost twenty-five years ago I was born in Guang Zhou, China. Since then I have moved home seven times. When I was ten, my brave mother brought us to The Netherlands for better chances at life. I grew up in Scheveningen, The Hague, a touristic beach neighbourhood. It shaped my standards for my living environment, and my perception of the city and the country. After experiencing student life and my first sense of independence in Delft for three years, I moved to The Hague Southwest more than a year ago. Having lived in very different environments, both in China and in The Netherlands, I felt like I could adapt to wherever I end up. Somehow, it seems a lot harder to build a sense of belonging here in The Hague Southwest. From the moment I step out of my house, there is more noise, I see more litter on the streets, more temporary spatial solutions, along with signs indicating prohibited behaviours. The people appeared more alert, yet simultaneously seemed to deliberately avoid engaging with their surroundings or others, always giving the impression of merely passing through. I have encountered more events of aggression on the streets in this one year living here than I did living in Scheveningen and Delft. Even though I am familiar with and have lived in more chaotic neighbourhoods in China, these experiences here bring me more discomfort. My view of “the Dutch life” is formed by my time in Scheveningen and Delft, and, naively, I considered myself very familiar with The Hague. The reality that The Hague is a city marked by spatial and social segregation, is what I only begin to understand now. These neighbourhoods had remained invisible to me. No one within my social circle lived in this area, and I had never had a reason to visit. My lack of exposure to this side of The Hague, until now, reflects a form of urban separation that is not only structural, but also personal.

My motivation for this research stems from a daily frustration of wanting to understand

why we, residents of The Hague Southwest, feel so uncomfortable in this space. I am aware that while I do not have much choice but to live in this neighbourhood at this stage of my life, my privileges allow my future to be different when this place does not fulfill my needs anymore. For those who are less likely to move to more favorable neighbourhoods, and those who view their current situation as a relative improvement, it is still essential that their voices and needs are acknowledged.

Drawing on a reflexive approach, I position myself in this research as a cisgender Asian woman shaped by both Dutch societal values and Chinese cultural heritage. My background, experiences, and affiliations inevitably shape how I engage with the research process and interpret the findings. I aim to remain reflexive throughout the study, questioning my assumptions about the context and identities of the participants, as well as the lens through which I view the data (Torensma et al., 2024).

Unlike myself, my mother, who has spent the majority of her life in China, feels at home in the Netherlands, yet remains hesitant to engage with Dutch institutional systems. Participatory processes such as co-creation often feel inaccessible to her, due to language barriers, unfamiliarity, and a sense that basic stability is enough.

This research seeks to explore ways to engage those in The Hague Southwest who, like my mother, lack the tools, resources, or perceived power to influence their living environments. Addressing this requires a critical reflection not only on the structures that marginalise these voices, but also on how my own positionality informs the research. I hope, by attempting to tackle this problem, that not only the elderly of The Hague Southwest, but also my mom can feel more comfortable in shaping her living environment when she finds uncomfortability in her neighbourhood.

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# Chapter 1

## Introduction

- Background & Context
- Urgencies
- Problem Field
- Contextualising the Case: Lozerlaan

# Background and context: The Hague Southwest

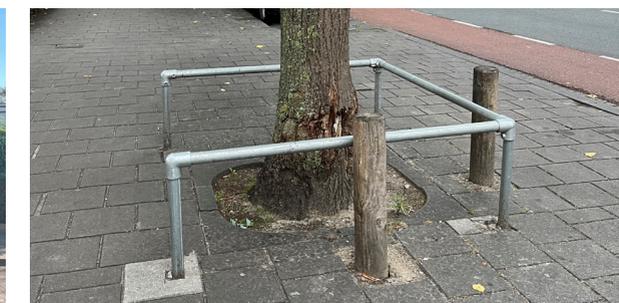
The situation in The Hague Southwest is characterised by significant challenges to the well-being of its residents, with broader prosperity under severe pressure. The concept of broad well-being encompasses not only material wealth but also aspects such as health, education, the environment, social cohesion, personal development, and safety. In Zuidwest, the conditions for residents are markedly worse compared to the rest of Den Haag and the surrounding region (Segregatiemonitor - Den Haag, 2024; Programma Bureau Nationaal Programma Den Haag Zuidwest, 2023). The state of housing and public spaces has deteriorated, and insufficient intervention by the local government has compounded the issue. The decentralisation of services, including the Youth Act (de Jeugdwet), Social Support Act (Wmo), and Participation Act (Participatiewet), has had a particularly adverse effect on the area. As psychiatric and care institutions were closed in favour of supporting individuals to live independently at home, many services for vulnerable populations have disappeared.

Furthermore, Zuidwest faces disproportionate levels of poverty, school dropouts, youth unemployment, crime, and social unrest (Segregatiemonitor - Den Haag, 2024; Programma Bureau Nationaal Programma Den Haag Zuidwest, 2023). With one in five households living on or below the minimum income, the economic challenges are stark. Many residents are in chronic debt, and a significant portion of the population relies on social benefits. Social cohesion in the area is low, with residents reporting feelings of insecurity and a lack of trust in authorities. Education outcomes are poor, with children consistently scoring lower than their peers in other parts of the city.

The social fabric of Zuidwest has been further strained by the ongoing economic crises, including inflation, the housing crisis, and the aftermath of the COVID-19 pandemic. These

compounding factors leave many residents feeling disconnected from society, contributing to lower political participation and a growing sense of disenfranchisement. Without meaningful opportunities for engagement and improvement, the cycle of decline in Zuidwest remains deeply entrenched, making it crucial to focus on fostering connection, participation, and a sense of control over one's life for the community's future well-being.

Almost 80% of the residents in The Hague Southwest have a migration background and around 13% are elderly (Segregatiemonitor - 2. Leef tijd, Achtergrond En Sociaal-economische Status - Den Haag, 2024; Wijkprofielen - Bevolking - 2 Escamp, n.d.). This diversity requires nuanced, inclusive urban planning to ensure that all residents, regardless of background or age, can access essential services and participate fully in society. The area's aging population particularly highlights the importance of "aging in place"—ensuring that elderly residents can live in their own homes and communities as they grow older, with the necessary support and infrastructure. Placemaking, which involves bottom-up designing and revitalising public spaces to enhance community interaction and connection, is vital for fostering a sense of belonging and maintaining the quality of life for older residents while encouraging intergenerational engagement.



# Urgencies

## Social isolation and health

The ageing population in European cities, including Den Haag Zuidwest, faces significant challenges, particularly related to social isolation, mobility limitations, and reduced participation in community life (Velez, 2023; European Commission, 2023). Elderly residents, many of whom wish to live independently, are particularly vulnerable as they experience increasing social isolation and declining health. Social isolation, both actual and perceived, has been strongly linked to increased mortality. A meta-analytic review found that social isolation and loneliness are associated with a 29% and 26% increased likelihood of early death, respectively (Holt-Lunstad et al., 2015). These figures highlight the urgent need for urban environments that support elderly residents in maintaining social connections.

In areas like Southwest, where urban regeneration efforts are ongoing, the effects of these redevelopments on the aging population depend on the context and methods. Some studies suggest that regeneration policies, though aimed at improving housing, can disrupt established communities, erode social support networks, and displace vulnerable populations (Gottdiener et al., 2019; Buffel & Phillipson, 2016). This is particularly concerning for elderly individuals from diverse backgrounds, who may already face additional social and cultural barriers.

Placemaking, which involves the creation of inclusive, community-driven spaces (Project for Public Spaces, 2007), offers a potential remedy to these issues (Johansson et al., 2012). By engaging residents in the urban design process, placemaking fosters environments that promote social connectivity and enhance the quality of life for elderly individuals. However, for placemaking to be truly effective, it must incorporate inclusive engagement strategies that recognise and respond to the diverse needs of elderly populations, ensuring that their voices are integral to the planning process.

## Urban regeneration in The Hague Southwest

The urgency of this research is underscored not only by the health disparities faced by marginalised groups, but also by the ongoing redevelopment in Den Haag Zuidwest (Den Haag, 2023). This redevelopment presents a unique opportunity to influence urban planning processes, ensuring that the needs of elderly residents, particularly those from diverse backgrounds, are adequately addressed in the redevelopment of the area.

By 2040, The Hague plans to have renovated a part of the post-war housing stock, demolished outdated buildings and added 10,000 more homes in Southwest (Den Haag, 2023). It is a huge task with a lot of complications. In their structural vision, however, the municipality has considered maintaining social connections, whereby residents displaced by demolition can return to their neighbourhood when the new building is ready. This is a good solution for some, but for elderly people who have to leave their own homes and neighbourhood for years, coming back may not be so easy.

Among other themes, better healthcare facilities is also part of the plans. The municipality aims to increase the amount of facilities, integrate different facilities in various locations, focus on prevention, promote healthy activities and better monitor healthcare needs. The planning for said changes will be done through a participation process. There will be several physical participation sessions, an exhibition in public libraries with civil servants who can explain the plans, residents' organisations (bewonersorganisaties) are actively engaged and a digital participation platform is in development to monitor the needs. This participation plan consists of a few elements of inclusivity. Yet challenges remain for low-literate and non-Dutch speakers, mainly due to complex documentation and lack of multilingual support. More visual communication, meetings in multiple languages and active outreach to vulnerable groups through community organisations and key people could increase accessibility. These improvements would help to truly involve everyone in the process.

# Problem Field

## Spatial Segregation and Polarisation, Historical and Societal factors

### Definition and Context

Spatial segregation refers to the physical separation of groups within urban areas, often based on socioeconomic status, ethnicity, or other demographic factors (Musterd & Ostendorf, 2010). In the context of The Hague Southwest, this phenomenon manifests through distinct neighborhoods that exhibit varying levels of economic prosperity, social mobility, and access to public services. These segregated spaces not only reflect disparities in wealth, health and opportunity but also perpetuate cycles of inequality.

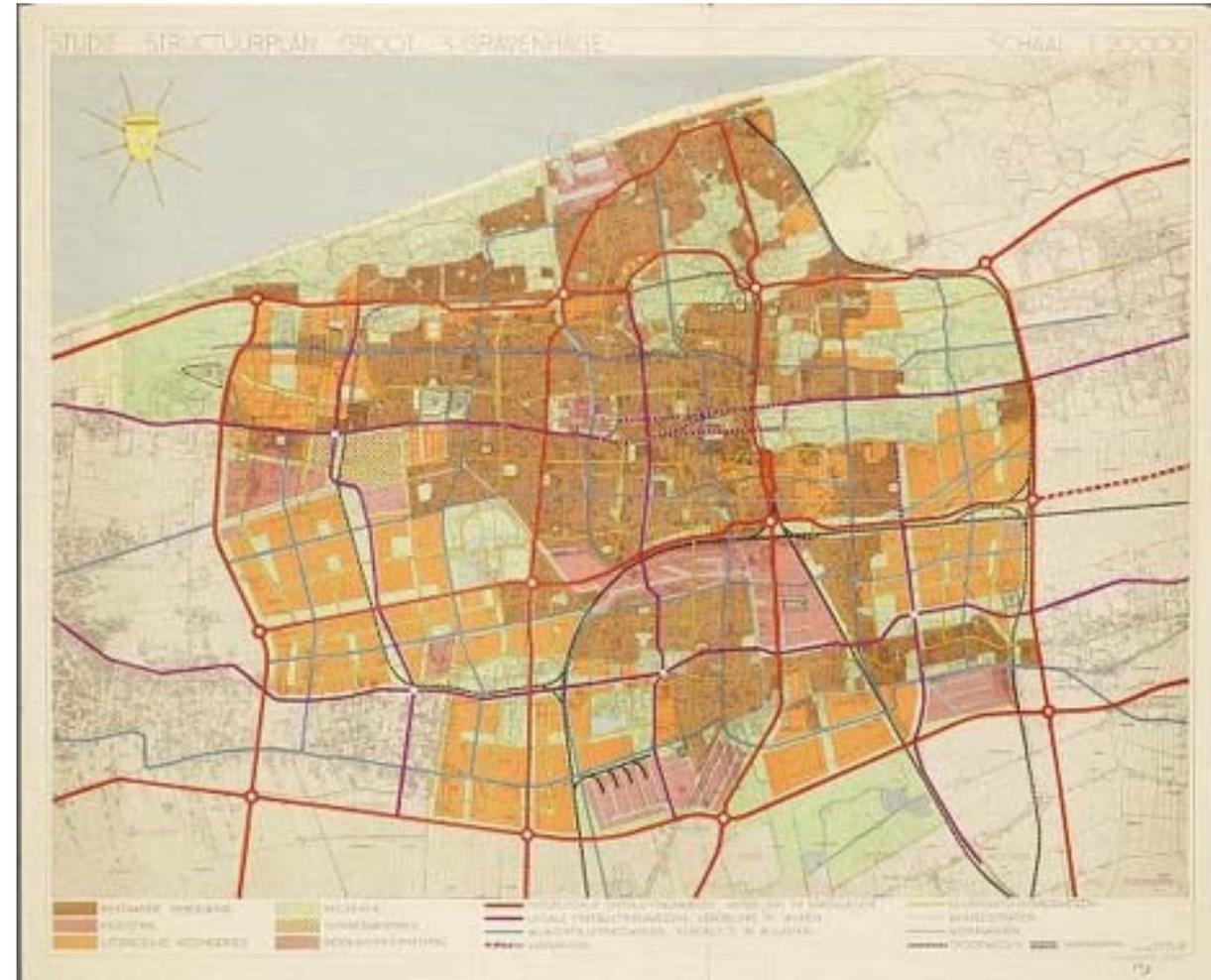
Polarisation, in this context, is the process whereby differences between groups in terms of socioeconomic status, cultural identity, and political alignment become more pronounced, leading to reduced interaction and increased tension between these groups (Hamnett, 1994). In The Hague Southwest, polarisation exacerbates social divisions, undermining efforts to foster community cohesion and societal integration. As communities become more fragmented, opportunities for meaningful cross-cultural interactions diminish, reinforcing stereotypes and further deepening societal rifts.

### Planning and Effect

The historical development of segregation in The Hague Southwest is a product of both deliberate urban planning decisions and broader societal dynamics.

Following World War II, large parts of The Hague were devastated, and with the rapid population growth—fueled by the baby boom and the return of Dutch nationals from Indonesia—there was an urgent need for housing, particularly affordable housing for the working class. To address this, architect and urban planner W.M. Dudok proposed the “Greater The Hague Structural Plan” (Structuurplan Groot 's-Gravenhage). Adopted by the municipality on July 19th, 1949, this plan set the framework for the city's expansion, particularly in the southwest regions (Haagse Tijden | Een Nieuwe Plattegrond, 2024).

In the 1950s and 1960s, districts such as Morgenstond, Bouwlust, Berestein, and Vrederust were developed, primarily under the direction of the Municipal Housing Service (De Gemeentelijke Woningdienst). The aim was to create public housing to meet the acute shortage, as private builders were deemed incapable of fulfilling the demand due to the lack of profitability in public housing. As a result, the southwest of The Hague became a hub



“Greater The Hague Structural Plan - W.M. Dudok, 1949

for low-income classes, concentrated in newly built housing estates designed to address the postwar housing crisis (Haagse Tijden, 2024; Valentijn, 2002).

However, this concentrated provision of affordable (social) housing also laid the groundwork for urban segregation. The clustering of low-income residents in these areas led to neighborhoods with higher turnover rates, lower educational and employment opportunities, and limited access to quality infrastructure. Over time, these neighborhoods became characterised by lower-quality housing and reduced investment, reinforcing cycles of marginalisation (Segregatiemonitor - Den Haag, 2024).

## ***The Dutch Approach to Multiculturalism and the Framing of the Newcomer***

In his 2013 work, *The Dutch Multicultural Myth*, Peter Scholten critically examines the Dutch approach to multiculturalism, arguing that policies focusing on group-specific rights and accommodations rather than on integration have contributed to social segregation (Scholten, 2013). Scholten's analysis highlights how Dutch multicultural policies often maintained cultural and ethnic divisions, fostering parallel societies rather than unified communities. In The Hague Southwest, these policies intersected with urban planning decisions, leading to the entrenchment of spatial divides. By failing to promote mixed-income housing and adequately address the needs of marginalised groups, the urban landscape of The Hague Southwest reflects a legacy of both planned and autonomous segregation. The consequences of these historical and societal factors are visible today, with high concentrations of residents with migration background, lower incomes, lower education levels, and poorer health outcomes in these neighbourhoods. This has led to a cycle of disenfranchisement, where marginalised communities face persistent barriers to improving their living conditions and integrating into the broader urban fabric.

These barriers are not only material but also social and psychological, shaped by decades of shifting policy narratives around integration. In the early 1980s, Dutch integration policy was grounded in the work of Rinus Penninx, who co-authored the foundational "Etnische Minderheden" report. The report defined a "minority" not merely in ethnic terms, but as a group marked by three key characteristics: a structurally disadvantaged position on the socio-economic ladder, a cultural identity viewed as "deviant" by both society and the group itself, and limited political influence. As Penninx later reflected in a recent interview with *De Correspondent* (Vermeulen & Sadeghi, 2025), "you are not a minority, you are made one." His emphasis on structural inequality and social framing contrasted sharply with what

would follow in subsequent decades.

By the late 1980s, amid economic crises and rising unemployment, integration policy underwent a fundamental shift. Critiques emerged claiming that multicultural policies had failed, not because of systemic inequality, but because they focused too much on cultural difference. Sociologist Han Entzinger, in his influential 1989 report *Allochtonenbeleid* (Wetenschappelijke Raad voor het Regeringsbeleid, 1989), proposed a new approach: migrants should no longer be seen as members of vulnerable ethnic groups, but as individuals responsible for their own integration. The preservation of language and culture was reframed as an obstacle to social mobility, and the state began to treat integration as a personal responsibility of the newcomer rather than a mutual societal process. This culminated in the 1994 *Nota Integratiebeleid Etnische Minderheden* (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 1993), which positioned adaptation to Dutch norms and language as the precondition for social acceptance.

This shift in framing, from collective accommodation to individual obligation, has had long-lasting consequences. As Penninx warns, when integration is defined solely as a problem of the newcomer, society ceases to reflect on its own role in producing exclusion. By placing the burden of adaptation entirely on migrants, while maintaining unequal conditions (poor housing, limited civic representation), the state fosters a dynamic in which migrants are always positioned as outsiders, never quite integrated, never quite entitled. As he states: "Every society defines who belongs and who does not. The question is: who mobilises these boundaries, and how are they framed?" (Vermeulen & Sadeghi, 2025).

These framings shape not only policy, but also social expectations and self-perception of residents with migration backgrounds. In

the context of urban participation, particularly in placemaking initiatives, the legacy of exclusionary discourse is clearly visible. Participation in placemaking implies ownership, belonging, and the right to shape one's environment. Yet many residents with a migration background do not engage in these initiatives. This is not necessarily due to a lack of interest, but because of both external and internalised barriers. Externally, they are often perceived as temporary guests or outsiders, whose contributions are not naturally invited. Internally, decades of structural exclusion and "gratitude politics" could have produced a sense of powerlessness and a belief that they have no right to demand better conditions.

In this way, the Dutch integration discourse has created invisible but powerful borders that extend into everyday urban life. These borders inhibit participation, not only in political or institutional domains, but in the very spaces where community and identity are negotiated. Understanding this history is essential to addressing why certain groups remain absent from placemaking processes today, and how inclusive participation can be reimagined.

### ***Nativism***

Alongside the historical patterns of spatial segregation and exclusionary integration policies, a more recent societal development has begun to exert significant influence on urban dynamics: the return of nativism. As sociologist Jan Willem Duyvendak argues in *The Return of the Native* (2022), Dutch society is increasingly shaped by the idea that true belonging is reserved for those perceived to be culturally, historically, and emotionally rooted in the national community, the "natives".

This nativist turn does not merely affect immigration policy or political rhetoric; it has profound implications for everyday urban life. It reshapes who is seen as having a legitimate claim to the city and who is granted the moral and symbolic authority to participate in shaping its future. In areas like The Hague Southwest, which is already marked by social segregation and historical marginalisation, this emerging logic further entrenches the exclusion of residents with a migration background. Even when participatory processes are formally open to all, the cultural framing of who "belongs" narrows the scope of meaningful engagement.

Nativism therefore deepens the very issues this chapter has outlined: it reinforces spatial and psychological boundaries,

legitimises unequal participation, and makes co-creation and inclusive placemaking more difficult. These developments suggest that exclusion today is not only a legacy of past policies but also a product of ongoing cultural and political shifts.

As this report will later explore, addressing these challenges requires more than spatial or procedural adjustments. It demands a confrontation with the underlying social narratives that shape the possibilities for inclusion in contemporary urban governance.

## Language Barriers

These intertwined historical, cultural, and institutional barriers not only limit opportunities for participation but also reframe structural exclusion as individual failure. Within this context, language is often presented as a neutral or technical barrier, yet it increasingly serves as a proxy for deeper exclusion. Shaped by decades of policy and reinforced by nativist narratives, the language barrier is frequently used to justify the limited participation of migrants, placing the burden of integration solely on the individual while obscuring the systemic conditions that have produced their marginalisation.

Language proficiency and low-literacy significantly impacts social participation among elderly residents. Not only those who have a migration background, but native Dutch elderly are also affected by the consequences of low literacy. Low literacy includes difficulty not only with reading and writing, but also with numbers and handling digital tools (Laaggeletterdheid, 2024). Limited literacy and language skills restrict the ability to navigate (care) systems and thereby, access to health and social services, deepening exclusion. Data shows that low literacy is much higher in The Hague (23%) than the national average (12%) (Stichting Lezen en Schrijven, 2018). The target group contributing most to this is migrants (30+) with partners and/or children, which makes up 60% of the group with low literacy in The Hague.

**When designing participation processes, language plays an important role in the accessibility of the process and effectiveness of the participation process.**

## Perceived Expertise in Participatory and Co-Creation Practices: A Problematic Hierarchy

In addition to spatial, linguistic, and cultural barriers, hierarchies of knowledge and expertise present a significant obstacle to inclusive urban development. In participatory and co-creation processes, there is often an implicit distinction made between professional and local knowledge. Urban planning and design practices have long privileged the authority of planners, architects, and policymakers as “experts”, while marginalising the experiential and situated knowledge of citizens. This imbalance becomes even more pronounced when intersected with factors such as migration background, socioeconomic status, and political visibility, reinforcing the perception that community members, particularly those from marginalised groups, lack the legitimacy or capacity to meaningfully contribute.

As Jeremy Till (2005) argues, professional expertise is frequently grounded in traditions of completeness, neutrality, and rational logic, which contrasts sharply with the openness, emotion, and lived messiness of everyday life. This bias devalues “non-expert” voices and limits the transformative potential of participatory processes. Yet, as scholars such as Till (2005), Parekh (2001), and Cripps (2004) highlight, genuine collaboration arises not from rigid hierarchies but from the dialogue between formal expertise and lived experience. Recognising the complementary value of both is essential for co-creation practices that aim to produce meaningful, situated, and just urban solutions.

Moreover, the political dimension of participation often remains underacknowledged. Till notes that participatory planning inherently involves power, as it shapes the environments in which people live. However, many professionals continue to adopt apolitical or technocratic approaches, distancing themselves from the ethical and distributive consequences of their work. Urban interventions such as the Rotterdam Act or Woonscholen, which have deeply spatial and social implications, require precisely this kind of political engagement. Without it, co-creation remains superficial, and systemic inequalities go unchallenged.

## ***From Participation to Co-Creation***

While both participatory and co-creation processes involve collaboration, the two differ in scope and outcomes. Participation, as categorised by Arnstein's (1969) "ladder of participation," ranges from non-participatory practices (e.g., manipulation and therapy) to genuine power-sharing approaches like partnership and citizen control. However, most participatory processes stop at the stage of producing actionable knowledge: decisions about what needs to be done and how. Genuine participation, while valuable, does not inherently guarantee practical implementation.

Co-creation takes participation a step further by emphasising practical outcomes. It involves a collaborative effort where stakeholders not only share knowledge but also enact real-world changes. Co-creation extends from developing joint action plans to implementing them, achieving tangible results like behavioral or systemic changes (Wiek, 2016). For example, co-creation efforts might culminate in redistributing resources or executing urban design interventions collaboratively, bridging the gap between planning and lived realities.

## ***Implications for Participatory and Co-Creation Practices***

In essence, co-creation builds upon the foundation of genuine participation by requiring both actionable knowledge and tangible outcomes. This distinction is critical in addressing the challenges posed by the perceived hierarchy of expertise. For co-creation to succeed, it must foster inclusive dialogues that equalise power dynamics, encouraging urban planners and policy makers to recognise the value of "non-expert" contributions. Such an approach not only mitigates the conflict between "experts" and communities but also enhances the capacity for innovation, addressing urgent, complex problems collaboratively. Ultimately, this shift from participation to co-creation, in the context of placemaking, represents a paradigm change, promoting a more equitable and effective framework for planning, designing, and engaging with urban spaces.

These conceptual tensions between participation, co-creation, and the distribution of expertise will be explored further in the theoretical framework of this thesis, where I examine more closely how participation has been defined, critiqued, and reimagined within urban studies, planning theory, and political philosophy.

## **Participation processes in The Hague**

The participatory processes in The Hague, exemplified here by the cases of Heeswijkplein, Hobbemaplein, and Moerwijk, demonstrate the critical importance of inclusive and well-informed engagement, while highlighting the challenges of building trust and avoiding tokenistic participation.

At Heeswijkplein (Moerwijk, The Hague Southwest), a criticised redevelopment in 2017 failed to meet community needs despite an intensive participatory effort, necessitating a new process in 2022 (Platform STAD, 2024; De Haagse Tijden, 2024). Similarly, the Hobbemaplein (Transvaal/Schilderswijk, southwest of The Hague city center) project illustrates the risks of incomplete representation, where dissatisfaction persisted despite a comprehensive engagement strategy involving workshops, multilingual communication, and targeted outreach to residents and businesses (Gemeente Den Haag, 2024). Protests over unresolved concerns about traffic flow, parking, and market logistics ultimately forced city officials to retract plans in response to overwhelming public opposition (NOS, 2025).

Meanwhile, in Moerwijk (The Hague Southwest), a participatory action research (PAR) approach proved instrumental in addressing trust deficits and promoting sustainable solutions. By involving residents as equal partners, this process highlighted the pressing concerns of poor housing, safety, and poverty, while empowering the community to co-create over 50 initiatives, including youth centers and meeting spaces for families (Van Der Vlegel- Brouwer, 2022).

These cases underscore the need for participation processes that are not only inclusive but also empower communities with clear goals, transparent communication, and actionable outcomes. Without these elements, participation risks becoming performative, perpetuating mismatches between design and use, and fueling dissatisfaction. Effective participation processes could not only promote equitable change, but also limit research and participation fatigue, ensuring more effective participation and co-creation processes in the future.

In sum, hierarchies of expertise, depoliticised planning practices, and unequal power relations continue to limit the transformative potential of participatory and co-creative processes in The Hague Southwest. These limitations, when layered upon spatial segregation, nativist discourse, and language barriers, help explain why many residents remain structurally excluded from shaping their environments.

To ground this theoretical and policy discussion in empirical reality, the next section introduces Lozerlaan, the focal case study for this research. Located in The Hague Southwest, Lozerlaan offers a unique opportunity to observe how participatory and co-creation processes function in a context shaped by spatial, social, and political exclusion. Fieldwork conducted in this area will allow for a deeper understanding of the issues outlined above.



Heeswijkplein, Moerwijk



Heeswijkplein, Moerwijk

# Contextualising the Case: Lozerlaan

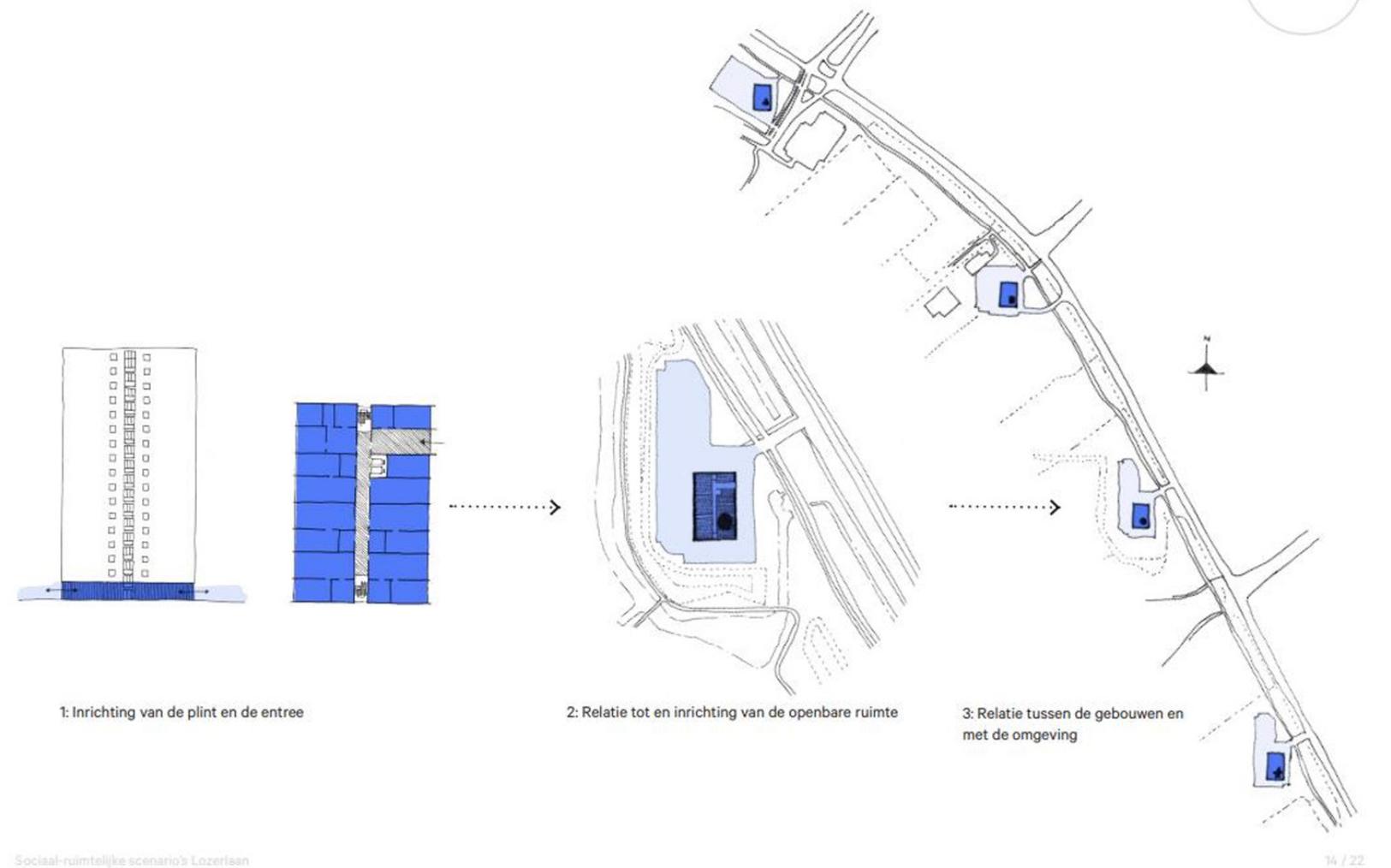
Within The Hague Southwest, this study focuses on the apartment complex Lozerlaan. Four iconic buildings, each with 125 apartments and 16 stories, are placed 400 to 500 meters apart from each other. They are located at the edge of the city, separated by a four-lanes road with wide central reservation. Characterised by eye-catching symbols on each building, they serve as a landmark for visitors. Built in 1970, with a recreational nature area (De Uithof) as the backyard and spacious apartments, it was a luxury to be able to live here. Nowadays, it is the property of housing association Haag Wonen and designated for senior housing (55+).

Through Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest, Leiden-Delft-Erasmus universities' education programme that actively connects students with practice and policy, I had the opportunity to connect with Haag Wonen and work on this neighbourhood development case. In light of renovation plans in the coming year, Haag Wonen's neighbourhood development team wants to use placemaking as an approach to transform the living environment of Lozerlaan residents to enhance their ability to age in place. As the apartment buildings are geographically further apart than usual complexes, each building is located in its own context and unique composition of residents. Even though the buildings have the same physical construction, they cannot be treated as one project for neighbourhood development but rather as four different projects. It is best described as four islands of an archipelago. Each island has its own dynamic, community and identity. However, like islands, they face challenges linked to connection (with the other buildings and the rest of the neighbourhood) and self-sufficiency.

Many stakeholders are involved in this redevelopment task of Haag Wonen. From students to community builders to the technical team, we all work towards the same goal: improve the residents' living environment to support their ability to age in place. El Kantoor, an architectural firm, was hired by Haag Wonen to start placemaking initiatives and designing the future of one of the apartment buildings. From their efforts so far, it is clear that the residents have many dissatisfactions and are ready for change. However, it was noticeable that the involvement came from already engaged individuals, mostly native Dutch residents, while the buildings housed a much more diverse community. Thus, the direction of this study emerged from the identified gap in resident engagement, particularly within placemaking processes involving communities with a migration background and/or with limited literacy and language proficiency.

## 3 schaalniveaus

Van huiskamer tot '15-minuten scootmobiel stad'





## **Chapter 2**

# **Research Framework**

- Research questions
  - Theory
  - Methodology

To understand how the challenges identified in the problem field take shape in the lived reality of Lozerlaan, this thesis turns to both theory and practice. The following chapters outline the conceptual tools and methodological choices used to explore inclusive placemaking from the perspective of elderly residents. Together, they form the foundation for analysing fieldwork insights and translating them into actionable strategies for urban actors.

# Research Questions

## Overarching question:

How can urban actors effectively engage **elderly** residents of The Hague Southwest, with **intersecting social identities** and **different language proficiency levels**, in **placemaking** initiatives to enhance their ability to **age in place**?

## Sub-questions:

1. What are the current barriers that limit and facilitators that enable participation from elderly residents?
2. How can these elderly residents be effectively engaged in placemaking initiatives that aim to enhance their ability to age in place considering the barriers and facilitators?
3. Which guidelines (for methods and approaches) can urban actors use to facilitate the participation of elderly residents in co-creation processes?

# Theory

## Theoretical framework

This chapter aims to define the core concepts for this research within context and find common ground. ‘Placemaking’ and ‘ageing in place’ are fundamental lenses in this thesis to explore elderly participation in urban development. In addition, the research is done through an intersectional lens that considers the compound effects of age, gender, migration background, language proficiency and socioeconomic status. This is also important because of the location of the research: The Hague Southwest.

## Intersectionality

The structural challenges outlined in the Problem Field include spatial segregation, nativist framings, language-based exclusion, and hierarchies of perceived expertise. This research adopts intersectionality as a key theoretical lens in light of this. Originally developed by Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), intersectionality offers a framework for understanding how various social identities such as age, gender, ethnicity, religion, migration background, and socioeconomic status interact to shape unique experiences of power, privilege, and marginalisation.

These problems are rarely experienced in isolation. Instead, they compound and intersect, producing layered forms of exclusion that conventional categories (such as “migrant”, “elderly”, or “non-Dutch speaker”) often fail to capture. For instance, urban planning policies or participation strategies that treat residents as homogenous groups based on age or origin, risk overlooking the complex, context-specific needs of the individuals within them. Intersectionality helps to resist this flattening of identity, revealing how certain subgroups become particularly vulnerable when multiple forms of marginalisation converge.

In this thesis, intersectionality is applied to examine the lived experiences of elderly residents in Lozerlaan, a cluster of four apartment buildings in The Hague Southwest. While these buildings are formally designated for individuals aged 55 and older, the population is far from uniform. The age range spans from mid-50s to 104 years old, and residents differ widely in terms of cultural background, religious affiliation, linguistic fluency, health status, and socioeconomic position. The group includes native Dutch seniors, first-generation migrant workers, status holders, and others from diverse migration backgrounds. Even within linguistic categories, there is internal variation. For example, some native Dutch residents have low literacy levels,

while some non-native speakers may be fluent or multilingual.

These intersecting identities shape not only residents’ material conditions, but also their perceptions of autonomy, aging, health, social connection, and their relationship to place (Meeks, 2019; Ma & Joshi, 2021; Torensma et al., 2024). For instance, recent studies show that combinations of religion, ethnicity, and gender can influence older adults’ preferences around aging in place or end-of-life care, reflecting deeper concerns about cultural fit, belonging, and marginalisation (Torensma et al., 2024). These preferences are not simply personal choices, they are shaped by structural barriers and by the inclusion or exclusion experienced in daily life.

Given the barriers described earlier, intersectionality becomes an essential counter-framework. Especially for those that position “the newcomer” as a problem or reduce participation to a question of language fluency. It allows this research to attend to invisible exclusions: residents whose needs, voices, or identities are not captured by dominant participatory models or policy categories. If placemaking is to support residents in aging peacefully in their homes and communities, it must be informed by an intersectional understanding of their lived realities.

At the same time, applying intersectionality in practice requires a careful balancing act. While this thesis aims to foreground diversity and complexity, it also acknowledges that some level of generalisation is necessary in data analysis, communication, and when drawing conclusions. The goal is not to avoid categorisation altogether, but to approach it critically and reflexively. This means to constantly ask whether the way we define and engage with groups is reproducing exclusion or creating space for inclusion. As researchers, we must remain attentive at every step, from research design to data interpretation, to whose perspectives are amplified, whose are left out, and how structural power shapes both. Intersectionality, then, is not only a framework for analysis but also a commitment to ethical research practice that resists essentialising the very people it seeks to understand and support.

## Placemaking

Placemaking is the collaborative process of transforming spaces into meaningful **places** that reflect and strengthen the connection between people and their environment. Originating from the work of New York-based nonprofit Project for Public Spaces (PPS) in the 1990s, placemaking is a community-driven approach to revitalise public spaces. Fred Kent, PPS's founder and a former assistant to William H. Whyte, during the influential Street Life Project, built the organisation on Whyte's principles of observing and enhancing human interactions within urban spaces. According to PPS, placemaking inspires communities to collectively reimagine public spaces as the heart of civic life, where physical, social, and cultural goals are integrated.

This approach fundamentally reorients traditional urban planning. Instead of focusing on top-down design of structures and infrastructure, placemaking starts with understanding the lived experiences and needs of communities. The emphasis of placemaking is on creating a sense of **belonging**, or *thuisgevoel*, among users. This involves fostering emotional connections to places, achieved through active stakeholder engagement, co-creation, and participation (Project for Public Spaces (PPS), 2018).

Placemaking as an approach is effective in addressing challenges posed by conventional participatory processes, particularly in marginalised neighbourhoods. It offers a way to elevate underrepresented voices, ensure inclusive engagement, and achieve tangible outcomes that resonate with community needs (Schuddebeurs et al., 2022). For instance, in The Hague, tactical placemaking initiatives like the WijWeiBank, which transformed a parking space into a communal gathering area, demonstrate how small-scale interventions can foster a sense of community ownership and identity (Fonds 1818, 2021). For placemaking initiatives to be successful, the communities involved should be empowered to make changes to their living environment. **Empowerment** goes beyond involvement and collaboration. It redefines the public's role by giving them the power to make final decisions and thereby

giving them control over their environment and lives (International Association for Public Participation, 2018b; Toolis, 2017). The first step towards empowerment is to be aware of **power dynamics** from the start of the project. It is essential to first establish **trust** between parties facilitating placemaking and the community (Toolis, 2017; Wichowsky et al., 2022; Rommens et al., 2022; International Association for Public Participation, 2018a). In placemaking, the local community is the expert and formal systems, such as municipalities, should take on **supportive** roles in the decisions made by the community (Wichowsky et al., 2022).

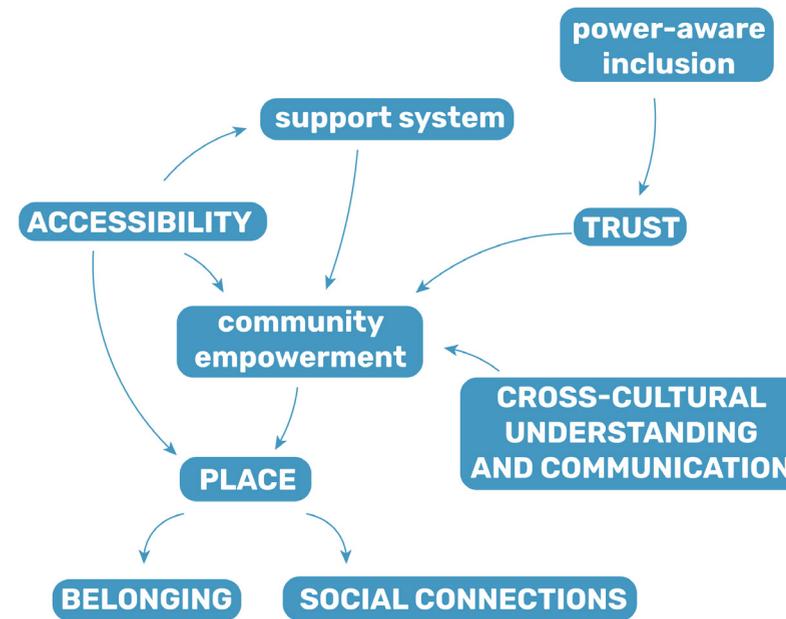
Placemaking by design creates opportunities for social gatherings and building networks for **social connection** (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). Public space could be a common ground for individuals with various identities to interact and develop understanding of different perspectives (Toolis, 2017; Project for Public Spaces & Knapp, 2008). However, language and different cultural norms can be barriers that hinder effective **communication**. In multicultural settings, it is important to have **sympathy and understanding of different cultural values** (Fang et al., 2016).

Moreover, placemaking bridges the gap between lengthy urban regeneration projects and the immediate needs of communities. Large-scale developments often disrupt **social networks** and could take years to complete, but placemaking initiatives, such as greening efforts in Bincks Groen (I'M BINCK, 2023) or participatory action research in Moerwijk, enable rapid, visible improvements while empowering communities to co-create their future. In Moerwijk, over 50 resident-driven initiatives emerged, addressing issues from housing to neighborhood

safety (Van Der Vlegel- Brouwer, 2022).

In the context of The Hague Southwest, a culturally diverse area with communities of different identities and needs, using placemaking as an approach to transform and reclaim public spaces could help to bring people of different cultural backgrounds together. Community-based initiatives have greater chances of fulfilling diverse needs of different cultural groups, resulting in greater sense of belonging and togetherness (Project for Public Spaces & Knapp, 2008).

Ultimately, placemaking's core lies in its transformative potential to turn spaces into places of **social connection**, cultural vibrancy, and **collective empowerment**. By prioritising participation and adaptability, it ensures that public spaces are not only inclusive and functional but also deeply meaningful to the communities they serve.



Main themes of placemaking and their relations

## Ageing in Place

Ageing in place, the ability for elderly to remain in their homes and communities as they age, is a prevalent theme across cultures. It is connected to a sense of independence, self-reliance, self-esteem and reflects (collective) autonomy (Pani-Harreman et al., 2020). To be able to peacefully age in place, factors like a strong **personal characteristics**, **social network** and **support system** together with a sense of **belonging** is essential (Kleinhans et al., 2018; Pani-Harreman et al., 2020).

When one ages, support from both informal and formal systems of care play essential roles in their ability to age peacefully. The transition from welfare state models (verzorgingsstaat) to participatory systems (participatiesamenleving), as highlighted in Dutch parliamentary debates (Tweede Kamer der Staten-Generaal, 2014), has increased the reliance on informal care networks. While this shift encourages community involvement, it risks overburdening informal caregivers and may fail to adequately address the complex needs for care and social inclusion of older adults (Kerstholt & Joop - BNN VARA, 2024).

Stories from street doctors (straatarts<sup>1</sup>) like Michele van Tongerloo illuminates these challenges further. In her book "Komt een land bij de dokter" ("A country comes to the doctor") (2024), she critiques the growing complexity of healthcare systems in The Netherlands. It increasingly prioritises bureaucratic processes and cost-efficiency over personal needs of patients. This systemic inefficiency disproportionately affects vulnerable populations, including the elderly. As mentioned before, having low literacy and being simply unfamiliar with how healthcare systems work, limit the access to healthcare and support services, and deepens the exclusion of vulnerable groups. This challenge is intensified for elderly whose exclusion is compounded by intersecting factors such as language barriers, low socio-economic status and

cultural unfamiliarity. For them, issues that someone who could easily navigate the health system could resolve within days may take months to address, if at all. This could result in worsening health conditions or the emergence of additional social and medical problems. Older adults facing these challenges and have had bad experiences with formal support systems often lose **trust** in institutions overall. Van Tongerloo advocates for a more human-centered approach, where care focuses on listening to individual needs rather than adhering strictly to procedural guidelines. Her insights underscore the difficulties older adults face in accessing consistent, compassionate care, particularly as they navigate a fragmented system while relying on overextended informal networks.

The ability to age in place is closely tied to the quality of **social connections**. Research shows that strong relationships, like friendship, could have the most positive impact on the physical and mental well-being in older adults (Waldinger & Schulz, 2023; Berger, 2025; Mineo, 2017). However, modern trends toward individualism and weaker community ties exacerbate social isolation. Fostering and maintaining social connections is essential to mitigate the risks of loneliness and health deterioration.

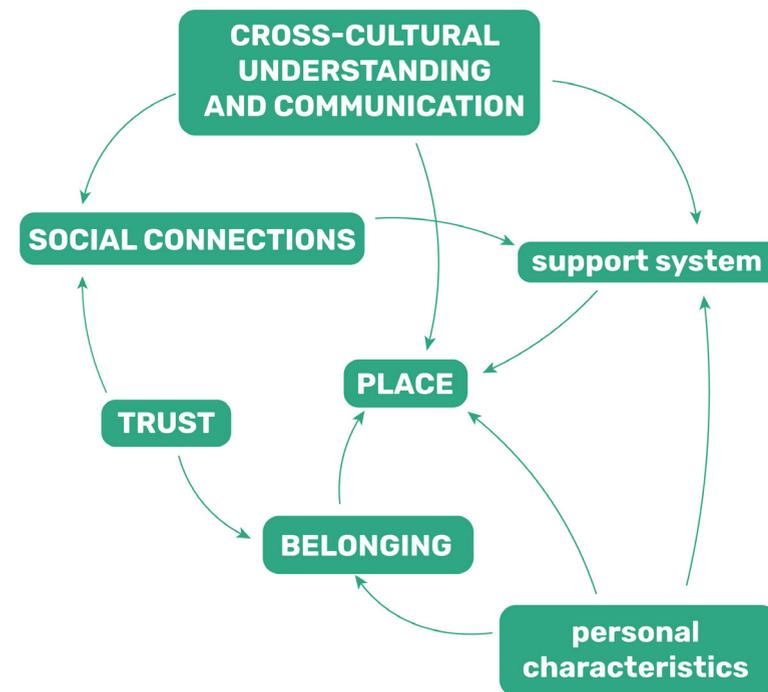
<sup>1</sup>Street doctor is the umbrella term for all street care providers. These professionals, including nurses, doctors and other healthcare experts, specialise in social-medical care for homeless people.

## Cross Cultural Considerations

Studies show that **cultural context** plays an important role in shaping the experience and definition of ageing in place. The first aspect is the **place** of aging. For example, while living independently in one's home is the norm in Western cultures, multigenerational households are more common in Southern and Eastern European cultures (Pani-Harreman et al., 2020). Other themes like the reliance on formal versus informal **support systems** also vary between different cultures (Nieboer & Cramm, 2024; Pani-Harreman et al., 2020). When individuals settle in a different culture, they face additional challenges and have specific needs. Older migrants experience additional barriers with language and challenges like cultural adaptation, and potential discrimination (Nieboer & Cramm, 2024; Pani-Harreman et al., 2020). Lastly,

personal characteristics such as resilience, adaptability, independence, health and financial status influence the ability to age in place (Nieboer & Cramm, 2024; Pani-Harreman et al., 2020).

Addressing the challenges of ageing in place requires systemic changes and personal touch while recognising and integrating one's cultural values. It is imperative that all individuals are enabled to express their needs and experience genuine recognition of their perspectives. In the context of ageing in place and placemaking, their living environments should be (re)developed in such ways that it could facilitate social connections, and personal, compassionate care.



Main themes of ageing in place and their relations

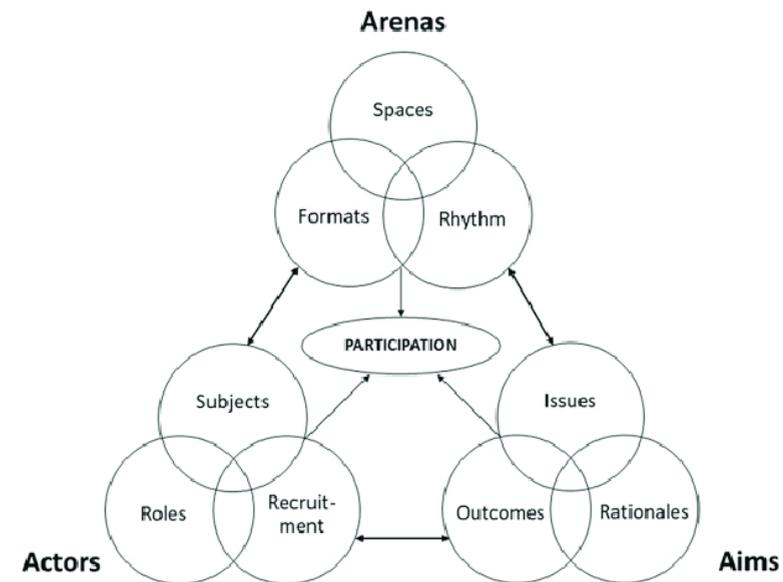
## Participation

Public participation is a widely used concept in literature and practice. Its definition depends on the participants, context and the goal. In this study, participation is understood as engagement in placemaking processes aimed at supporting ageing in place, while drawing insights from societal participation and civic engagement.

Participation in placemaking, by design, creates opportunities for neighbours to work together and spaces for gathering and **social connection** (Project for Public Spaces, 2016). Especially for the elderly, participation processes could help reduce social isolation (Fang et al., 2016). Drawing from Arnstein's (1969) "Ladder of Participation" and IAP2's (2018) "Spectrum of Public Participation", this study focuses on the higher levels of participation, emphasising on co-creation and striving toward genuine community empowerment. This is essential for inclusive participation in a multi-cultural context, and effective to create solutions fitting to diverse needs. Despite this, it is important to note that co-creation and **community empowerment** is not free from inequalities and **power dynamics**. Some residents will have more time, resources, energy and information to participate than others (Leino & Puumala, 2020; De Jong et al., 2019; Hofer & Kaufmann, 2022). Aiming for inclusivity in participation means recognising power relations as well as social and **cultural** factors that influence individuals ability to participate.

Building on two dimensional frameworks like Arnstein's (1969) "Ladder of Participation" and IAP2's (2018) "Spectrum of Public Participation", Hofer & Kaufmann's (2022) 3A3 framework describe participation as a dynamic and relational phenomenon. The three dimensions (actors, arena and aims) each have three elements and interact in complex ways, influencing the participation process. Important themes for successful participation are further explained using this framework.

There are many barriers to an equitable participation process. The first hurdle to overcome is the **accessibility** to participatory processes. When designing the participation process, challenges to accessibility could be addressed in the arenas and actors dimension.



*The dimensions of participation and their elements, 3A3 framework  
Hofer & Kaufmann's (2022)*

### Arenas

Within the arena dimension, three elements help set guidelines for accessible participation processes: spaces, formats, rhythm. Especially for the elderly, it is important that participation processes are either geographically close or conveniently reachable (Fang et al., 2016). Ideally, the **place** of participation should be one that residents already **trust**, such as their familiar living environment. However, gaining access to this personal space demands the establishment of relational trust. It helps to engage participants through trusted figures in the community, helping to create a sense of **belonging** that lays the foundation for deeper engagement and collective action (Fang et al., 2016; Schuddebeurs et al., 2022). The formats of participation matter for accessibility as well, especially when the aim is community empowerment. For example, elderly migrants who face language barriers and have differences in cultural norms might not feel encouraged to participate in information sessions or listening and learning workshops (Fang et al., 2016; Maiorano et al., 2024). Instead, using **creative, flexible and engaging methods** in combination with interpreters, makes a participation session much more accessible and inclusive (Fang et al., 2016). The third element of the arenas' dimension, rhythm, could serve as a framework to **address competing priorities** when designing for participation. Thoughtful design of the rhythm or the time-component of the participation process can accommodate

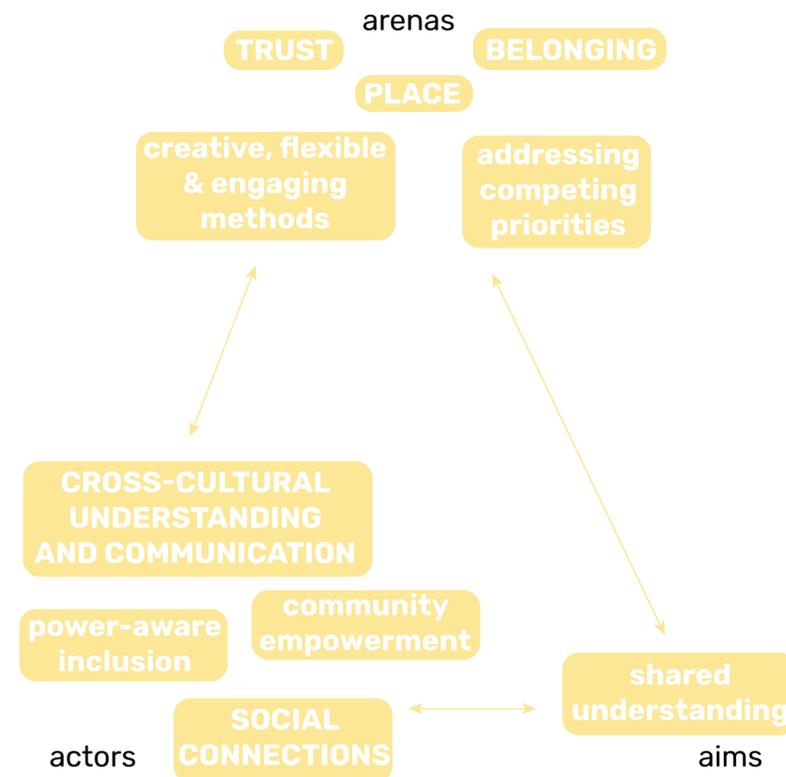
participants' limited time and resources (Maiorano et al., 2024). One approach is to pre-define the duration and scope of participation, offering participants clear expectations regarding their commitment. While this can enhance transparency and provide a sense of security, it could also discourage involvement if the perceived commitment appears too demanding. Alternatively, a more flexible approach, allowing the process to evolve organically, can lower the initial threshold for engagement and make participation feel more accessible. However, such open-endedness could also suggest uncertainty, necessitating careful management of expectations to maintain trust and avoid over promising outcomes.

### Actors

Another dimension of the participation process is the actors. This includes the participants but also the organisations initiating and/or facilitating the participation process. It should be emphasised again here that participants or target groups can hardly be considered a homogeneous group if inclusiveness is an important value in the process. Within this dimension, it is not only the task to consider who is involved, but also how to engage and recruit the participants. In a multicultural context, again, **cross-cultural understanding** is essential in building relationships and trust for successful participation (Maiorano et al., 2024). Furthermore, clarity about each actor's role, taking into account the **power dynamics**, helps the **empowerment** of the community, fostering their engagement and sense of ownership (Leino & Puumala, 2020; Maiorano et al., 2024).

### Aims

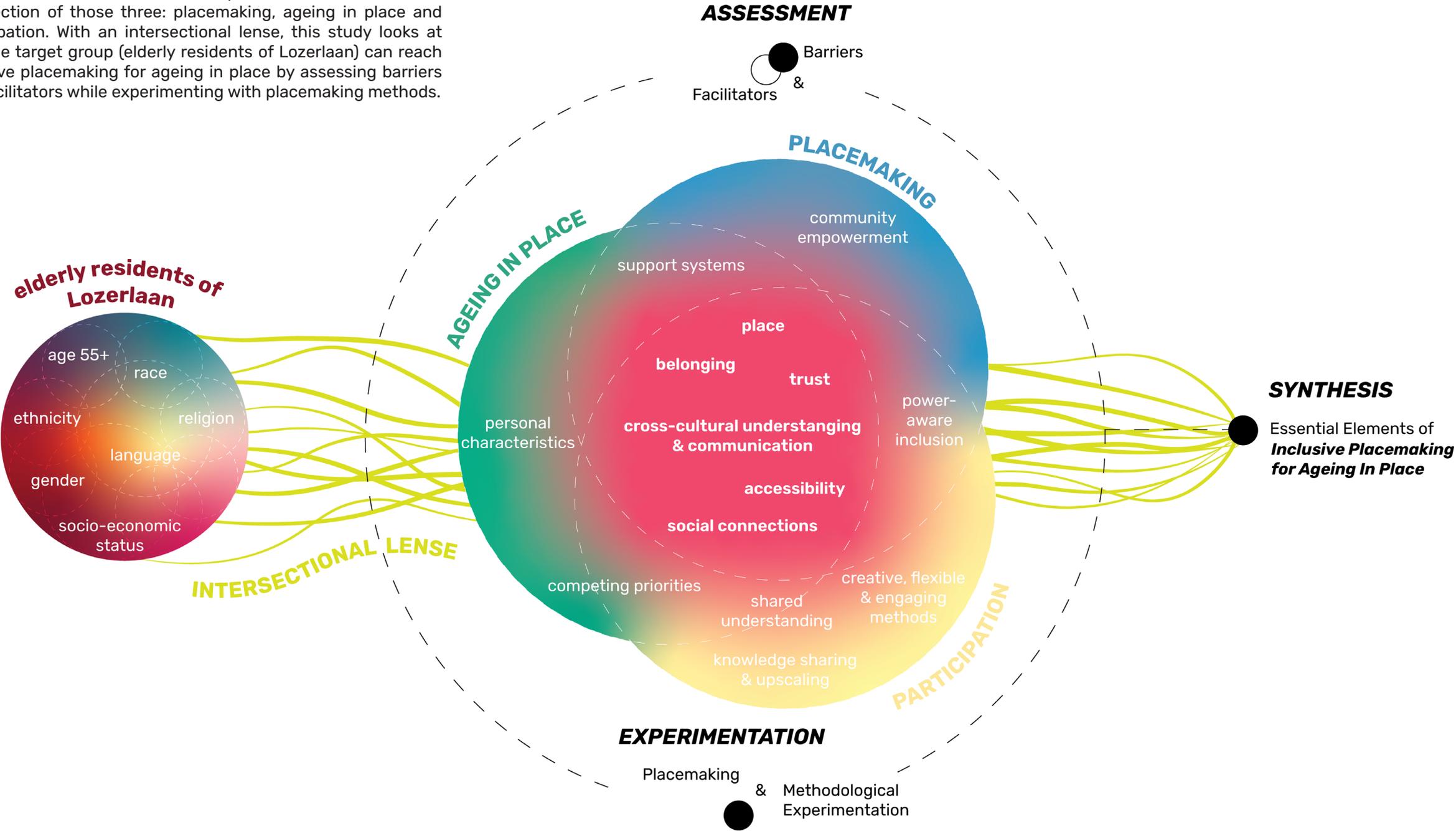
The third dimension of participation, aims, is made up of the elements issues, rationales and outcomes of participation. In higher levels of participation, like co-creation or empowerment, creating a **shared understanding** of the goals and problems to address (issues), the reason for participation (rationales) and the tangible products (outcomes) is essential for success (Maiorano et al., 2024).



Main themes of participation and their relations

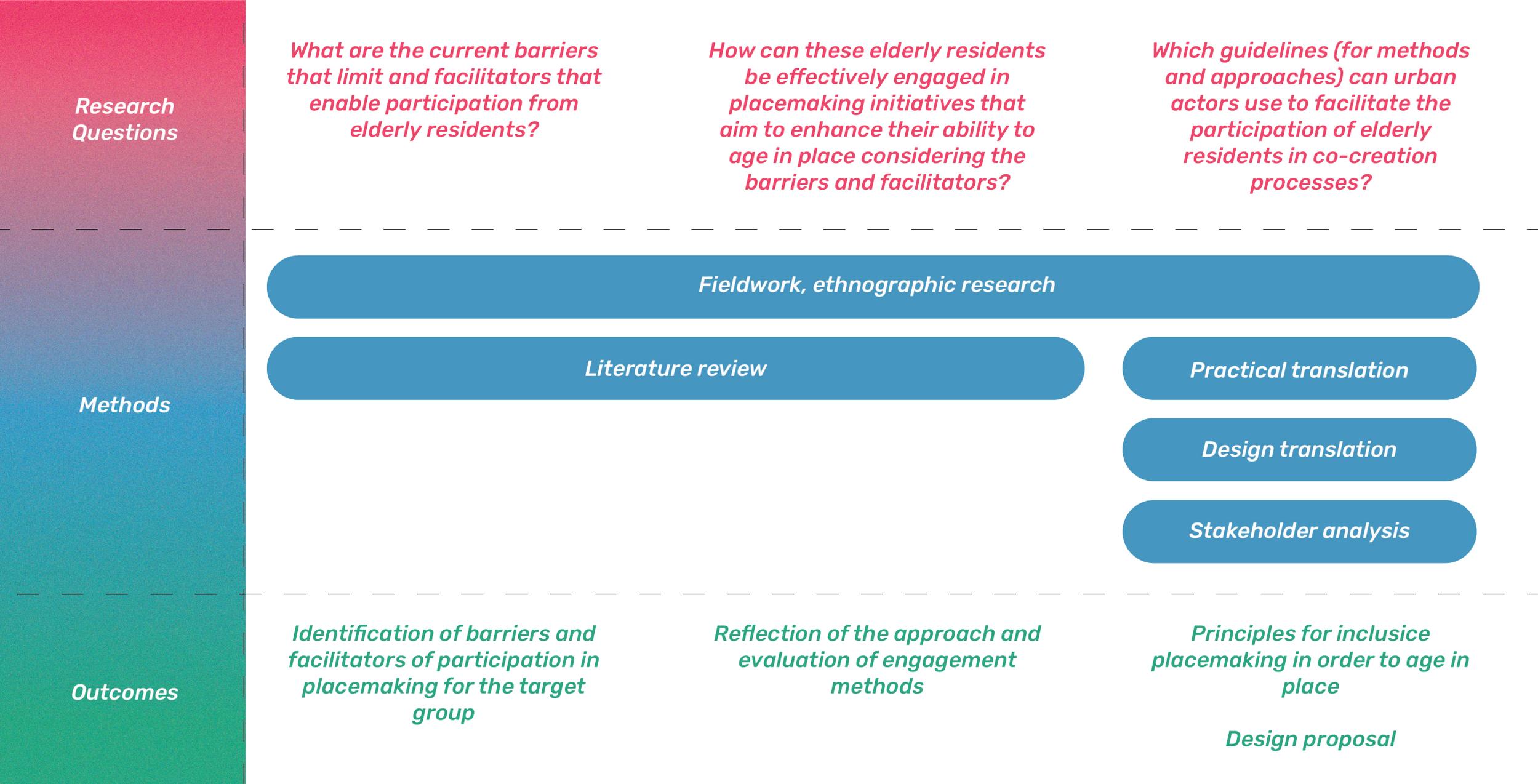
**Conceptual framework**

The conceptual framework illustrates the relations between theory and concepts and structures both the analytical and practical components of the research. Essential themes to understand the theoretical concepts are illustrated at the intersection of those three: placemaking, ageing in place and participation. With an intersectional lense, this study looks at how the target group (elderly residents of Lozerlaan) can reach inclusive placemaking for ageing in place by assessing barriers and facilitators while experimenting with placemaking methods.



# Methodology

This thesis combines qualitative, design-based, and participatory research methods to explore how urban actors can engage elderly residents with intersecting social identities in inclusive placemaking processes that support ageing in place. The methodology was carefully designed to stay grounded in the lived experiences of the target group while also producing outputs that respond directly to the needs and roles of relevant urban stakeholders.



## Literature Review

To contextualise the research, a literature review was conducted on both the historical development and current socio-spatial challenges of The Hague Southwest. This helped situate the fieldwork site, Lozerlaan, within broader patterns of urban segregation, post-war housing policy, and migration-related inequality.

In parallel, a review of academic literature shaped the theoretical backbone of the research. The core concepts are placemaking, ageing in place, and participation. These were examined through the lens of intersectionality (Crenshaw, 1991) to understand

how overlapping social identities influence the accessibility and outcomes of participatory urban processes. These insights were synthesised into an analytical framework that guided data collection and interpretation.

## Fieldwork, Ethnographic Research

Through the Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest, the research was embedded in an active redevelopment context: Haag Wonen's placemaking initiative at Lozerlaan. Ethnographic fieldwork took place continuously throughout the research period and was supported by both formal and informal access to community spaces and stakeholders.

residents' words without disrupting the flow of natural interaction. While no audio recordings were made without explicit consent, quotes were transcribed as faithfully as possible immediately after the interaction to preserve tone, intent, and context.

Data was collected through the following methods:

- Spontaneous conversations with residents on site
- Conversations and reactions during workshops organised and moderated by me, sometimes through a translator.
- Results from the workshops organised by me
- Conversations and reactions during preliminary design workshop by El Kantoor
- "Achter de Voordeur" conversations, organised by Haag Wonen to collect needs and wishes and gain support from residents for the coming renovation.
- Conversations during home visits to residents for various reasons with Haag Wonen

Informal acts of reciprocity, such as helping residents with practical needs, were also part of the research ethic. For example, the researcher provided furniture support to a recently housed status holder. These actions were not just practical but aimed at building trust and giving back to the community that enabled the research.

All methods and activities were reviewed and approved by the Human Research Ethics Committee of TU Delft, application number: 5011, and all data was collected and presented anonymously. The HREC approval letter can be found in Appendix E.

Because many meaningful conversations occurred spontaneously and informally, quotes and reflections were documented in real time using the Notes app on the researcher's phone. This method allowed for discreet, respectful, and accurate capture of

## Data Analysis Framework

Through literature review, important themes arose from the three main concepts of this study. These are explained in the theoretical framework and illustrated in the conceptual framework. After data collection, the quotes, observations and results from workshops and the language inventory were organised within each theme and divided into barriers and facilitators related to the themes. From here, the data was interpreted and a conclusion was made for each theme, exposing the barriers and facilitators.

## Design Translation of Findings

In addition to qualitative analysis, this research includes a design-based component to explore how insights can be translated into the built environment. The design proposal focuses on the "Cirkelflat," one of the Lozerlaan apartment buildings, and is grounded in direct input from residents during workshops and conversations.

Rather than serving as a fixed solution, the design acts as:

- A spatial interpretation of fieldwork insights,
- A provocation for future co-creation, and
- A visual way to bridge the abstract and everyday dimensions of inclusive placemaking.

Design strategies include spatial elements that promote informal encounter, sense of safety, cultural recognition, and ownership. These elements emerged as essential to ageing in place with dignity and autonomy. These design principles are formulated in a communication product (booklet B) for the architects working with Haag Wonen.

## Communication Products: Booklets as Actor-Specific Outputs

To ensure the findings are accessible, actionable, and relevant to those directly involved in urban development, this research produced four tailored booklets. Each booklet is designed for a specific urban actor.

These booklets are more than deliverables. They are knowledge translation tools that communicate the research in role-specific language, drawing on the fieldwork to support real change in practice:

- **Haag Wonen:** A reflective booklet challenging the organisation to rethink its opdrachtgeverschap (commissioning role) in light of intersectional accountability and shifting resident identities.
- **Architects:** A visual guide translating fieldwork insights into spatial principles that promote belonging, pride, and inclusivity.
- **Residents:** A comic-style booklet (non-academic) that shares findings and future possibilities in an accessible, narrative form.
- **Municipality of The Hague:** A vision map and narrative prompts encouraging city planners to embed resident voices in the redevelopment of De Uithof.

These booklets function as conversation starters, not prescriptive guidelines, but provocations that ask urban actors to reflect on questions such as:

**Who are you doing this for?**

**Who exactly are you accountable to?**

Appendices A–C include selected booklets to illustrate this translation process.

## Stakeholders analysis

Stakeholders analysis was conducted to understand the structures of operation and power dynamics within this case. The results inform how (proposed) placemaking initiatives and interventions could be realised. Analysing the structure also gives insight on how this approach could be applied elsewhere.



## **Chapter 3**

# **Barriers and Facilitators of Elderly Participation**

- Data collection
- Data analysis and interpretation
- Conclusions

## Data collection

The data collection process began with simply being present on site. In light of future renovation work and neighbourhood development plans, Haag Wonen placed a temporary office on the parking lot of one of the apartment buildings. This is the first point of contact with Haag Wonen for residents seeking assistance with (housing-related) concerns. Without initiating formal interviews, I was able to gather relevant contextual information through observation and spontaneous conversations. These early interactions also served as a way to introduce myself to the residents, to establish familiarity, and thereby lowering potential barriers for future engagement.

## Language inventory

Recognising the role of language in shaping access and participation, I initiated a language inventory to identify the different languages spoken within one of the apartment buildings. The focus on language, rather than nationality, was intentional. Nationality is tied to bureaucratic classifications and does not necessarily reflect the personal way of living or identity. Language on the other hand provides a more accurate reflection of daily communication and is a more accessible theme to explore.

With permission from Haag Wonen, support from an active resident and after positive reactions from other residents, I installed a poster in a high-traffic area near the elevators, inviting residents to place a sticker next to the language(s) they speak or prefer to speak. Despite receiving initial positive feedback, the poster was removed by an unknown resident the same day. A second attempt was made in the entrance hall near the mailboxes, following the suggestion from active residents, but this poster was also removed within the same day. The motivation behind these removals remains unclear, though other residents and Haag Wonen suggest it is resistance towards a multilingual approach.

While the poster method was intended to serve both as a data collection tool and a means to visually demonstrate the building's linguistic diversity, its removal necessitated a methodological pivot.

In response, I designed a more structured and anonymous form, emphasising the centrality of Dutch as the main language of communication while inviting residents to share any additional languages spoken in their households. These forms

were distributed to every mailbox in one of the buildings, with completed forms to be returned anonymously via the building's huismeester (caretaker) mailbox.

The responses were predominantly Dutch, which will be discussed further in this chapter. One resident expressed frustration at the omission of Spanish as an example language in the form. I responded with gratitude and offered to include Spanish in future communications and to organise a workshop with Spanish interpretation, to which the resident replied they would consider the offer.



*First attempt of language inventory poster. Put up on an announcement board across from the elevators.*



*Second attempt of language inventory poster. Put up in the entrance hall, across from the mail boxes.*

## De Talen van Lozerlaan

Beste bewoners,

Ik ben Jing. Ik studeer aan de TU Delft. Voor mijn studie onderzoek ik de buurt. Ik werk samen met Haag Wonen om de buurt beter te maken.

In de flat spreken we Nederlands. Dat is logisch en blijft zo. Maar we willen ook dat mensen die niet goed Nederlands spreken, alles kunnen begrijpen. Iedereen moet zich thuis voelen.

### Samen maken we de buurt sterk en fijn!

Wilt u laten weten welke taal u (liever) spreekt? Zet een vinkje bij de taal. Staat uw taal er niet bij? Schrijf het dan in het vakje "Opmerkingen". U kunt de brief (anoniem) in de brievenbus van de huismeester doen of aan mij geven.

Ik ben meestal op donderdag in de Tiny Lab-container buiten. Heeft u vragen of opmerkingen? Laat het mij gerust weten!

Alvast bedankt voor uw hulp.



Dear residents,

I am Jing, a student at TU Delft. For my studies, I am researching the neighborhood and working with Haag Wonen to improve it.

Would you like to let us know which language you (prefer to) speak? Please put a checkmark next to the language or write it in the "Comments" box if your language is not listed. You can return the letter (anonymously) via the caretaker's mailbox (near the elevators downstairs) or give it to me.

I am usually at the Tiny Lab container outside on Thursdays. Do you have any questions or comments? Feel free to let me know!

Thank you in advance for your help.

Sevgili sakinler,

Ben Jing, TU Delft'te öğrenciyim. Çalışmalarım için mahallemeyi araştırıyorum ve Haag Wonen ile birlikte çalışarak burayı daha iyi hale getirmeye yardımcı oluyorum.

Hangi dili (tercihen) konuştuğunuzu bize bildirmek ister misiniz? Lütfen dilin yanına bir işaret koyun veya eğer diliniz listede yoksa, "Yorumlar" kutusuna yazın. Mektubu (anonim olarak) kapıcının posta kutusuna (asansörlerin yanında, aşağıda) bırakabilir veya bana verebilirsiniz.

Genellikle Pergembe günleri gündaki Tiny Lab konteynerindeyim. Sorularınız veya yorumlarınız mı var? Lütfen bana bildirin!

Yardımınız için şimdiden teşekkür ederim.

السكان الكرام،

TU Delft، جامعة TU Delft، أصل مع Haag Wonen، كجزء من دراستي لأحيائي في الحي لتحصين

هل تود إخبارنا باللغة التي تفضل التواصل بها؟ يرجى وضع علامة بجانب اللغة المطلوبة، أو كتابتها في مربع "الملاحظات" إذا لم تكن ضمن القائمة. يمكنك إعادة الرسالة بشكل مجهول عبر صندوق بريد المشراف، الموجود بالقرب من المصعد في الطابق السفلي، أو يمكنك تسليمها لي شخصياً.

أنا متواجدة عادةً يوم الخميس في الحاوية Tiny Lab، هل لديك أي أسئلة أو ملاحظات؟ لا تردد في زيارتي في العارضية التابعة للمختبر.

شكراً لك مقدماً على مساعدتك

Drodzy mieszkańcy,

Jestem Jing, studentem TU Delft. Badam okolicę w ramach moich studiów i współpracuję z Haag Wonen, aby ją ulepszyć.

Czy możesz zaznaczyć, jakim językiem (najchętniej) się posługujesz? Postaw ptaszek przy swoim języku lub wpisz go w rubryce "Uwagi", jeśli nie ma go na liście. Możesz oddać ten list (anonimowo) poprzez skrzynkę pocztową dozorczy (przy windach na dole) lub bezpośrednio mi.

Zazwyczaj jestem w czwartek w kontenerze Tiny Lab na zewnątrz. Masz pytania lub uwagi? Daj mi znać!

Уважаеми жители,

Аз съм Джинг, студент в TU Delft. Изследвам квартала като част от моето обучение и работя с Haag Wonen, за да го подобрим.

Бихте ли ни казали кой език (предпочитате да) говорите? Поставете отметка до езика или го напишете в полето „Коментари“, ако не е в списъка. Можете да върнете писмото (анонимно) чрез пощенската кутия на портиера (до асансорите долу) или да го дадете на мен.

Обикновено съм в четвъртък в контейнера Tiny Lab навън. Имате ли въпроси или коментари? Чувствайте се свободни да ми кажете!

Предварително благодаря за вашата помощ.

ساكنان عزیز

Haag Wonen برای مطالعه‌ام در حال بررسی محله هستم و با TU Delft من جینگ هستم دانشجوی دانشگاه همکاری می‌کنم تا آن را بهتر کنیم

آیا می‌خواهید زبان مورد ترجیح خود را به ما اطلاع دهید؟ لطفاً کنار زبان مورد نظر خود علامت بزنید یا اگر زبان شما در لیست نیست، آن را در قسمت "توضیحات" بنویسید. می‌توانید این نامه را (به صورت ناشناس) در صندوق پستی سرایدار (زویک آسانسورها در طبقه پایین) قرار دهید یا به من بدهید.

اگر بیرون هستم، آیا سؤالی یا نظری دارید؟ لطفاً به من اطلاع دهید Tiny Lab من معمولاً پنجشنبه‌ها در کانتر

از کمک شما پیشاپیش سپاسگزارم

Opmerkingen

Opmerkingen

## Workshops

In the course of this thesis, 5 workshops were organised. There were 13 participants in total. The method of the workshops and the participant recruitment process will be explained and further discussed in the next chapter.

Based on both the language inventory results and informal observations, I conducted the first workshop in Dutch to reinforce its role as the main language and establish a baseline for participation. The following workshops were held in Arabic, Turkish, Spanish, and English. These workshops aimed not only to collect additional qualitative data but also to foster inclusivity and mutual understanding across language groups.

## "Achter de Voordeur" conversations

In collaboration with Haag Wonen, I participated in their "Achter de Voordeur" (Behind the Front Door) initiative, aimed at initiating early conversations with residents of a building planned for renovation in 2027. The goal of these conversations was to collect input on resident needs and aspirations, thereby enhancing trust and demonstrating the association's commitment to participatory planning.

## ***El Kantoor Workshop***

As part of the broader neighbourhood development strategy, El Kantoor, an architectural firm commissioned by Haag Wonen, organised a workshop to present a preliminary design based on residents' input. This event was held in the communal space of one of the apartment buildings and included a feedback moment for the residents with the summary of the "Achter de Voordeur" conversations. I used this opportunity to further engage with residents and observe their reactions to the proposed changes and the participatory process.

## ***Home Visits and Informal Conversations***

In addition to the aforementioned structured engagement moments, I also accompanied the site project leader from Haag Wonen on various home visits. These visits had a variety of reasons: responding to resident inquiries (e.g., questions about heating costs or administrative letters), troubleshooting maintenance issues, welcoming new residents, including recent status holders and just having a conversation with residents who needed social interaction.

While not initially designed as data collection moments, these informal visits provided rich qualitative insights into the lived experiences of residents. Conversations often touched on everyday challenges, housing concerns, and residents' relationships with Haag Wonen, all of which contributed to a more nuanced understanding of the local context.

# Data analysis and interpretation

The diverse methods employed provided a rich, qualitative dataset that reflects the lived realities of residents in this housing context. The data reflects linguistic diversity as well as broader themes around communication barriers, trust in institutions, and varying levels of civic engagement. The framework for analysis stems from key themes of placemaking, ageing in place and participation, identified in the theoretical framework. I analyse these data using this thematic approach, identifying key patterns and resident perspectives that emerged across the different modes of engagement. This analysis forms the basis for my conclusions regarding the barriers and facilitators for participation from the diverse community of Lozerlaan.

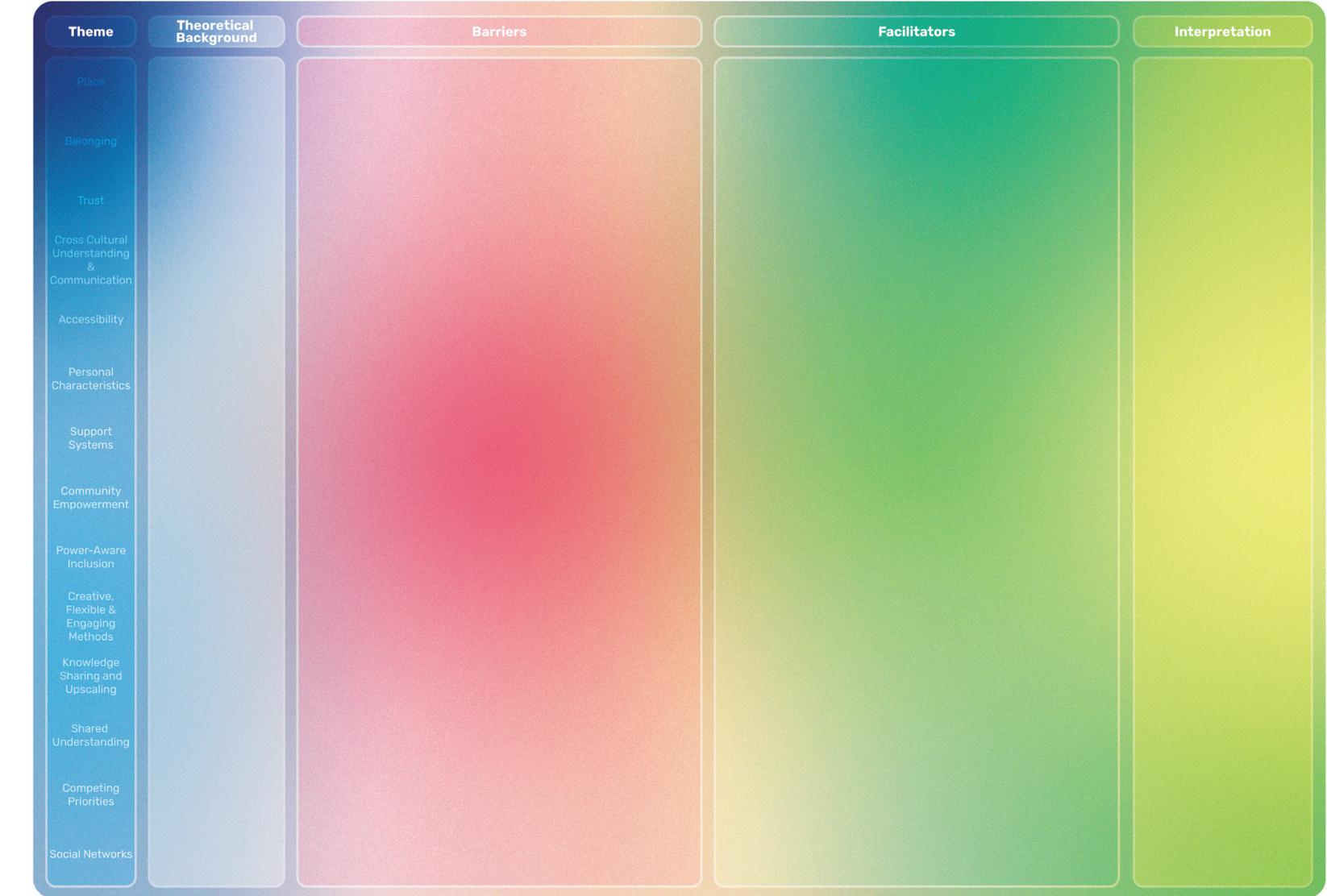
The full data analysis can be found in the appendix.

## Place

The theme place describes both the physical aspect of the living environment and the emotional and social connections associated with a particular location. **Feelings of unsafety**, together with experiences of **uncleanliness and disorder** in the immediate living environment, were frequently cited as barriers that hinder emotional connection to the direct living environment. In some cases, these barriers even contribute to social polarisation as residents begin to generalise negative experiences by attributing issues such as unsafety, uncleanliness, or disorder to specific ethnic or social groups, often based on isolated incidents. On the other hand, residents identified **peacefulness, functional living space** and **stability and order** within their living environment as facilitators of attachment to place. **Nature**, with Uithof as an example, was mentioned by the majority of residents as the main quality of their living environment. The Uithof serves as a place for peace, relaxation and space to connect with nature, which brings them joy.

**“Ik ben zelf ook buitenlander ik kan het zeggen. Al die \*\*\*\*\* hier maken de flat vies, ze zetten overal vuil neer.”**

**“Nee, ik discrimineer niet. Ik ben er niet blij mee als er bijvoorbeeld slachtafval van het slachtfeest van de buitenlanders open in de vuilcontainers liggen.”**



Data analysis framework created by author. Full data analysis in appendix.

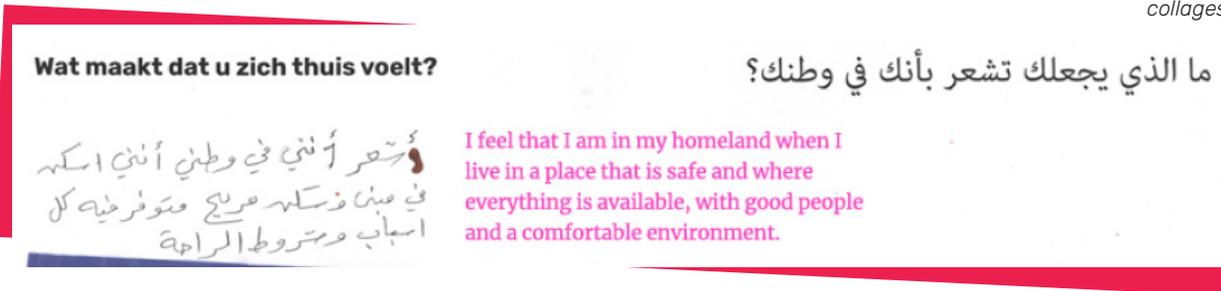
**“Hierachter in de bosjes slapen asielzoekers in tenten en die eten alle honden en katten uit de buurt op... Ja dat is echt hoor.”**

## Belonging

Barriers to a sense of belonging are linked to their connection to the neighbours. **Perceived reduced (good) social interaction with neighbours** and **lack of connection with like-minded people nearby** take away from a sense of belonging.

It is important to elderly residents that they have **peaceful** neighbours and a **sense of safety and order**. Personal characteristics like **feelings of gratitude** increase the sense of belonging to their living environment.

Selected results  
from workshop  
collages



## Trust

This theme describes residents' trust towards the community, the neighbours as well as Haag Wonen and other organisations that have an impact on the living environment of elderly residents.

While being present in the on-site office of Haag Wonen, residents often walk-in to complain or raise the fact that Haag Wonen still did not solve previously indicated problems to their house and/or in and around the buildings. As residents perceive **no or delayed results** from organisations that have an impact on their living environment, this diminishes their trust in them and makes it less likely for them to express their wishes for the future, because more urgent problems have not been solved yet.

On the other hand, **perceived positive change** and a **sense of good organisation** boosts the sense of trust towards organisations as well as other parties involved. Keeping **short lines of communication**, like the on-site office of Haag Wonen, also increases the sense of trust. Not only do residents perceive this approach by Haag Wonen as more effective, but they also see familiar faces Haag Wonen and therefore build personal connections.

Between the residents, some distrust others because of **gossiping or neighbour quarrels**. This resulted in one resident to withhold from participating in workshops.

## Cross-cultural understanding & communication

One of the most prominent challenges identified in cross-cultural understanding and communication was the **language barrier**, which often led to misunderstandings and everyday conflicts. For example, a resident described a situation where incorrect waste disposal could not be corrected because they didn't speak Dutch "hij spreekt geen Nederlands." Language gaps often add to perceptions of disorder or lack of social etiquette, reinforcing a sense of frustration among some Dutch-speaking residents.

Another significant dynamic that emerged could be best described by the framework of nativism. As explored before in the Problem Field chapter, it is the belief that those who are "native" to a country or culture (often implicitly white and Dutch in this context) are more entitled to live in or shape the community than newcomers or those perceived as culturally different (Kešić & Duyvendak, 2019). Nativism often operates through "subtle" us-versus-them narratives that reinforces forms of cultural and ethnic exclusion, as seen in statements like "ik wil echt niet dat er een buitenlander naast me komt wonen" (I really don't want a foreigner to live next to me) or "gelukkig komt er een Nederlander wonen." (Luckily, a Dutch person is moving in). These remarks reveal how cultural and/or ethnic difference is frequently associated with being a bad neighbour, noisy, disrespectful, or unhygienic. Such sentiments reflect not only personal discomfort but also a broader insider/outsider logic that restricts opportunities for mutual understanding.

Some residents note that the situation was different in the past. "It used to be that everyone just sat outside talking to everyone else. And then it didn't matter what nationality you were. But that has declined so much in the last 15-20 years." "I have seen it change so much in these 12 years." "Wat stopt de corporatie hier allemaal in joh." (What kind of people are they sticking in here now?) Such statements suggest not only a sense of loss but also a belief that contemporary social dynamics have deteriorated, particularly in terms of openness and mutual engagement. This sentiment follows the return of nativism discourse, linked to Dutch politicians like Geert Wilders, Thierry Baudet and the late Pim Fortuyn (Kešić & Duyvendak, 2019; Universiteit van Amsterdam, 2023). The concerns focus primarily on immigration and integration. Results from the language inventory were mainly Dutch residents expressing their concerns about the integration of newcomers who speak another language. These quotes show the concern for the loss of the Dutch language while pushing away the responsibility of integration only on the newcomers. This discourse could be a significant barrier in residents who are seen as foreign's ability to participate.

**"Er is al een hoop verbeterd sinds dat jullie hier rondlopen"**

**"De gemeente ruimt de borden niet op na werkzaamheden. Het is een asociale boel hier."**

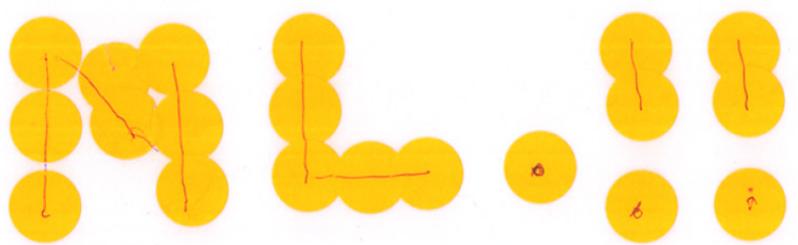
**"En er wonen al zoveel asociale hier."**

Despite these challenges, several facilitators to cross-cultural understanding were also observed. Positive interpersonal experiences, where residents built relationships across cultural lines, and individual attitudes such as openness, patience, or previous experience with diversity, played a significant role in mitigating tensions.

Gewoon Nederlands spreken. Je woont in Nederland dus leer (goed) Nederlands spreken en lezen. Waarom moeten wij ons aanpassen aan de nieuwkomers. Zij moeten zich aanpassen. Moeten wij ook als we naar een ander land verhuizen. Anders heb je het niet. In een ander land passen zij alle informatie ook niet aan aan het Nederlands.

\* Wij spreken gewoon Nederlands de mensen die het niet spreekt moet maar op cursus gaan en aanpassen hier in Nederland.

Waarom zie ik er geen Nederlanders bijstaan? Wij wonen in Nederland, en ik ben een Nederlander, wie hier wil blijven wonen, moet Nederlands leren, ik versta al die vreemde talen niet. Kunnen wij, niet begrijpen wat er staat, is er vast wel iemand die hen wil helpen!!!.



Selected results from language inventory form

## Accessibility

This theme describes the accessibility to support systems, social networks and community engagement opportunities, with the geographic proximity of these elements as part of the theme.

The Lozerlaan apartment buildings are located next to a major four-lane road that acts as a physical barrier. This separation makes the buildings feel isolated, like islands disconnected from the rest of the city. Several residents reported difficulties crossing the road, as the pedestrian crossing signal turns red too quickly to safely cross in one attempt. Despite this, many residents expressed appreciation for the convenience of nearby public transport stops, which are located directly in front of the buildings.

Pedestrian pathways running alongside a cycling lane link the four buildings. However, at the beginning of the study, these paths were poorly maintained. They were overgrown and uneven due to tree root growth. As part of broader redevelopment plans for the Uithof recreational area redevelopment, the municipality of The Hague organised a walk with Lozerlaan residents through the landscape of Uithof. During this residents express their needs and concerns, as well as complaints about the lanes connecting the buildings. As a result of this dialogue and follow-up by Haag Wonen, the connecting lanes were recently repaired, a change that residents have responded to very positively. In this case, a physical barrier to accessibility was transformed into a facilitator during the course of the study.



Photo taken by El Kantoor  
Elderly residents walking on the cycling lane because of overgrown walking lane



*Unwalkable lane connecting the four buildings*



*Improved cycling and walking lane*

Another factor affecting accessibility is the distance to essential amenities. The closest grocery shops are at least 1 kilometre away from the closest apartment block.

Language is also a barrier to the accessibility to community engagement opportunities, as well as support systems and social networks. Several residents with limited Dutch proficiency reported feelings of loneliness, and one noted a direct lack of support due to language difficulties.

During one of the workshops supported by an Arabic interpreter, a Dutch-speaking participant joined the session. I had prepared bilingual worksheets in both Dutch and Arabic and began the session using short Dutch sentences, which the interpreter translated. After a few minutes, the Dutch-speaking participant stood up and asked whether I had worksheets in Dutch only, as they were finding it hard to follow the format. Unfortunately, I did not, and she chose to leave. Interestingly, the same participant later rejoined a Spanish-language workshop, where I had prepared only Dutch worksheets and the Spanish interpreter provided translations only to the Spanish-speaking participant. In this setting, the Dutch participant remained engaged and participated.

## **Personal characteristics**

During fieldwork, several personal barriers and facilitators to participation for placemaking were noted. Some participants reported that they could not engage in activities or do some of their hobbies because of **financial constraints**. Others had **far-away family members** and/or **poorer health conditions**.

Ageing is constantly adjusting to what your body can and cannot do. Several participants acknowledge that they could still walk easily while others in their surroundings cannot. This contributes to a **sense of autonomy and independence**, which in turns adds to the motivation to participate. Another personal characteristic which contributes to the ability to age in place, but not necessarily to the ability to participate in placemaking, is a **feelings of gratitude**. Small things in life like seeing flowers can already give them energy and joy.

## **Support systems**

While elderly individuals in general may experience limited access to informal support, particularly when family members live far away, this challenge is often more pronounced among elderly migrants. Having relocated from another country, they are less likely to have extended family nearby. Some do not have family in the country at all, which reduces opportunities for informal care and assistance.

For those who do not speak Dutch (fluently), language becomes an additional barrier to building local support networks. Several participants shared their desire to have neighbours who speak their language, whom they could trust with their house keys for emergencies or turn to for help with daily needs.

When identities such as migrant background, limited language proficiency, and low socio-economic status intersect, the barriers to aging in place safely and with dignity become significantly more complex. These overlapping challenges can hinder access to both formal and informal support systems, increasing the risk of isolation and unmet needs.

In the Dutch workshop, several participants noted **having family close by** and **good neighbours** as a need to age well in place.

***“Ik wil misschien terug naar Turkije. Ik heb geen familie hier. Zorg is hier niet goed, ik word ouder.”***

## ***Participation for community empowerment***

The themes of *power-aware inclusion, creative, flexible & engaging methods, knowledge sharing and upscaling, and shared understanding* are closely interconnected and contribute to *community empowerment*. These themes are therefore discussed together.

*Community empowerment*, for example, was supported through events of collaborative decision-making, immediate placemaking activities, followed up by the exchange of knowledge, and experiences of enjoyment and positive affect. However, its realisation was sometimes constrained by barriers such as a lack of trust within the community, unresolved tensions with non-participating residents, and uncertainty about procedural follow-up, particularly around what happens after a complaint is raised.

Achieving community empowerment, however, depends on more than isolated actions. It is intertwined with the ways inclusion, methods, knowledge-sharing, and mutual understanding are approached. A critical foundation is power-aware inclusion. When I first introduced myself as a TU Delft student, a few residents reacted with “Oh, you’re so smart!” This comment already reveals a potential perceived power imbalance based on education status. Aware that this could limit honest exchange and mutual learning, I changed my introduction to just a student who is learning from Haag Wonen and the residents here. However, my position as a student later proved beneficial as residents felt they could freely express their concerns about the building, Haag Wonen and neighbours without potential repercussions.

Furthermore, multiple residents withheld from participating because they had no complaints. “I have nothing to add, I’m new here.” “I chose to come here, I have nothing to complain about.” While this seems respectful, it may actually mask internalised power dynamics. These residents might feel that they are not “entitled” to voice concerns. Especially elderly migrants expressed more gratitude and downplayed their concerns. Even if their current living environment is an upgrade already, it is important to let them know that participating in placemaking initiatives is not only about solving complaints or just spatial problems. It is an opportunity for social inclusion and to create a sense of ownership and belonging. In this, all participants should have an equal chance for contribution.

Closely linked to inclusion is the use of creative, flexible, and engaging methods, which can either enable or restrict

empowerment. When activities were adaptable, and well-organised, they fostered stronger participation and dialogue. On the other hand, lengthy sessions and uncomfortable environments became barriers to engagement, limiting the potential for inclusive participation.

In addition, knowledge sharing and upscaling is important in sustaining community empowerment beyond the immediate scope of engagement. Facilitators included good on-site connections and effective coordination, which supported the dissemination of outcomes and their translation into broader policy or practice. For example, Haag Wonen organises coffee moments on-site with all the parties involved in neighbourhood development to catch up on progress and share insights. Without these mechanisms, not only do valuable insights then risk remaining unimplemented, but residents could also experience research and participation fatigue if different parties operate uncoordinated.

Following up, shared understanding of the aims of the project is essential for the entire participatory process and for empowerment to be meaningful and sustained. This does not only mean that participants share the same understanding of why a workshop is conducted, but applies for all parties involved with the neighbourhood development project throughout. Noticeably, during El Kantoor’s presentation of their preliminary design, several participants said “that will take so long, I won’t live to see it.” or “Very nice what you all want to do on the ground floor, but I just want to know what will happen to my property.” These comments reflect emotional and motivational detachment. When outcomes are far in the future, residents, especially older ones, may feel excluded from the benefits of their own participation. This could weaken empowerment and ownership. It also shows that the long-term scope of Haag Wonen’s project does not align with the community urgency, especially for aging populations. It could help to start by making clear how urgent issues like safety and functionalities within the building are being addressed and then that it is still important to think about the future and, with that, interventions that could already be realised during renovation.

Following up on addressing competing priorities when aiming for community empowerment. It is not only important to address the temporal disconnect between planning processes and the lived realities of residents, but also cultural and social dynamics that shape participation. As highlighted during the preliminary design workshop with El Kantoor, while some residents expressed

***“Ik heb niks, ik ben nieuw hier.”***

***“Ik heb zelf gekozen om hier naartoe te komen, ik heb niks te klagen.”***

***“Heel mooi, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee.”***

***“Belangrijkste is veiligheid, de rest komt wel.”***

***“Heel leuk wat jullie allemaal op de begane grond willen doen, maar ik wil gewoon weten wat er met mijn woning gaat gebeuren.”***

enthusiasm for ideas like a collective “DIY space,” others reacted with skepticism. One participant even walked away, remarking, “Now crazy things are being said.” Such responses reflect a gap between proposed interventions and residents’ perceptions of feasibility or relevance that even results in dropping out of participants.

Low attendance at the workshop supported by a Turkish interpreter underscored how cultural and religious rhythms like Eid or Iftar preparations can affect engagement. This aspect is further discussed in the next chapter when reflecting on the methods used during this study. Deeper and more sensitive issues such as housing insecurity, where residents withhold from participation in anything, even social interactions, out of fear of being exposed for housing fraud. As one person noted, “Some people don’t want to participate because they have multiple people living in their house.” These factors create barriers to visibility and voice but is debatable if this is a barrier that should be addressed.

Taken together, these interconnected themes illustrate that community empowerment is not a standalone outcome, but rather the product of deliberate, reflective, and context-sensitive approaches across all aspects of participation. It is important to acknowledge different individuals’ barriers to community empowerment and participation, but this does not mean that all residents should be participants.

### ***Social networks***

In literature review, social networks was seen as an important theme across studies on placemaking, ageing in place and participation. Strong social networks are tied to improved well-being, resilience and stronger sense of belonging, this is particularly important for the ageing population. Data from fieldwork exposed greater barriers to form a strong social network for elderly migrants. During the Arabic workshop, multiple participants shared feelings of loneliness and noted the absence of Dutch friends or familiar language communities in their buildings. A similar pattern was observed when inviting residents for the Spanish workshop. Two Spanish speaking residents in the same building did not know each other and both were unaware of others who shared their language or background. These examples point to critical obstacles to social network formation, including a lack of shared language, absence of perceived cultural micro-communities, and limited opportunities for casual interaction.

However, participation sessions like the organised workshops proved to be moments of connection. Participants of the Arabic workshop exchanged phone numbers and even shared food, underscoring how small gestures can serve as powerful facilitators of social bonding. Proximity of family, friendships, and good neighbourly relations were all seen as enabling factors for a strong social network.

## **Conclusions**

This chapter has explored the main barriers and facilitators shaping elderly residents’ ability and willingness to participate in placemaking. Central to enabling engagement is the acknowledgement of residents’ urgencies, particularly concerns around safety, order, and the functional quality of their homes. When these fundamental needs are recognised and addressed, trust in the process increases, fostering a sense of empowerment and making participation more meaningful.

A major barrier identified is language and communication. These do not merely refer to spoken or written language, but to broader communicative mismatches within the community and between residents and urban actors. Poor communication undermines inclusivity in placemaking and weakens support systems crucial for ageing in place. It also limits the residents’ ability to form social networks, which are essential for sustained engagement and sense of belonging.

Another critical barrier stems from internalised power imbalances, especially among residents with a migration background. A perception of limited influence and a reluctance to voice concerns, that is rooted in feelings of being “grateful” for what they have, can suppress active participation. Overcoming this requires flexible and adaptive participation methods that lower thresholds for involvement and make room for diverse voices and capacities.

The understanding of both limiting and enabling factors sets the stage for a deeper reflection on practice. The following chapter, Engagement methods and reflections, evaluates the methods applied during the study to engage the diverse community of Lozerlaan. It assesses what approaches work well with elderly residents, especially those living at the intersection of multiple challenges, and identifies where adaptations are still needed for more inclusive, responsive engagement.



## **Chapter 4 Engagement Methods and Reflections**

- Fieldwork engagement methods
- Progress Haag Wonen & broadening engagement
- Stakeholders analysis

## Fieldwork engagement methods

This chapter addresses the sub-question: How can elderly residents be effectively engaged in placemaking initiatives that aim to enhance their ability to age in place, considering the barriers and facilitators?

To explore this question, I reflect on the methods used during fieldwork to engage elderly residents in participation activities, with a particular focus on what strategies were effective, what challenges arose, and what could be improved in future initiatives.

### Initial engagement through presence

As outlined in the previous chapter, the fieldwork began with an informal approach by being present on site. This presence allowed residents to become gradually familiar with me and created space for spontaneous interactions. Over time, these informal exchanges built a foundation of trust and familiarity, which proved instrumental for deeper engagement. For instance, two residents later brought neighbours to the workshops, illustrating how early efforts helped to extend my reach through word-of-mouth and peer trust.



Self introduction through the information display in the entrance hall

## Recruiting workshop participants

The recruitment process for workshops began with the distribution of printed invitations in every resident's mailbox. Interested participants were asked to return the invitation to the huismeester's mailbox. However, the actual attendance never aligned with the number of returned invitations. One participant, for example, mentioned forgetting to return the form and another had forgotten entirely about the workshop but happened to pass by at the right time and joined spontaneously.

This suggests that while formal invitations can initiate interest, they may not reliably predict attendance. Reminders towards activities are also needed to ensure participation from interested residents. Furthermore, the workshops were held in the building's communal room, an intentional choice. This space is well-known and trusted by residents, which increased the accessibility of the workshops. The room's visibility also enabled walk-ins, which further adds to participation opportunities.

The selection of the day and time for the workshops was informed by an active resident who manages the communal room. Thursdays were chosen, as no other events were scheduled during that day, reducing potential conflicts and enhancing turnout.

### Workshop design and adaptation

The initial workshop sessions followed a structured format. After welcoming the participants, I introduced myself and the purpose of the workshop, explained the informed consent process, and described the activity. Residents could then answer up to three questions using various formats: writing, drawing, stickers, or verbal responses, which I transcribed for them. The questions participants could answer were:

- What makes you feel at home?
- What do you need to grow old peacefully here?
- How does a perfect day look like to you?

As the workshops progressed, I began to adapt the format. Later sessions were smaller and less formal, with participants arriving at various times during a two-hour window. This flexibility allowed for more personal, one-on-one interactions and gave participants control over their mode of engagement. The evolving structure reflected that adapting to the residents' pace and comfort levels enhances participation.



*Photo of the general workshop setting  
Worksheets with the questions,  
Informed consent form, creative  
materials and snacks*



*Photo taken during the first workshop*

### ***Personal invitations and language considerations***

Following the initial session, the invitation method shifted toward more personal outreach. For the second workshop, I personally invited an Arabic-speaking resident whom I had met during a house visit. I encouraged them to bring a friend, which they did. A third Arabic-speaking resident, whom I also already had connected with, joined spontaneously upon seeing the workshop underway. Communication in this session was supported by an Arabic-speaking interpreter.

However, not all interactions were seamless. A Dutch-speaking resident walked in during the Arabic-language workshop and left visibly frustrated by the lack of Dutch-language only materials and the difficulty of following translated discussions. I promised to prepare Dutch only materials for future workshops and to explain the activity personally in Dutch. This resident returned and participated in a later session. This incident highlighted the importance of linguistic sensitivity and inclusive facilitation, particularly in multilingual residential contexts. It raised the question to me if integration and mixing of linguistic groups is necessary or is co-existence enough.

### ***Cultural considerations***

Both the Arabic and Turkish workshops are planned during Ramadan to fit the planning also to the course of the thesis. Knowing this, I prepared snack packages for participants to take home instead of offering snacks, coffee or tea during the workshops. These packages contained fruits and dates or waffles. However, this consideration was not enough to ensure attendance.

In particular, the Turkish-language workshop only had one participant, as it was held on the Thursday before Eid, when many residents were already occupied with preparing for the celebrations and the evening Iftar meal. The participant who did attend commented that Turkish residents in the building generally tend to keep to themselves and may prefer not to engage in group activities such as these workshops. This experience showed that it is not enough to be generally aware of cultural or religious events. True understanding and effective planning require consultation with someone who is part of that specific community. Engaging cultural insiders can help identify meaningful nuances in timing, participation preferences, and social dynamics that might otherwise be overlooked.



*Photos of the snack packages for participants of the Arabic and Turkish workshop during Ramadan*

### **Participation overview**

Over the course of five workshops, a total of 13 residents participated. The breakdown is as follows:

Category	Number of Participants
Total participants	13
Invited personally or previously known	7
Invited by another participant	2
Unknown prior to workshop	4
Non-Dutch speakers (requiring interpreters)	4

All non-Dutch-speaking participants were personally invited or were friends of personally invited participants. These individuals likely would not have joined without direct outreach. This shows the value of trust and personal connection.

### **Progress Haag Wonen & broadening engagement**

In recent years, Haag Wonen has made meaningful steps in developing placemaking strategies that support ageing in place. Recognising that the built environment and social cohesion play a crucial role in the well-being of older residents, the housing association has increasingly integrated community-building efforts into its housing projects. The initiative aims to create environments where residents can comfortably and safely grow older while remaining in their trusted living environment.

The stakeholder analysis conducted as part of this project, which will be shown and explained in the next chapter, shows the breadth and depth of partnerships involved in the neighbourhood development. Haag Wonen engages municipal authorities, social workers, community organisations, and, crucially, the residents themselves. What stands out is the shared understanding among all parties: the common goal of making the neighbourhood a better place for residents to age in, with dignity, agency, and connection.

Two years ago, Haag Wonen launched its first placemaking initiative in one of the four Lozerlaan buildings in this project. Applying the Asset-Based Community Development (ABCD) method (LSA bewoners, 2023), they focused on identifying and mobilising the strengths and talents within the resident community. This led to the co-creation of the “Lozer Inn”, a communal space initiated, furnished, and decorated by the residents themselves. Furniture was sourced collectively and donated by fellow residents. Activities in this room are self-organised, reflecting the community’s interests and capacities. The management of this communal room is fully in the hands of a few active residents, it became a symbol of ownership and belonging. As a result, the residents of this building are now also highly engaged in conversations around the upcoming renovation and redevelopment of their living environment. They are no longer passive recipients of change but active participants shaping the future of their home.

However, while both Haag Wonen and the active resident group acknowledge the increasing diversity within the building, pointing to the growing number of residents from migrant backgrounds, the current engaged group is almost entirely composed of native Dutch residents. This realisation sparked the need to broaden the inclusivity of community building efforts and ensure that voices from all cultural and linguistic backgrounds are heard and involved.

This research project was designed in response to that gap. The focus shifted to a second building, where Haag Wonen had not yet initiated community building activities. Here, the main objective was to explore ways of reaching residents who are often underrepresented in participatory processes due to language barriers or cultural differences. As documented earlier in this chapter, this effort successfully engaged four residents who required interpreters to communicate and who would likely have remained disengaged without this targeted outreach.

A particularly memorable moment came when one of these residents invited Haag Wonen staff for lunch as a gesture of gratitude, a meaningful sign of trust and connection. Additionally, during a workshop held in Turkish, the single participant who attended, although fluent in Dutch, expressed appreciation for the effort to include the Turkish community and offered to help organise future events and workshops to engage others from similar backgrounds.

Although time constraints prevented further follow-up within

the scope of this thesis, these initial steps have laid important groundwork. The door is now open for Haag Wonen to follow up on this engagement with groups that have historically been less visible in such processes.

## **Stakeholders analysis**

To ensure that the findings of this project could inform and support urban actors in improving their approaches to placemaking, particularly when working with marginalized groups, I conducted a stakeholder analysis. Understanding the roles, relationships, and influence of different actors is essential for identifying where coordination succeeds or falls short, and how this impacts inclusive engagement. This analysis was developed through a combination of insights from Haag Wonen, who outlined their key collaborators, and my own experiences and observations on site. These complementary perspectives helped clarify both the formal structures and informal dynamics at play. I visualised these relationships through directional arrows to reflect levels of cooperation, support, tension, or misalignment. While all stakeholders see the residents as the central beneficiaries, their approaches do not always reflect this in practice. This reveals the importance of aligning intentions with effective, resident-centered strategies. In the following chapter, I connect these stakeholder roles to the fieldwork findings to explore how collaboration can be improved to better support inclusive, community-led placemaking. The graphic can be found in the next page.

**PRIVATE**

- Residents fluent in Dutch
- Multi-lingual residents who are less sufficient in Dutch
- Residents not sufficient in Dutch

**CIVIC**

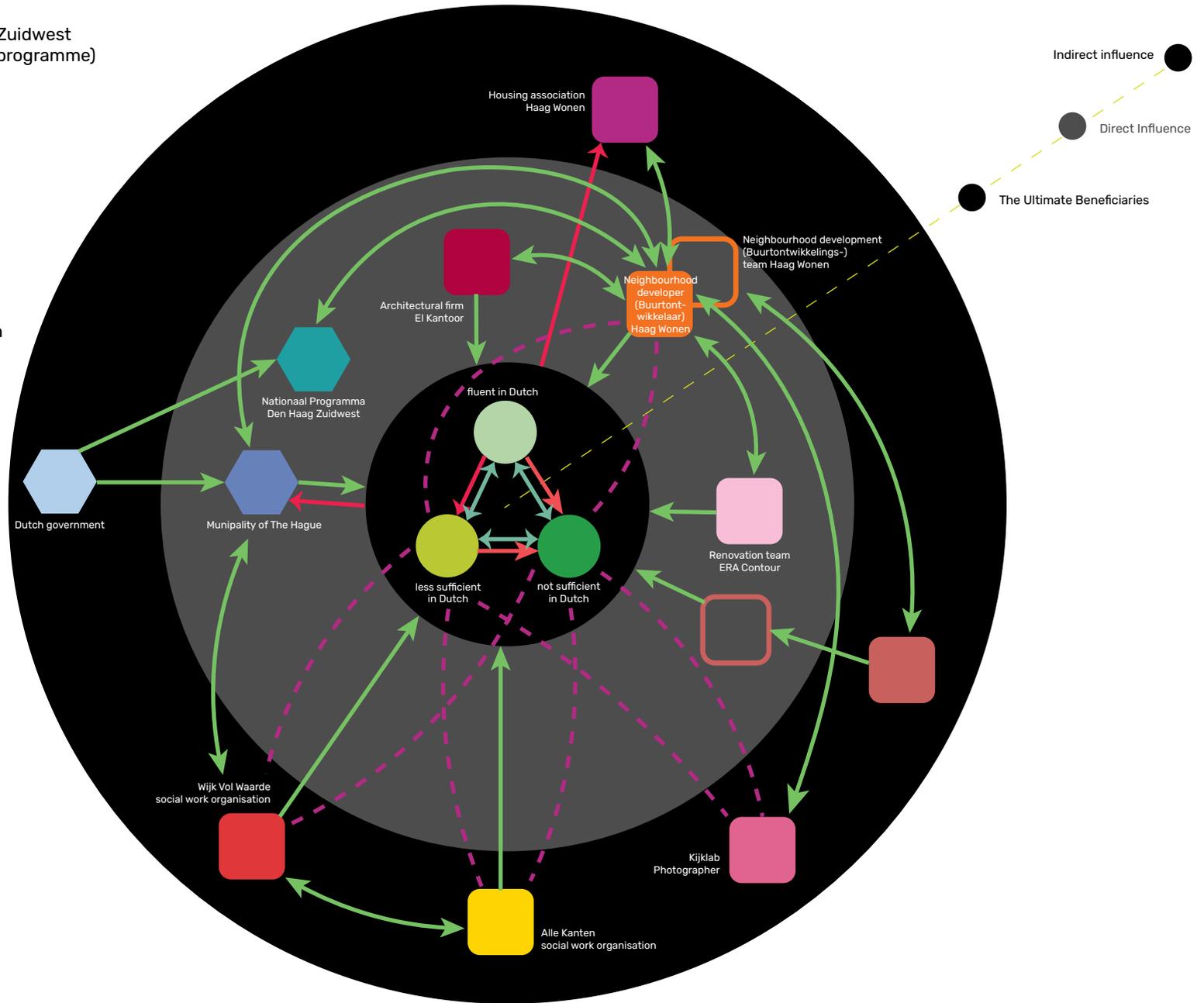
- Neighbourhood developer (Buurtontwikkelaar) Haag Wonen
- Neighbourhood development (Buurtontwikkelings-) team Haag Wonen
- Kijklab photographer
- Renovation team ERA Contour
- Research & Academia

**RELATIONS**

- Cooperation
- Support
- Positive attitude
- Conflict
- One-sided conflict/exclusion
- Negative attitude
- Weak relationship, untapped potential

**PUBLIC**

- Nationaal Programma Den Haag Zuidwest (National liveability and security programme)
- Municipality of The Hague
- Dutch government
- Housing association Haag Wonen
- Alle Kanten social work organisation
- Wijk Vol Waarde social work organisation
- Architectural firm El Kantoor
- Students



# Chapter 5 Synthesis

- Essential elements
- Guidelines



## Essential elements

The fieldwork process demonstrates that building trust and tailoring engagement strategies to the lived realities of elderly residents, especially those facing barriers due to language, mobility, or confidence, requires time, flexibility, and patience. Nevertheless, such investments are necessary and worthwhile in creating inclusive placemaking initiatives that truly support aging in place.

The relatively small number of participants (13 across five sessions) appears modest. However, the deeper impact lies in the quality of inclusion, particularly the engagement of four residents who would likely have remained excluded without targeted effort. The workshops proved beneficial to these residents as they could also expand their social networks.

A conclusion of essential elements for inclusive placemaking for ageing in place in this case is as follows:

- Personal relationships are the most effective tool for engagement, particularly for residents with language barriers, different cultural norms or low confidence.
- Workshop and activity formats should be flexible to allow participants to join and contribute at their own pace.
- The location for placemaking initiatives should be trusted and accessible locations. This facilitates both planned and spontaneous participation.
- Linguistic and cultural sensitivity is essential for equitable engagement. It is best to consult about the best approach from someone of the same culture.
- The lived reality and urgency of the residents should be acknowledged first and ideally addressed before presenting plans for the longer scope of the project.

## Guidelines

The essential elements serve as a foundation for the next step: understanding how such inclusive placemaking efforts can be sustained and scaled through effective collaboration among stakeholders. The stakeholder analysis conducted for this project identifies three main groups involved in the process:

**Main Initiator:** Haag Wonen, as the property owner and driver of the placemaking initiative.

**Ultimate Beneficiaries:** The residents, including both currently engaged individuals and those yet to be reached.

**Social and Institutional Stakeholders:** This includes community workers, translators, local organisations, care providers, and municipal actors.

Each group plays a distinct role, but to realise inclusive placemaking in practice, their efforts must be aligned through intentional design and coordination. Based on research and fieldwork so far, several guiding principles emerge:

### ***Maintain consistent, personal relationships***

The most effective engagement stems from familiarity and trust. To preserve this, there should be a small number of recognisable faces representing the main initiator who act as constant, reliable points of contact. These individuals serve not only as facilitators but as bridges between the residents and the broader network of stakeholders. By connecting new stakeholders, whether municipal planners, social workers, or researchers, through these trusted contacts, residents are less likely to be overwhelmed by unfamiliar actors, and a clear overview of involvement and activities can be maintained. This helps avoid both participation and research fatigue while giving external stakeholders more effective access to the community.

In this case, Haag Wonen appointed one project leader on-site who takes on this role to maintain personal relationships with the residents. The different stakeholders, including students like me, have coordination meetings and update moments with this project leader and are introduced to residents through this face of the community. One example shows the learning progress of coordinating efforts. In connection with one of the courses of TU Delft, students were introduced to residents for interviews. After one general meeting moment, organised by the project leader in the communal room of the building, students started to seek contact with residents on their own for further interviews.

## *Keeping residents' well-being central*

While this is done with good intention and a polite approach, the residents suddenly felt “backed into a corner”. Students who ran into this difficulty stated the following:

“...When we suggested the home visit and the domestic diary etc, they were unpleasantly surprised.

We did end up with information we could use for the final assignment, but (resident) didn't want to go into his personal life or daily routine— he said that (he) also didn't feel safe, considering we were strangers.

He did also state more residents felt this way, a little backed into a corner considering they volunteered, but apparently for something they weren't aware of.”

This situation is mitigated after further intervention from the project leader.

### *Design activities from the perspective of the residents*

Regardless of which stakeholder initiates an activity, its design must be rooted in the lived experiences, social positions, and preferences of the people who inhabit the space. However, drawing from an intersectional lens, it is crucial to avoid treating “residents” as a homogenous category. Age, language, cultural background, religion, gender, mobility, and socio-economic status intersect to produce vastly different forms of inclusion or exclusion. A participatory process that centres the generic “resident” risks overlooking the specific needs of those most marginalised within the community.

To address this complexity, an intersectional approach should guide all stages of engagement and recognise overlapping vulnerabilities and privileges. Urban actors can operationalise this by using frameworks like Hofer and Kaufmann's (2022) 3A3-framework, which includes nine core elements of participation. These help ensure accessibility, inclusion, and sensitivity to difference. Practical design decisions (such as organising activities in familiar, trusted locations, at convenient times, and in the languages people are comfortable with) can significantly affect participation outcomes. Facilitators should reflect the diversity of the community, or work alongside cultural and linguistic mediators who help bridge divides in trust, language, and lived experience.

Stakeholders often come to placemaking with diverse objectives like urban regeneration, inclusion, data collection, or innovation. But whatever the goal, the ethical anchor must be the well-being of the people whose lives are most affected. That said, even this must be approached carefully. The question is not just “How can we help the residents?” but more precisely:

#### **“Who exactly are we accountable to?”**

This question demands ongoing reflection. Accountability should not be limited to abstract notions of “the community” or “the resident,” but should remain responsive to the most vulnerable and least heard voices. This requires not only consultation but redistribution of power, allowing those typically excluded to help define the terms of engagement.

Moreover, urban actors must critically examine their own role in the participatory process:

#### **Are you informing? Consulting? Co-creating? Or enabling real empowerment?**

Referring to IPA2's Spectrum of Public Participation (International Association for Public Participation, 2018b), this distinction matters deeply. Processes that appear inclusive may, in practice, reproduce top-down dynamics or tokenism. Naming the mode of participation clearly and transparently helps set expectations and build trust.



# Chapter 6 Translating the Research into Practice

- Why Communication Products?
- Booklets

This research cumulates in a set of four tailored communication and design output booklets that respond to the needs, roles, and responsibilities of key urban actors: the housing association (Haag Wonen), collaborating architects, Lozerlaan residents, and the Municipality of The Hague. These booklets aim to translate complex theoretical insights and resident experiences into accessible, actor-specific formats that support long-term, inclusive urban transformation.

## Why Communication Products?

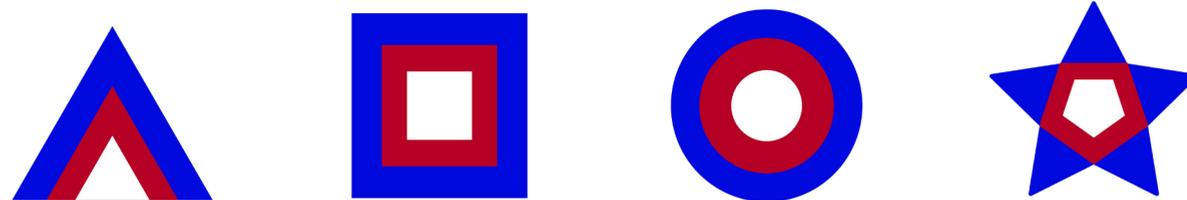
Throughout the course of this research, it became evident that generating insights alone is not enough. The complexity of urban transformation processes demands that research be translated into practice in meaningful, accessible, and context-sensitive ways. This is where communication products come in.

Drawing from a design research approach, the creation of communication products is understood as a form of research translation. Rather than treating the thesis as the final container of knowledge, these products extend its insights into the real-world arenas where decisions are made and relationships are negotiated. They bridge the gap between theoretical analysis, empirical fieldwork, and applied spatial or social strategies.

Fieldwork with residents and interviews with institutional actors revealed the urgent need for clearer channels of understanding between different stakeholders. Misalignments in language, priorities, and expectations often lead to misunderstanding or disengagement. Urban actors each operate within their own institutional logics and capacities. They hold distinct priorities and responsibilities, and therefore require tailored forms of communication.

The four booklets developed in this research respond to this need. Each one is crafted specifically for a different actor involved in or affected by the development of Lozerlaan and its surroundings. These booklets are not intended as prescriptive blueprints or fixed solutions. Instead, they function as conversation starters, as tools for reflection, orientation, and dialogue. They invite their readers to re-examine their roles, assumptions, and accountabilities in light of the lived experiences of residents and the broader systemic challenges outlined in this thesis.

By embracing the format of situated, actor-specific communication products, the research moves toward a model of engaged scholarship, where knowledge circulates not only through academic channels but also through the practices, discourses, and decisions of urban life itself.



## Booklets

### *Booklet A: Rethinking Haag Wonen's Commissioning Role and Institutional Responsibility*

These orientations toward inclusive placemaking are not merely abstract principles, they form the basis of a practical communication product developed for Haag Wonen, the housing association that plays a central role in shaping living environments like Lozerlaan. In a forthcoming booklet designed specifically for Haag Wonen, I invite the organisation to critically reflect on its "opdrachtgeverschap" (its commissioning role and institutional responsibility) in relation to the communities it serves.

Rather than viewing "residents" as a single, unified target group, the booklet encourages Haag Wonen to ask:

#### **Voor wie doe je het? Who exactly are you doing this for?**

This question pushes beyond conventional notions of stakeholder consultation. It asks Haag Wonen to consider how its actions affect diverse subgroups of residents, especially those whose needs are most often overlooked due to age, language, migration background, or other intersecting factors. Through this reflection, "opdrachtgeverschap" is redefined not only as managing housing stock or implementing policy, but as a commitment to ethical, responsive, and inclusive stewardship.

The booklet draws on the theoretical insights discussed here, including intersectionality, participation theory, and the 3A3-framework, to offer concrete provocations and tools that support Haag Wonen in aligning its practices with the realities of its residents. The goal is not to prescribe a fixed model, but to open a space for self-examination, dialogue, and more intentional engagement. In doing so, it becomes possible for housing associations like Haag Wonen to act not only for their communities, but with them, acknowledging complexity, redistributing power, and cultivating long-term trust.

## ***Booklet B: Design Principles for Architects***

This booklet translates the lived experiences of Lozerlaan residents into spatial design principles. Essential elements identified through the study, such as accessibility, safety, social connection, and recognition of diverse needs, have direct spatial implications. Drawing on placemaking theories, this product explores how these findings could materialise in the built environment of the Cirkelflat, Lozerlaan. Rather than serving as a definitive solution, this product functions as a spatial translation of the research outcomes. Specifically aimed at the architects working with Haag Wonen, it is intended to exemplify how placemaking can respond to the lived realities of elderly residents, and to offer a visual and conceptual tool for further discussion and development with urban actors.

The design principles are explained in the following sections.

### ***Exterior space design***

Each complex of Lozerlaan has its own context and the four buildings cannot be treated as one design task. For this design proposal, the Circle building will be taken as an example as most of the data is collected from its residents.

### ***Concept***

The main concerns expressed by residents related to the theme “place” and “belonging” was feeling of unsafety and disorder. The building’s exterior space has 122 parking spaces, 70 of which are fenced off, for a total of 125 apartments. Several residents noted that in the back corner of the unfenced parking lot suspicious activities happen at night involving strange cars and traces of drug use and illegal sex work. Another issue concerns the high-turnover rate of this building and with that the amount of bulky waste that sometimes stays in front of the entrance for days. This, together with trash from outsiders and some residents, give feelings of disorder and uncleanness.

The goal of the proposal is to showcase uplift through design as the way the built environment is organised could teach care and foster ownership. The design proposal aims to bring back pride and belonging to the place.

### ***Design principles***

To re-establish a sense of ownership over the exterior space, a visual boundary should be introduced to distinguish the residents’ living environment from the surrounding urban fabric. This can be achieved through subtle yet clear design elements such as a pronounced archway marking the entrance and exit. While the area remains unfenced, these features can help define the transition from public to semi-private space, reinforce the identity of the site, and subtly discourage uninvited access without creating a sense of exclusion.

To address the pocket of unsafety in the back corner of the parking lot, the space could be reclaimed as a green and inviting area for relaxation. Currently, there are no outdoor seating options available, this presents an opportunity to transform the space into a shared community zone. Applying placemaking principles, the area could be immediately transformed with alternating trees in planters and seating. This design maintains clear sightlines at eye level to enhance visibility and perceived safety. The trees could also serve as acoustic buffers, softening noise for the upper residential floors. This intervention would naturally discourage the advent of unfamiliar vehicles, but some parking spaces may need to be relocated elsewhere.

Other aspects for the design of this exterior space include (nature-friendly) lighting and other nature integrations. These interventions add to the identity, perceived safety and uplift of the place.



Entrance of the Cirkelflat  
Current situation and design proposal



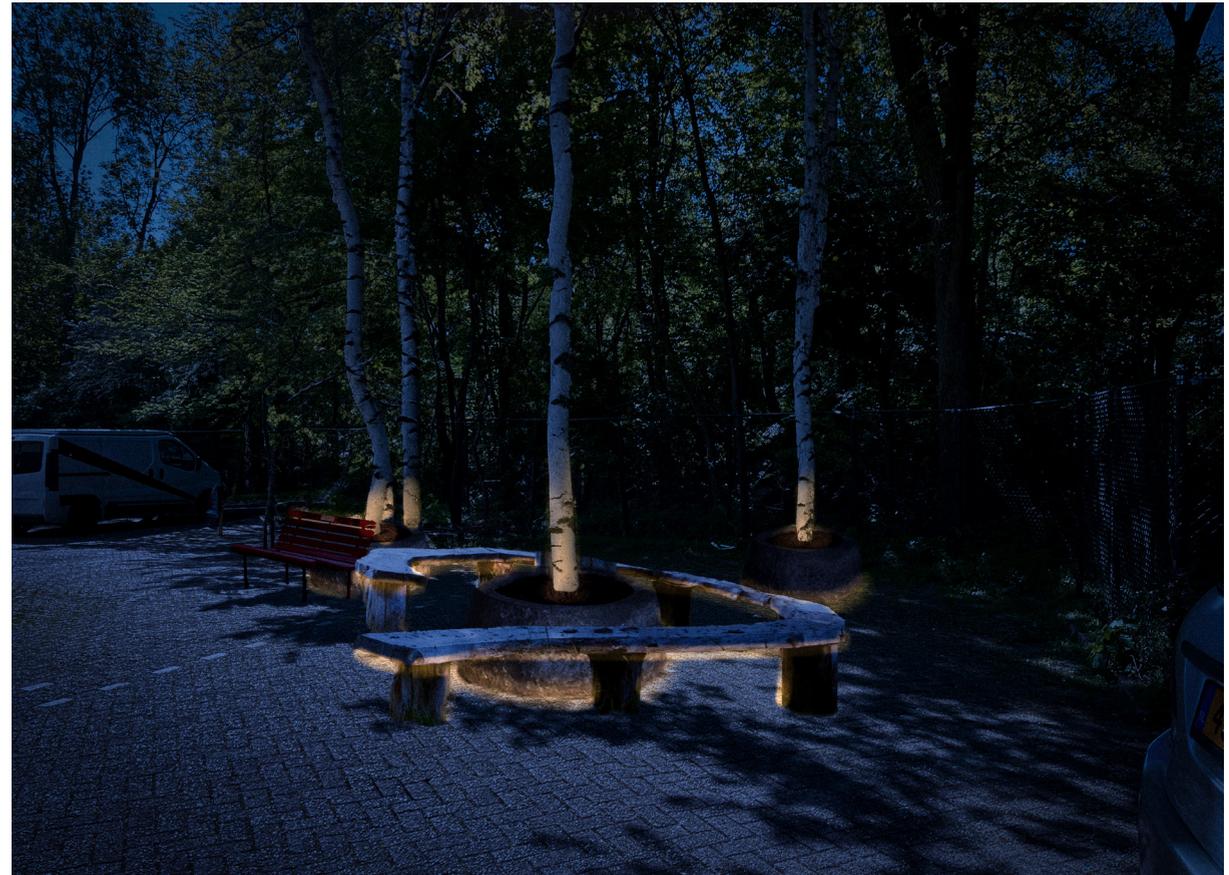
Addressing the "pocket of unsafety" in  
the back of the parking lot  
Current situation and design proposal





*Addressing the "pocket of unsafety" in the back of the parking lot  
Design proposal (daytime)*

*Addressing the "pocket of unsafety" in the back of the parking lot  
Design proposal (night time)*

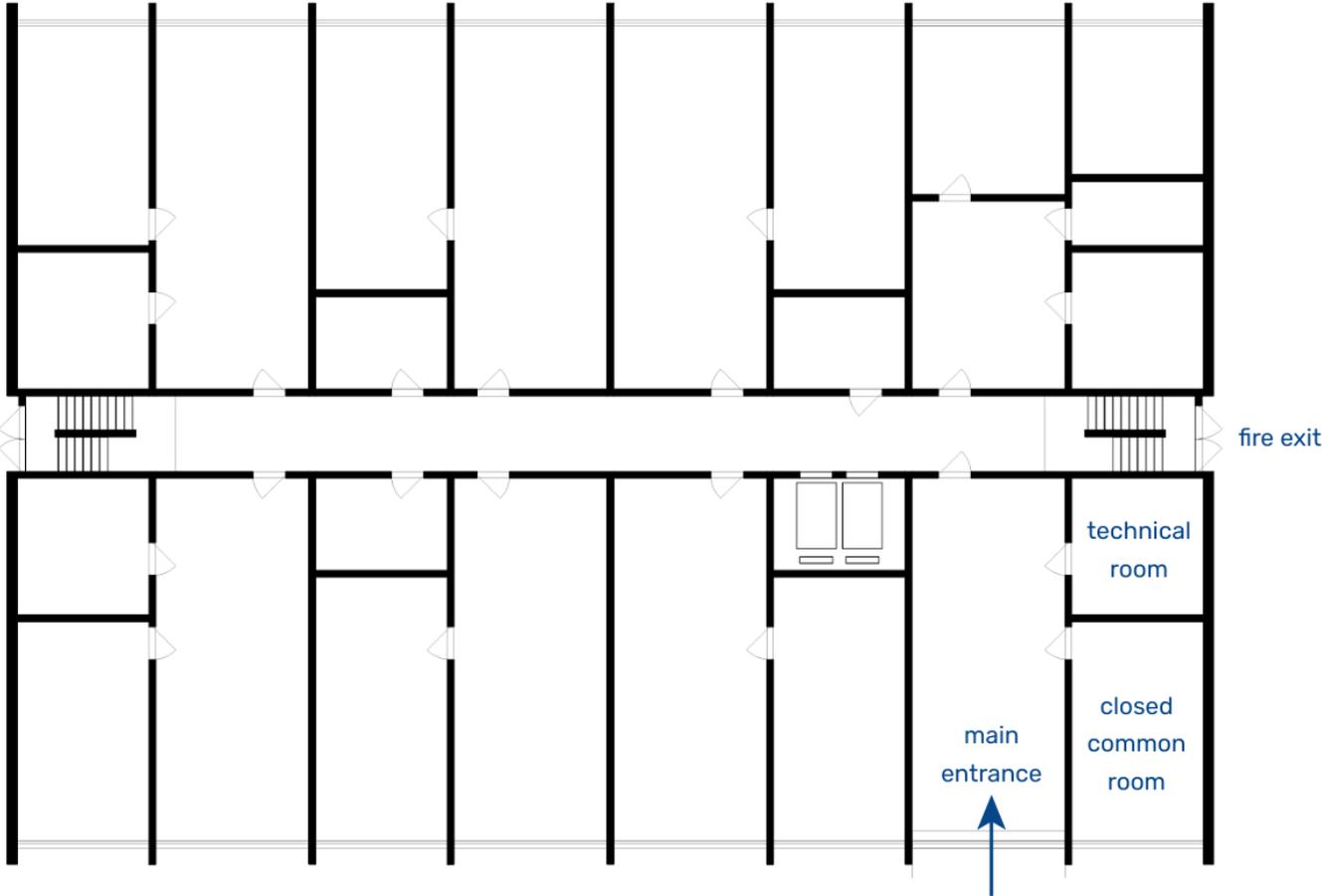


Interior space design

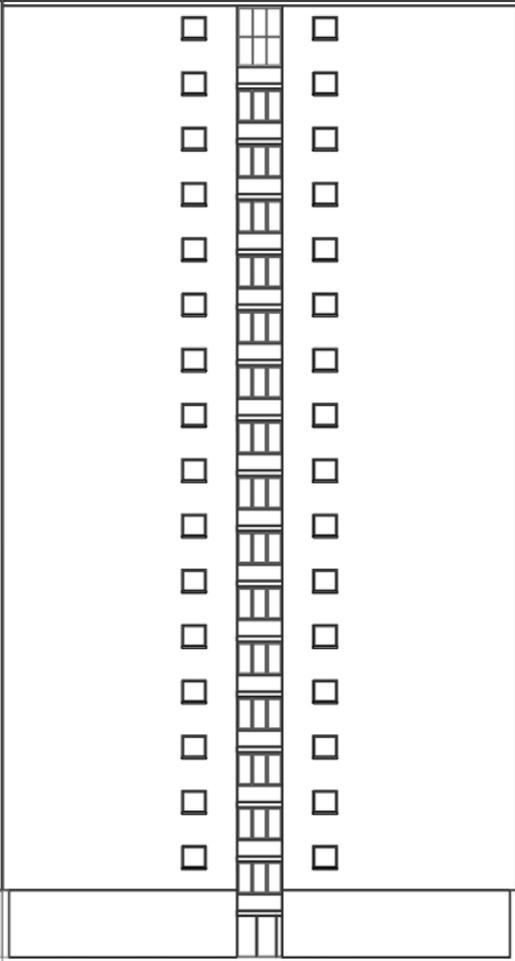
Concept

The entrance concept and the flow of the building is structured around two spatial principles: horizontal encounter and vertical co-existence. Horizontally, the main entrance is designed to encourage casual interactions and foster a sense of community among residents. This space is open, welcoming, and socially oriented with areas for brief exchanges and shared use. Vertically, as one moves through the building's levels, the design should support peaceful co-existence while also fostering identity and belonging. By introducing elements that reflect the diversity of the residents, the design encourages a sense of ownership and pride. This emotional connection to the space can, in turn, promote care and attentiveness, helping to address ongoing

issues like uncleanliness and disorder. Recognising that not everyone seeks interaction in the same way, the building also includes side entrances for more private access. This dual-access approach balances sociability with autonomy, ensuring the building feels inclusive, respectful, and well-loved by its residents.



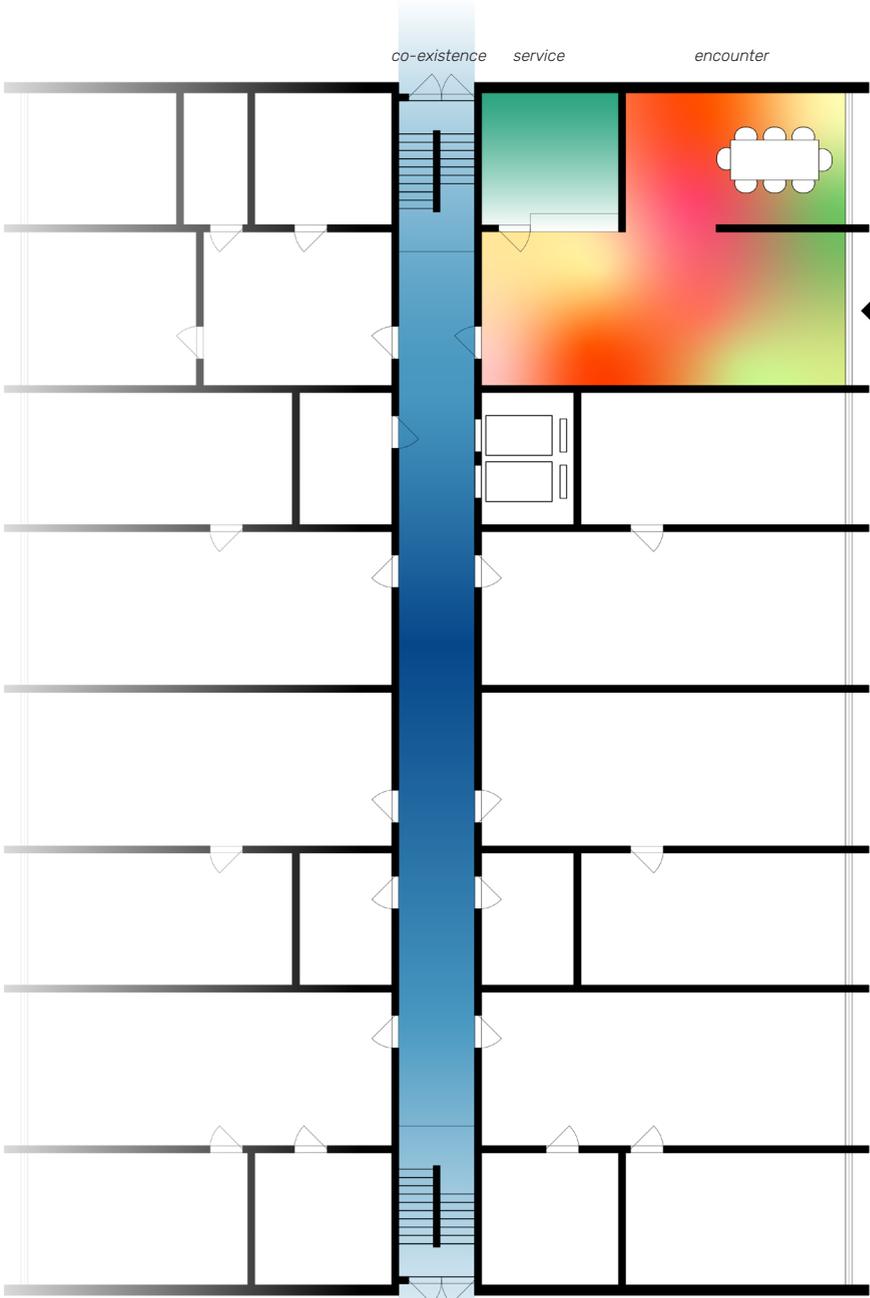
Monotone facade



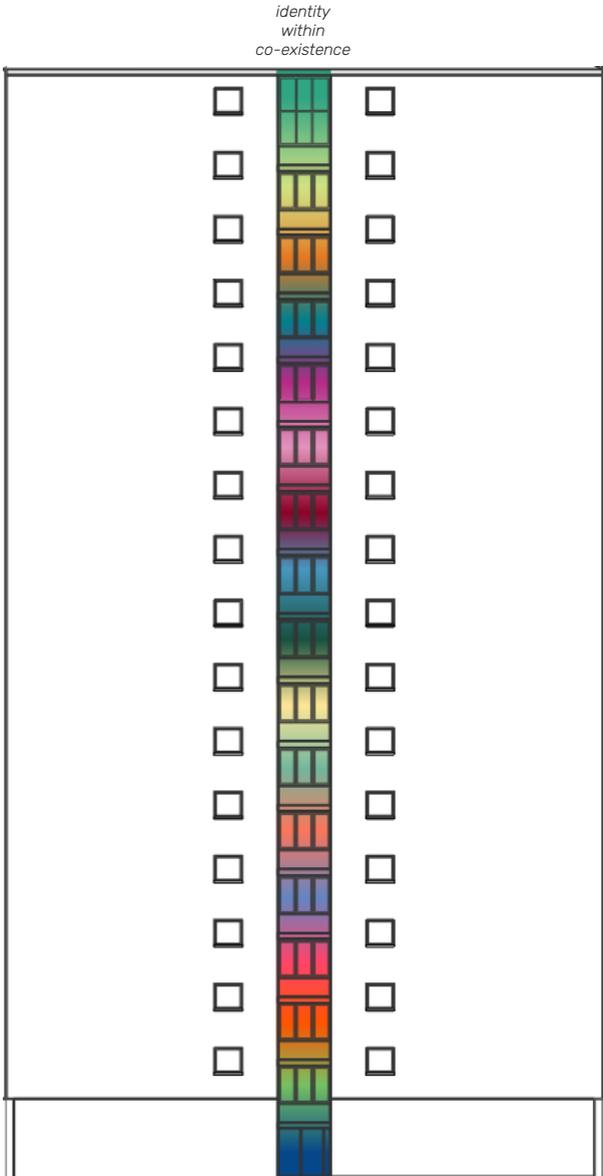
*Design principles*

The closest grocery shops and pharmacies are 1,5 kilometres away. Hidden in a residential area across the street, at an 11 minute walking distance, there is also a gathering place with support from social workers. A future task could be to strengthen the connection with the neighbourhood. In the spirit of placemaking, some of these amenities could be brought into the building itself, improving accessibility and integration.

The design of the entrance hall translates the concept of encounter into a practical, multi-functional space that supports both daily needs and community interaction. At its core, the hall functions as a communal hub, open and flexible in layout, where residents can pass through, pause, or engage. Important services such as small-scale grocery provisions, a personal contact point with Haag Wonen, and a visible presence of the huismeester (caretaker) are integrated into the space. These additions promote self-sufficiency while fostering a sense of safety and trust within the building. The communal zone is designed to adapt to different uses throughout the day, whether informal gatherings or simply a quiet place to sit. In contrast, side entrances offer an alternative route for those who prefer privacy, supporting the idea of co-existence. As residents move vertically through the building, hallways are given character through the use of color schemes that help define identity and orientation. These colours shine through the windows, connecting the interior life of the building with its exterior surroundings, reinforcing a sense of belonging.



Ground floor plan, Cirkelflat, Lozerlaan



North-west facade, Cirkelflat, Lozerlaan

*Main guides for design*

In summary, the design principles outlined in this product are guided by the principle of implementing straightforward and effective interventions that support placemaking at a practical level. The aim is not only to improve the spatial quality of the building but to create conditions that promote a sense of ownership and care among residents. These design decisions are grounded in the overlapping themes of the theoretical framework: place, belonging, trust, cross-cultural understanding, accessibility, and social connection. Informed by theory and fieldwork data, the design supports both individual agency and collective autonomy. In doing so, it seeks to contribute to a more inclusive, functional, and socially cohesive living environment.

The full booklet can be found in Appendix B.



**Spatial design should not only foster meeting and encounter but also, and most importantly, the autonomy of elderly**



*Day and Night situation  
Entrances + service and communal room*

### ***Booklet C: A Lozerlaan Comic Book for the Residents***

This booklet is designed specifically for the elderly residents of Lozerlaan and takes the form of a comic booklet. Unlike the other communication products, this booklet does not aim to communicate technical or design recommendations but instead focuses on empowerment, recognition, and ownership. Grounded in fieldwork insights, it distills key themes from the research like belonging, care, pride of place, and cross-cultural understanding into an accessible visual narrative. The comic format allows for an inclusive mode of communication that respects varying literacy levels and linguistic backgrounds among residents. While it is not included in the academic appendices of this thesis, it is an essential part of the broader knowledge translation strategy, ensuring that research does not only speak about residents but also with and to them. Reflecting on essential elements collected from residents during fieldwork, this booklet shows that they are heard and seen. By presenting familiar spaces and experiences through storytelling and illustration, the booklet supports a sense of recognition and encourages residents to see themselves as central actors in the future of their environment.

### ***Booklet D: An invitation to the Municipality of The Hague***

This booklet is aimed at the municipality of The Hague, specifically the urban planning team responsible for the redevelopment of De Uithof. This area is described by the Lozerlaan residents as “the backyard of Lozerlaan”. Through this booklet, I invite the municipality not only to include in the design brief the perspectives and needs of Lozerlaan residents, but to give these perspectives a higher priority. The booklet shows the lived experiences of the residents through quotes collected from fieldwork, and literally brings the voices of residents to the municipality. This booklet aims to contribute to “het Ambitiedocument” (the ambition document) that contains ideas of residents, visitors, business owners and local associations about the area De Uithof, which is the preliminary work of the development strategy.

In the following paragraphs, the concept and vision for De Uithof will be explained to emphasise the design task from the perspectives of Lozerlaan.

The full booklet can be found in Appendix C.

### ***Concept***

The four apartment buildings of this case are located at the edge of The Hague, bordered by a four-lanes road Lozerlaan, country roads (N-wegen) and the recreational nature reserve De Uithof. Spaced 400 to 500 meters apart, the buildings resemble islands in an archipelago. This geographic separation presents both advantages and challenges.. This far apart from each other, each building has its own unique composition of residents with unique dynamics. Each complex, due to its distance and slightly differing urban context, has developed a distinct resident community with its own social dynamics. Like islands, the buildings face the ongoing challenge of balancing self-sufficiency with meaningful connection, both to one another and to the broader fabric of the city.

### ***Vision of De Uithof***

One of the qualities of this area is De Uithof. Residents and Haag Wonen describe this nature reserve as “the backyard of Lozerlaan” and it’s a place for relaxation and joy. Though, for some, this area brings feelings of unsafety because it serves as a home for roofless migrant workers and loitering at night. De Uithof also houses other programs like a sports and events centre under the same name, an equestrian centre, animal shelter and more. It is important that the access to this area is improved, focusing on fostering connection with nature and place for relaxation. This perspective balances benefits of the Lozerlaan complexes as “islands” on their own and the need for connection with each other, nature and the rest of the city.

### **From Booklets to Practice**

These booklets are not the end point, but tools for ongoing negotiation and reflection among stakeholders. They translate research into relational prompts, practical frameworks, and imaginative visions, tailored to the everyday roles and languages of urban actors. They ask not only “what should be done?”, but “who exactly are you accountable to?”



## **Chapter 7**

### **Outro**

- **Conclusions**
- **Reflection**

# Conclusions

This thesis explored how placemaking can become more inclusive for older adults living in The Hague Southwest, particularly those with intersecting social identities shaped by migration background, language barriers, age, gender, socioeconomic status, and more. It examined how urban actors such as housing associations, architects, and municipal planners can engage with elderly residents not as a single, uniform group, but as a richly diverse community whose lived experiences challenge standard models of participation, representation, and design.

The main research question asked:

**How can urban actors effectively engage elderly residents of The Hague Southwest, with intersecting social identities and different language proficiency levels, in placemaking initiatives to enhance their ability to age in place?**

This inquiry was guided by a theoretical framework grounded in placemaking, ageing in place, and participatory design, approached through an intersectional lens. This lens exposed the risks of treating “residents” as a homogeneous category. This is a framing that often reinforces power imbalances and unintentionally marginalises subgroups. Instead, intersectionality helped uncover how systems of exclusion are often layered and compounding, especially for residents with a migration background, limited Dutch fluency, or low institutional trust.

Through fieldwork at Lozerlaan, consisting of workshops, interviews, and observations, key barriers and facilitators to inclusive placemaking were identified. Barriers included not only linguistic and mobility challenges, but also deeper structural dynamics such as residents’ internalised disempowerment, us-vs-them mentalities, and a lack of trust in institutions. Facilitators emerged through low-threshold, flexible, and relationship-based engagement, including culturally sensitive workshop design, use of familiar spaces, and sustained presence from actors like community leaders and the on-site project leader from Haag Wonen.

To ensure these insights could inform real-world practice, this thesis developed a series of four communication products, booklets, tailored to different actors:

**For Haag Wonen:** a reflective tool that challenges the association to rethink its “opdrachtgeverschap” (commissioning role), asking not only “who are you doing this for?” but “who exactly are you accountable to?”

**For architects:** a design guide grounded in fieldwork, turning lived experience into spatial principles that support safety, dignity, and pride of place.

**For residents:** a comic book that communicates findings in an accessible, empowering format (not included in the academic thesis, but part of the wider research output).

**For the municipality:** a vision map for De Uithof, imagined through the needs and perceptions of Lozerlaan residents, urging the city to embed lived experience into future redevelopment plans.

These outputs are not final answers but conversation starters, inviting urban actors to revisit their assumptions and redefine their roles. Crucially, this thesis argues that urban planning and placemaking do not exist outside politics. In the current climate, where polarisation, nativist rhetoric, and institutional mistrust are on the rise, placemaking must be defended not just as a technical process, but as a political and ethical commitment to inclusivity, recognition, and shared space.

This research calls into question the prevailing pyramid of expertise, where professional knowledge dominates and lived experience is often sidelined. In the Lozerlaan case, even the category of “residents” contains an internal hierarchy. Native-born, long-time residents often occupy positions of informal authority, while newcomers, particularly those with migration backgrounds, are treated as guests or outsiders, both in discourse and in participation structures. If placemaking is to support ageing in place and community cohesion, these implicit hierarchies must be acknowledged and actively dismantled.

Ultimately, the thesis offers a simple but urgent message for urban actors:

**Redefine your understanding of “the resident.”**

**Reframe your own position, not as service providers or decision-makers alone, but as facilitators of shared futures.**

This is not the time for fear-driven planning or rigid professionalism. It is a time for openness, humility, and radical attentiveness to difference. Inclusive placemaking is not about inviting others into pre-designed spaces, it’s about co-creating spaces of care, belonging, and autonomy in an increasingly diverse and divided society. That work begins with listening differently, acting relationally, and always asking: Voor wie doe je het?

## Limitations

One important limitation of this thesis is the time constraint inherent to academic research, which directly impacts the trust building process essential for inclusive placemaking. As mentioned before, developing meaningful relationships within the community takes time, consistency, and presence. These factors are difficult to fully achieve within the limited scope of a student project. Just as connections began to deepen and outreach potential increased, the research period concluded. While it is encouraging to have laid a foundation for future engagement, it is also personally difficult to leave the site at this stage. Nevertheless, the findings, relationships, and momentum built during this process have been shared with Haag Wonen, with the hope that they will continue to cultivate inclusive practices and sustain the trust developed.

Additionally, it is again important to acknowledge that there is no single blueprint for inclusive placemaking. This study does not claim to offer a universally applicable model, but rather presents a set of approaches that proved effective or showed potential within the specific social, cultural, and spatial context of this project. The value lies in these grounded insights, which may inspire adaptation and reflection in other settings, rather than direct replication.

## Recommendations for further research

This thesis has focused on rethinking placemaking as a political, ethical, and spatial practice, particularly in the context of ageing in place and super-diverse urban environments like The Hague Southwest. While it offers concrete insights into how urban actors can more effectively engage elderly residents through intersectional, trust-based, and flexible approaches, several important avenues remain open for further research.

First, there is a need to explore how the orientations and communication products developed in this study, the actor-specific booklets, can be tested and implemented in practice. Future research could follow urban actors such as Haag Wonen, architects, or municipal planners as they engage with these tools, to evaluate whether and how they lead to shifts in mindset, process, or outcome. In particular, this research could investigate how actors redefine their roles and understandings of “residents” over time, and how these redefinitions influence their participatory and spatial strategies.

Second, while this study has asked how urban actors can

support inclusive placemaking, future research should critically examine why inclusive placemaking practices remain so difficult to institutionalise, even when their benefits are instinctively known and quite well documented. This requires moving beyond community-level barriers to look at institutional hesitation, organisational culture, and the persistent dominance of technocratic or depoliticised approaches to urban planning. Questions such as: What prevents actors from embracing more participatory or power-sharing approaches? and How do nativist pressures or political risk-aversion shape everyday urban decisions? are urgent in the Dutch context and under-researched.

Further work could also investigate how common constraints facing urban actors, including limited time, financial pressure, and lack of culturally competent staff, might be addressed through capacity building, institutional learning, or policy reform. Understanding what kinds of support urban actors need to make inclusion not only possible but sustainable is essential to bridging the gap between theory and practice.

A final area for future research concerns the role of spatial design in mediating both everyday encounter and respectful co-existence in super-diverse neighbourhoods. While this thesis offered one spatial translation through the design proposal for the Circle Building (Cirkelflat), a deeper design-research agenda could explore how built form can support different modes of being-together, without forcing uniformity or erasing difference. This includes questions of visibility, privacy, ritual, identity, and emotional safety in shared environments. In increasingly polarised societies, the ability of space to hold difference without conflict may become one of urban design’s most critical challenges.

In sum, further research should not only refine inclusive placemaking methodologies, but also confront the structural and cultural barriers that keep them from being widely adopted. To move forward, we need more than new tools. We need new ways of thinking about power, accountability, and togetherness in the city.

# Reflection

## Relation between graduation topic, studio topic, master track and master program

My graduation project critically engages with the systemic exclusion of older adults, especially those with intersecting identities, from placemaking and participatory planning processes. Situated within the Urbanism track and the Planning Complex Cities studio, the project challenges dominant paradigms in urban planning that often privilege efficiency, neutrality, or broad demographics over nuanced, lived experiences. By focusing on ageing in place and inclusive placemaking, I question whose voices are considered legitimate in shaping urban space, and whose are consistently overlooked.

The Planning Complex Cities studio provided a valuable lens for interrogating complex socio-spatial dynamics, yet I found myself needing to push further, examining how ageism, ableism, and structural inequalities historically embedded in planning practices continue to manifest in subtle but impactful ways. I engaged with theories from social sciences to confront these legacies and to explore alternative, inclusive participatory models that resist one-size-fits-all approaches.

This aligns with the MSc Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences program's interdisciplinary ethos, yet also exposes tensions between innovation and deeply entrenched institutional practices. While the program encourages blending design with social science, I realised that applying this critically requires continuous reflection on my own role as a designer-researcher, acknowledging my own biases and the limits of my positionality in engaging marginalised groups. Ultimately, my project serves as a contribution to inclusive design discourse.

## Relation research & design

In my project, research and design are interwoven rather than sequential or separate. The theoretical framework I developed was grounded in literature on participatory planning, ageing, and intersectionality. It served not just as a backdrop but as an active lens for interpreting the lived experiences of older adults during fieldwork. This research phase culminated in a framework for analysing barriers and facilitators of inclusive placemaking, highlighting not only physical but social and institutional dimensions of exclusion.

Rather than treating design as an applied afterthought, I positioned it as a translation tool: a way to spatialise the abstract principles of inclusion and to test what implementations of

participatory placemaking might look like in practice. However, the move from research to design was not linear. It required constant reflection, asking not only how to translate insights into form, but whose needs were being prioritised, and what power relations were being reproduced or challenged through the design proposal.

While the final design proposal may appear as a logical end product, it also reveals the limits of design as a solution to deeply structural problems. It raises questions about the role of spatial interventions in addressing social inequities: how do you balance encounter (integration of diversity) and co-existence? Through this iterative process, research informed design, but design also questioned the sufficiency of research categories, urging me to reflect on the ethical stakes of simplification and representation in planning.

## Value & limitations of approach and methods

A central strength of my approach was engaging with a real-life case in collaboration with Haag Wonen. This allowed me to situate my research in everyday lived realities, rather than in abstract models. I tested theory-informed participatory methods in practice, which helped surface both the potential and the limitations of inclusive placemaking approaches. Immersing myself on site gave me access to rich, situated knowledge and allowed for genuine dialogue with residents. This is something I could never have achieved in a purely theoretical project.

However, the same immersion brought ethical and emotional complexities. Unlike academic exercises where failure has no consequence, this context involves real stakes for people's lives. As a student-researcher, I had to confront the responsibility of participation: how my choices might affect trust, representation, or even reinforce marginalisation or polarisation. For example, when I first started to conduct a language inventory, a few native Dutch residents expressed discontent and voiced their objections on a multi-lingual approach. Some reasons for this were the complete opposite of how I view inclusion. I became aware of my own positionality, not only methodologically but emotionally, navigating between professional distance and human connection.

The current political climate, marked by rising nativism, was strongly present in resident conversations. I often encountered views on migration, diversity, and inclusion that clashed

with my own values. Initially, this was overwhelming and disheartening. However, with the support of mentors, I began to see these encounters not as obstacles, but as reflections of broader structural anxieties that participatory planning must reckon with. This experience deepened my understanding of urbanism as an ethical and political practice, reminding me that participatory tools alone cannot resolve deeply rooted societal divisions, but they can open space for listening, complexity, and care.

## Academic & Societal value

The value of my project lies in its attempt to bridge academic inquiry with real-world impact. Academically, it contributes to the discourse on inclusive urbanism by narrowing the focus to the intersection of placemaking, ageing in place, and participatory practices specifically in the context of The Hague Southwest. The project demonstrates how abstract theoretical concepts (like trust and belonging) can be translated into spatial strategies, grounded in empirical data from fieldwork and lived experience. This methodological integration of theory, analysis, and design adds nuance to the academic discussion on inclusive urban design.

Societally, the project generated a space for engagement, dialogue, and small but meaningful acts of trust-building. Working with Haag Wonen and their neighbourhood development team, I contributed to a collaborative process that may continue to shape how they approach resident engagement. I experienced this not as a one-way “knowledge transfer” but as mutual learning.

Yet these connections raised ethical tensions. Building trust with residents, including helping a new status holder beyond the formal boundaries of my project, blurred the lines between researcher, practitioner, and person. While my data collection followed ethical protocols (anonymity, cultural sensitivity), the emotional and ethical labour of navigating real relationships proved far more complex. One key lesson was the need to clearly communicate the temporal nature of the project, that I would eventually leave. Balancing genuine care with the reality of my limited role remains ethically fraught, but the experience has shaped how I think about responsibility, trust, and long-term impact in participatory work.

## Transferability of results

While my project was grounded in the specific spatial, social, and institutional context of Lozerlaan in The Hague, I developed several frameworks that can be used for other cases. The theoretical, conceptual and data analysis framework, and the process of developing inclusive placemaking guidelines, which combines fieldwork insights, stakeholder dynamics, and literature, can be adapted for use in other urban contexts. Particularly for areas interested in fostering inclusive environments for ageing in place, these tools offer a replicable foundation for research and action.

However, I also recognise the limits of this transferability. Inclusive placemaking is highly context-dependent: what works in The Hague Southwest may not translate seamlessly to cities with different demographics, planning cultures, or political climates. Thus, rather than viewing the outputs as universally applicable, I see them as transferable in method rather than content. Other practitioners or researchers can build upon my approach while tailoring the findings to their own unique context.

Ongoing collaboration with Haag Wonen and Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest extends the real world relevance of this work. A communication product is in development to share key insights with other stakeholders. Yet I remain cautious: transferability isn't just technical, it's relational and institutional—dependent on willingness to listen, engage, and shift power dynamics. In that sense, this project may inspire rather than prescribe.

## Positionality

In this research, I position myself as a cisgender Asian woman, shaped by both Dutch societal values and Chinese cultural heritage. Having grown up and lived most of my life in the Netherlands, I am fluent in Dutch and culturally embedded in Dutch society. Yet, I am often still perceived as the “other” due to my appearance, which does not conform to the dominant image of what is considered “Dutch.” This duality placed me in a complex position during fieldwork: simultaneously an insider and outsider, embodying both the “us” and the “them.”

My project explores themes of diversity, intersectionality, and inclusive placemaking, which naturally intersect with current political discourses around migration, nativism, and belonging. These issues surfaced frequently in resident

interactions. At times, native Dutch participants openly expressed anti-immigrant sentiments in front of me, perhaps unaware or dismissive of my background. Others tried to relate by referencing Chinese cuisine or restaurants, seemingly well-meaning but still marked by cultural essentialism. These encounters didn't challenge my self-perception, but they did surface the politics of visibility and belonging in deeply personal ways.

There were moments I felt tempted to shift my research focus toward these confrontations. But I reminded myself that my aim was to amplify voices that are often unheard, particularly older residents facing intersectional barriers. To navigate this, I deliberately focused my analysis on language, communication barriers, and participation, rather than framing it through national or ethnic categories. This approach allowed me to remain critical, reflexive, and focused on structural issues rather than reactive to individual statements, without erasing the socio-political context in which these interactions occurred.

## What I learned about the role of the urbanist/urban designer

This project fundamentally shifted how I view the role of the urbanist or urban designer. It became more clear to me that the designer is not necessarily someone who delivers solutions or builds objects, but as a mediator, listener, and connector. An urban designer is someone who helps bridge distances between institutions and residents, between professional expertise and lived experience.

Urbanists are not neutral actors, we operate within social, historical, and political systems. Everything we do is political, whether or not we acknowledge it. Our work takes place within power structures, and our designs reflect the values we choose to prioritise or ignore. It is not enough to "add participation" or "consider diversity" as checkboxes. True engagement starts by asking: whose knowledge counts, whose needs are central, and who gets to decide?

We must develop the capacity to hold complexity, to listen beyond our assumptions, and to see the underlying structures that shape the built environment: histories of segregation, policies of exclusion, and everyday micro-politics of space. As urbanists, we need to ask better questions, remain open to contradiction, and resist the urge for tidy resolutions in messy realities.

*Achter de Voordeur  
gesprek  
(Behind the Front Door  
conversation)  
with Mandy Koenraads,  
Scriptiewerkplaats Den  
Haag Zuidwest*



*El Kantoor design  
workshop in Vierkantflat,  
Lozerlaan*



*Meeting pets during  
house visit*



*Photos taken by Jeffrey  
Grouwstra, Kijklab for  
Haag Wonen, with  
consent from residents  
and Haag Wonen*

# 8

## Appendix

- **Booklet A: Haag Wonen**
- **Booklet B: Architects**
- **Booklet D: Gemeente Den Haag**
- **Data analysis framework**
- **HREC approval letter**
- **Bibliography**

**Opdrachtgeverschap Haag Wonen**



## Introductie

In de wijken van Den Haag Zuidwest werkt woningcorporatie Haag Wonen dagelijks aan het verbeteren van de leefomgeving van haar huurders. Met ambities als het bouwen van meer woningen, het bieden van duurzame en betaalbare huisvesting, en het realiseren van prettige, sociale buurten, wordt gestreefd naar een betere toekomst voor velen. Maar hierbij rijst een belangrijke vraag: voor wie doen we dit eigenlijk?

Achter de abstracte term “huurders” gaat een wereld van diversiteit schuil. In buurten zoals de Lozerlaan wonen mensen van verschillende leeftijden, talen, culturen, sociaaleconomische achtergronden en gezondheidssituaties. In dit communicatieproduct richten we ons specifiek op een vaak over het hoofd geziene groep: oudere huurders (55+) met uiteenlopende sociale identiteiten.

Uit ervaring van Haag Wonen blijkt al dat veel van deze bewoners onvoldoende gezien en gehoord zijn in processen rondom placemaking en buurtontwikkeling. Verschillen in taalvaardigheid, culturele opvattingen, mobiliteit en vertrouwen in instanties maken dat hun stem vaak juist ontbreekt in trajecten die direct invloed hebben op hun leefomgeving. Dit terwijl het betrekken van diverse bewoners essentieel is om een buurt echt leefbaar te maken voor iedereen, en om ouderen te ondersteunen in het langer zelfstandig wonen, oftewel: ageing in place.

Met dit boeklet wil ik Haag Wonen uitnodigen om haar rol als opdrachtgever opnieuw te bekijken.

Hoe kunnen jullie bewoners met diverse achtergronden daadwerkelijk betrekken bij placemaking? Welke aannames zitten er in het idee van “prettig wonen”?

En: hoe zorgen we ervoor dat de stemmen van alle groepen huurders meetellen in de toekomst van Den Haag Zuidwest?



## Inhoudsopgave

- 1 **Haag Wonen & De Missie**
- 2 **Casus Lozerlaan**
- 3 **Intersectioneel Denken**  
*Waarom het Moet, Niet Alleen Mag*
- 4 **Dus hoe ontwerp je een inclusieve participatieproces?**
- 5 **Toekomstgericht Opdrachtgeverschap**
- 6 **Herdefinitie in de praktijk: wat vraagt dat?**

# Onze missie

**Goed wonen in Den Haag voor mensen met een bescheiden inkomen.**

We zetten ons iedere dag in voor:

- ✓ het beste huis voor iedereen, simpel geregeld
- ✓ duurzaam en betaalbaar wonen
- ✓ gezond en veilig wonen
- ✓ leefbare wijken

(Haag Wonen, 2025)

## Leefbare wijken

Fijn wonen is meer dan alleen een fijn huis. Een veilige en sociale buurt waarin iedereen meedoet maakt mensen gelukkiger. Dat kan zitten in een groet van de buren. Goede scholen. Een groene binnentuin of parkje. Een supermarkt om de hoek en een baan dichtbij. Daarom werken wij hard aan leefbare wijken. Dat doen we samen met onze partners. En we zorgen bijvoorbeeld voor binnentuinen waar kinderen kunnen spelen en ontmoetingsplekken waar je gezellig met je buren kunt praten.

*En bewoners?*



(Haag Wonen, 2025)

We zijn een volkshuisvester met een sociaal hart en we bouwen de komende tien jaar verder aan onze mooie stad. Onze topprioriteit ligt op het bouwen van nieuwe woningen, om het nijpende tekort aan betaalbare woningen zoveel mogelijk terug te dringen. Daarnaast werken we verder aan de kwaliteit van ons bezit, aan de betaalbaarheid van woningen en aan verduurzaming. We hebben ook speciale aandacht voor wonen en zorg en veerkracht en leefbaarheid in de wijken.

**We dragen bij aan een prettig leven in een mooie en sociale buurt, samen met onze huurders en partners in de stad**

**Onze mensen zetten zich in voor tevreden huurders. We zijn aanpakkers, betrouwbaar, betrokken en daadkrachtig**

# Wat dit van ons vraagt

## Waar nodig, gaan we buiten de gebaande paden

Haag Wonen wil het verschil maken in de stad Den Haag en in de regio Haaglanden. Dit vraagt om een vernieuwende aanpak met een gezonde dosis lef en durf. Om onze volkshuisvestelijke doelen te halen, doen we een beroep op onze ondernemersgeest. We pakken kansen en zoeken waar nodig de grens op. Dat doen we vanuit openheid, transparantie en vertrouwen.

**'Ieder contact met onze huurders is een kans om ze te leren kennen.'**

*De koers van Haag Wonen 2023+ (Haag Wonen, 2023)*

## Casus Lozerlaan

Aan de Lozerlaan in Den Haag Zuidwest staan vier markante flatgebouwen van zestien verdiepingen hoog. Gebouwd in 1970 als luxe appartementen, zijn ze inmiddels in gebruik als seniorenwoningen voor bewoners van 55 jaar en ouder. De gebouwen vormen samen één complex, maar liggen fysiek ver van elkaar – en dat is voelbaar. Elk gebouw heeft zijn eigen dynamiek, zijn eigen bewonersgroep, en zijn eigen verhaal.

De bewoners vormen een rijke, maar complexe gemeenschap. Er wonen mensen van allerlei achtergronden: van geboren en getogen Hagenaars tot bewoners met wortels in Turkije, Marokko, Suriname, de Antillen en daarbuiten. Sommigen zijn vitaal en actief in de buurt, anderen leiden een meer teruggetrokken leven, soms vanwege gezondheid, taalbarrières of wantrouwen richting instanties.

Via de Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest kreeg ik als onderzoeker de kans om met Haag Wonen samen te werken aan buurtontwikkeling. Met geplande renovaties op komst wil de corporatie placemaking inzetten om de woonomgeving aangenamer te maken en ouderen te ondersteunen in het zelfstandig blijven wonen.

Toch bleek al snel dat niet alle bewoners zich even makkelijk laten betrekken. De gesprekken en activiteiten worden vaak gedomineerd door de 'bekende gezichten': actieve, veelal Nederlandstalige bewoners. Maar wie ontbreekt er aan tafel? En waarom?

Hier deel ik inzichten uit de gesprekken met bewoners, en kijken we naar de stille stemmen in het complex. Juist hun ervaringen zijn essentieel voor een inclusieve toekomst.

## Belemmeringen & Kansen voor Betrokkenheid

Hiernaast staan de belangrijkste factoren centraal die bepalen of oudere bewoners wél of juist níet kunnen en willen deelnemen aan placemaking-initiatieven in hun woonomgeving. Een van de belangrijkste inzichten is dat betrokkenheid pas echt mogelijk wordt als er oog is voor wat bewoners zélf belangrijk vinden. Vaak gaat het dan om heel basale zaken zoals veiligheid, orde en de functionele staat van de woning. Wanneer deze zorgen serieus genomen worden, groeit het vertrouwen in het proces. Bewoners voelen zich dan sterker, meer gehoord, en participatie krijgt daadwerkelijk betekenis.

### Belemmeringen (Barrières)



#### **Taal- en communicatieproblemen**

Niet iedereen spreekt of begrijpt Nederlands goed; communicatie sluit niet aan bij alle bewoners.



#### **Communicatieve mismatch**

Misverstanden tussen bewoners en instanties, en binnen de gemeenschap zelf.



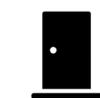
#### **Sociale isolatie en zwakke netwerken**

Beperkte sociale contacten maken betrokkenheid moeilijker.



#### **Geïnternaliseerde ongelijkheid**

Bewoners met migratieachtergrond voelen zich soms te bescheiden of te dankbaar om zich uit te spreken.



#### **Hoge drempel tot participatievormen**

Bijeenkomsten zijn vaak te talig, formeel of onbekend qua werkwijze.



#### **Gebrek aan vertrouwen in instellingen**

Eerdere ervaringen met woningcorporaties of gemeente leiden tot afstand of wantrouwen.

### Kansen (Facilitators)



#### **Aansluiten bij bewonerszorgen**

Denk aan veiligheid, orde en functionele woonkwaliteit. Deze thema's raken direct.



#### **Vertrouwen opbouwen via herkenning**

Luisteren en zichtbaar iets doen met input vergroot betrokkenheid.



#### **Ruimte voor diverse stemmen**

Participatievormen die rekening houden met taal, cultuur en mobiliteit nodigen meer mensen uit.



#### **Laagdrempelige methodes inzetten**

Zoals wandelgesprekken, meertalige flyers of sleutelpersonen uit de wijk.



#### **Bewoners serieus nemen als kennisdragers**

Wanneer bewoners voelen dat hun ervaring telt, groeit hun motivatie.



#### **Duidelijke terugkoppeling geven**

Laat zien wat er met input gebeurt, dit stimuleert duurzame betrokkenheid

## Intersectioneel Denken Waarom het Moet, Niet Alleen Mag

In mijn scriptie worden aantal uitdaging in Den Haag Zuidwest besproken, bijvoorbeeld sociale uitsluiting, taalbarrières en beperkte participatie. Deze uitdagingen staan niet op zichzelf, ze zijn verbonden met bredere maatschappelijke structuren, zoals ruimtelijke segregatie, nativistische beeldvorming, taalgebaseerde uitsluiting en hiërarchieën van 'wie het weet'. Om deze dynamieken écht te begrijpen, is een andere manier van kijken nodig. In dit deel wil ik laten zien dat intersectioneel denken een onmisbare bril is.

Het begrip intersectionaliteit, oorspronkelijk ontwikkeld door jurist en mensenrechtenactivist Kimberlé Crenshaw (1991), helpt ons te begrijpen hoe verschillende sociale identiteiten (zoals leeftijd, gender, etniciteit, religie, migratieachtergrond en sociaaleconomische status) met elkaar samenhangen. **Deze identiteiten stapelen zich niet zomaar op, maar versterken of verzwakken elkaar afhankelijk van de context. Zo ontstaan unieke ervaringen van macht, privilege of juist uitsluiting.**

In het onderzoek naar de bewoners van de Lozerlaan werd duidelijk hoe uiteenlopend deze identiteiten kunnen zijn. Hoewel de woningen formeel zijn bestemd voor 'senioren', is deze groep allesbehalve homogeen. De leeftijden lopen uiteen van midden 50 tot ruim 100 jaar. Er wonen mensen met en zonder migratieachtergrond, mensen die Nederlands nauwelijks spreken én meertalige bewoners, hoogopgeleiden naast laaggeletterden, en mensen met heel verschillende religieuze, culturele en gezondheidssituaties.

Deze identiteiten beïnvloeden méér dan alleen iemands woonervaring. Ze bepalen ook hoe bewoners denken over ouder worden, zelfstandigheid, zorg, verbondenheid en hun plaats in de buurt. Zo tonen recente studies (Torensma et al., 2024; Meeks, 2019) aan dat de combinatie van religie, gender en etniciteit mede bepaalt hoe ouderen willen omgaan met ouderenzorg of de keuzes in het levenseinde die diep geworteld zijn in gevoelens van culturele erkenning, thuishoren of juist uitsluiting.

**Een intersectionele benadering is daarom geen luxe, maar noodzaak.** Zeker wanneer beleidsmakers of corporaties de neiging hebben om bewoners te reduceren tot één kenmerk zoals 'nieuwkomer' of 'taalarme oudere'. Dan worden andere, vaak onzichtbare vormen van uitsluiting niet herkend. Intersectionaliteit helpt om ruimte te maken voor die complexiteit en voorkomt dat participatieprocessen onbedoeld mensen buitensluiten.

Tegelijkertijd vraagt intersectioneel werken ook om nuance. Het doel is niet om categorisering volledig los te laten, maar om er kritisch mee om te gaan. We moeten onszelf voortdurend afvragen: **Wie krijgt een stem in dit proces? Wie niet? En hoe beïnvloeden bestaande machtsstructuren onze keuzes daarin?**

Intersectioneel denken is daarmee niet alleen een analysekader, maar ook een **ethische houding**. Een houding die weigert mensen te reduceren tot 'de oudere', 'de migrant' of 'de taalachterstand', maar **steeds op zoek gaat naar hoe identiteiten samenkomen en hoe we dáár ruimte kunnen creëren voor inclusie.**



## Richtlijnen voor Inclusieve Participatie

Participatie is geen neutraal instrument. Het is altijd ingebed in sociale relaties, verwachtingen en machtsverhoudingen. Juist daarom is het belangrijk dat Haag Wonen niet alleen aan participatie doet, maar ook bewust stilstaat bij de vorm, het doel en de voorwaarden ervan. Hoe wordt participatie ingezet? Voor wie is het toegankelijk? En vooral: wat gebeurt er met de inbreng van bewoners?

### Een helder startpunt: wat is het doel van participatie?

Voor je begint met een participatieproces, is het essentieel om te bepalen waar het proces toe moet leiden. Wil je bewoners informeren? Hun mening ophalen? Of écht samen ontwerpen, beslissen en uitvoeren?

Gebruik hierbij het IAP2 Spectrum of Public Participation als leidraad. Dit model onderscheidt vijf niveaus van participatie:

1. Informeren
2. Raadplegen
3. Betrekken
4. Samenwerken (Co-creatie)
5. Medezeggenschap (Empowerment)

		INCREASING IMPACT ON THE DECISION 				
		INFORM	CONSULT	INVOLVE	COLLABORATE	EMPOWER
PUBLIC PARTICIPATION GOAL		To provide the public with balanced and objective information to assist them in understanding the problem, alternatives, opportunities and/or solutions.	To obtain public feedback on analysis, alternatives and/or decisions.	To work directly with the public throughout the process to ensure that public concerns and aspirations are consistently understood and considered.	To partner with the public in each aspect of the decision including the development of alternatives and the identification of the preferred solution.	To place final decision making in the hands of the public.
	PROMISE TO THE PUBLIC	We will keep you informed.	We will keep you informed, listen to and acknowledge concerns and aspirations, and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will work with you to ensure that your concerns and aspirations are directly reflected in the alternatives developed and provide feedback on how public input influenced the decision.	We will look to you for advice and innovation in formulating solutions and incorporate your advice and recommendations into the decisions to the maximum extent possible.	We will implement what you decide.

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Op welk niveau willen wij met bewoners samenwerken?  
En zijn we bereid om ruimte te maken voor hun ideeën, ook als die afwijken van onze eigen plannen?

### Waarom co-creatie zo krachtig is, en tegelijk kwetsbaar

Co-creatie [het gezamenlijk ontwikkelen van oplossingen] biedt grote kansen. Vooral in een multiculturele wijk kan het zorgen voor:

- meer draagvlak en eigenaarschap
- betere aansluiting bij diverse behoeften
- versterking van sociale netwerken

Voor ouderen, zeker die met beperkte mobiliteit of sociaal isolement, kan participatie ook bijdragen aan verbondenheid en welzijn.

Maar: **co-creatie is géén garantie voor gelijkheid**. Niet iedereen heeft evenveel tijd, energie, taalvaardigheid of vertrouwen om actief mee te doen. Sommige bewoners zijn goed geïnformeerd en mondig; anderen blijven op afstand, bijvoorbeeld uit bescheidenheid, onzekerheid of negatieve ervaringen uit het verleden.

Daarom vraagt inclusieve participatie om maatwerk:

- Gebruik diverse vormen van betrokkenheid (wandelinterviews, creatieve sessies, meertalige materialen)
- Erken informele kennis als even waardevol
- Faciliteer deelname door praktische drempels weg te nemen (zoals vervoer, taalondersteuning, kinderopvang)

Check je eigen aannames: **wiens ideeën worden serieus genomen? En welke suggesties blijven liggen?**

### Wat gebeurt er met de ideeën van bewoners?

Een eerlijke vraag die bewoners vaak stellen (soms hardop, soms stilletjes) is: **“Wordt er eigenlijk wel iets gedaan met wat wij zeggen?”**

Echte participatie betekent ook: bereid zijn om te veranderen. Het vraagt van Haag Wonen om transparant te zijn: welke ideeën zijn uitvoerbaar? Wat gebeurt er met suggesties? En minstens zo belangrijk: **waarom worden bepaalde dingen niet gedaan?**

Aanbeveling: Geef vooraf duidelijkheid over de invloedruimte: **“Dit is wat al vastligt. Dit is wat open staat. En dit is waar we samen beslissen.”**

## Dus hoe ontwerp je een inclusieve participatieproces?

Het 3A3-framework van Hofer & Kaufmann (2022) biedt Haag Wonen een concreet en flexibel hulpmiddel om participatieprocessen inclusiever en realistischer te ontwerpen. Het bestaat uit drie dimensies: Arenas, Actors en Aims, elk met drie elementen. Hieronder staan de belangrijkste aandachtspunten per dimensie, toegespitst op de praktijk van placemaking en ouderenparticipatie aan de Lozerlaan.

### Arenas: Waar, hoe en wanneer vindt participatie plaats?

#### Ruimte

- Kies vertrouwde en toegankelijke locaties, bij voorkeur in of nabij de woonomgeving van bewoners. Denk aan portieken, binnentuinen of buurtkamers.
- Werk aan vertrouwen vóór je het persoonlijke domein betreedt – gebruik sleutelpersonen of vertrouwde gezichten uit de buurt.

#### Format

- Kies voor creatieve, flexibele vormen van participatie. Vermijd uitsluitend talige sessies of formele vergadermodellen.
- Denk aan wandelinterviews, fotomethodes, of co-creatieve werkvormen mét taalondersteuning.

#### Ritme

- Stem de tijdsinvestering af op de realiteit van bewoners: korte, overzichtelijke trajecten kunnen duidelijkheid bieden.
- Of kies voor een open proces met instapmomenten – mits verwachtingen goed gemanaged worden.

### Actors: Wie doet mee, en in welke rol?

#### Diversiteit in beeld

- Zie bewoners niet als één doelgroep, maar als een veelkleurige groep met verschillende noden, achtergronden en mogelijkheden.

#### Relatieopbouw

- Investeer in cross-culturele communicatie en relaties. Gebruik wijkprofessionals of bewoners als bruggenbouwers.

#### Rolverdeling en macht

- Stem de tijdsinvestering af op de realiteit van bewoners: korte, overzichtelijke trajecten kunnen duidelijkheid bieden.
- Maak helder wie welke rol heeft in het proces. Erken bestaande machtsverhoudingen en werk aan gedeeld eigenaarschap.

### Aims: Wat is het doel, waarom doe je het, en wat komt eruit?

#### Vraagstukken (issues)

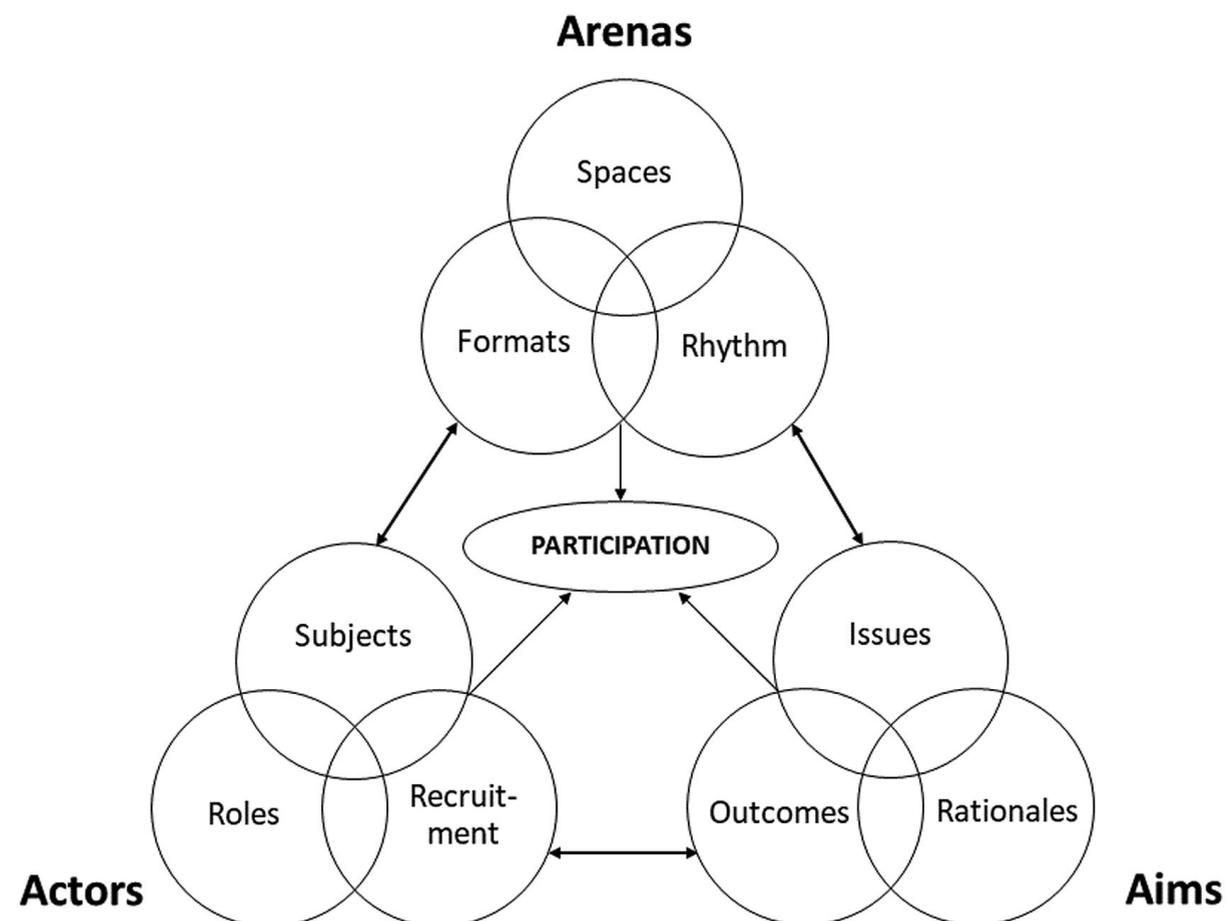
- Formuleer samen met bewoners welke thema's ertoe doen. Ga niet uit van vooraf vastgestelde agendapunten.

#### Motieven (rationales)

- Leg uit waarom participatie plaatsvindt, en waarom ieders bijdrage belangrijk is. Dit versterkt motivatie en verbondenheid.

#### Uitkomsten (outcomes)

- Maak afspraken over wat er met de input gebeurt. Zorg voor tastbare resultaten of terugkoppeling, ook bij kleinere uitkomsten.W



Hofer, K., & Kaufmann, D. (2022). Actors, arenas and aims: A conceptual framework for public participation. *Planning Theory*, 22(4), 357–379. <https://doi.org/10.1177/14730952221139587>

## Toekomstgericht Opdrachtgeverschap

### Herdefiniëren met een Inclusieve Blik

Haag Wonen heeft de ambitie uitgesproken om buurten te creëren waarin mensen prettig kunnen wonen, samenleven en oud worden. Met speerpunten als meer woningbouw, betaalbaarheid, duurzaamheid en leefbaarheid ligt de focus terecht op kwaliteit en toewijding. Maar om deze doelen te bereiken in een diverse en veranderende stad, is er meer nodig dan beleid en stenen.

Het vraagt ook om een fundamentele reflectie: **wat betekent het om opdrachtgever te zijn in een inclusieve samenleving?**

### Van sturen naar luisteren

In veel participatieprocessen neemt de woningcorporatie nog steeds een klassieke rol in: als initiatiefnemer, aanstuurder en eindverantwoordelijke. Participatie wordt dan georganiseerd als iets wat toegevoegd wordt aan een bestaand traject. Maar juist in buurten met grote diversiteit, zoals Den Haag Zuidwest, zien we dat deze benadering vaak te beperkt is.

Niet alle bewoners herkennen zichzelf in het beleid. Niet iedereen weet hoe 'meepraten' werkt. En niet iedereen durft te spreken in de formats die worden aangeboden. Hierdoor dreigt opdrachtgeverschap, hoe goed bedoeld ook, te vervreemden van de realiteit van bewoners.

Een toekomstgerichte vorm van opdrachtgeverschap keert deze verhouding om: van regisseren naar faciliteren, van zenden naar afstemmen. Het betekent dat bewoners niet worden 'meegenomen', maar dat zij zelf richting mogen geven, op manieren die bij hen passen.

Maar deze manier van werken stopt niet bij de voorkeur van de bewoners. Ook binnen de organisatiestructuur van Haag Wonen vraagt dit om verandering. Medewerkers die dagelijks contact hebben met bewoners (zoals buurtontwikkelaars, wijkbeheerders of sociaal projectleiders) beschikken over cruciale, contextspecifieke kennis. Zij weten vaak beter dan beleidslagen hoger in de organisatie wat er leeft en wat er nodig is.

Als Haag Wonen écht ruimte wil maken voor inclusieve participatie, moet ook intern de regie meer bij deze 'nabije' professionals komen te liggen. Zij moeten de vrijheid en het vertrouwen krijgen om hun aanpak af te stemmen op wat werkt in de praktijk. Alleen zo voorkom je dat goede ideeën en initiatieven blijven steken in bureaucratische lagen of vastlopen in standaardprocedures.

Toekomstgericht opdrachtgeverschap betekent dus ook: **luisteren naar je eigen mensen.**

## Herdefinitie in de praktijk: wat vraagt dat?

### 1. Wees expliciet over je positie en macht

Transparantie is essentieel: wat ligt vast, wat staat open, en waar is écht ruimte voor co-creatie?

### 2. Ontwerp samen met bewoners, niet vóór hen

Gebruik modellen zoals het IAP2-spectrum en het 3A3-framework om participatieprocessen op maat te maken.

### 3. Zie diversiteit als vertrekpunt, niet als complicatie

Intersectioneel denken helpt om verschillen niet plat te slaan, maar juist mee te nemen in het ontwerp van beleid, communicatie en besluitvorming.

### 4. Accepteer dat niet alles controleerbaar is

Co-creatie is rommelig, vertraagd soms de planning, en levert onverwachte uitkomsten op. Maar juist daarin ontstaat eigenaarschap en duurzame betrokkenheid.

### 5. Laat los wie de 'expert' is

Bewoners bezitten ervaringskennis die niet in beleidstukken staat. Als opdrachtgever heb je de taak om die kennis ruimte te geven en serieus te nemen.

***“Als woningcorporatie zien wij onszelf als verbinder en facilitator van inclusieve leefomgevingen. Onze opdracht begint bij het luisteren naar wat bewoners nodig hebben om zich thuis te voelen en eindigt pas als zij zich mede-eigenaar voelen van hun buurt. We erkennen dat participatie niet vanzelfsprekend is, en ontwerpen onze processen met aandacht voor verschillen in taal, achtergrond, gezondheid en vertrouwen. Alleen zo bouwen we aan buurten die écht van en voor iedereen zijn.”***

**De toekomst van Den Haag Zuidwest wordt niet alleen gebouwd met beton, maar ook met vertrouwen. Dit booklet heeft laten zien dat écht inclusieve buurtontwikkeling vraagt om meer dan goede bedoelingen: het vraagt om aandacht, maatwerk, reflectie én het besef dat niet elke bewoner vanaf dezelfde plek start.**

**We hebben gekeken naar wie de bewoners van de Lozerlaan zijn, en vooral: wie er vaak ontbreken aan de gesprekstafel. We bespraken de drempels die meedoen moeilijk maken, maar ook de kansen die ontstaan wanneer participatie aansluit bij mensen hun leefwereld. We introduceerden intersectioneel denken als lens om recht te doen aan de complexiteit van bewonerservaringen, en we boden concrete richtlijnen voor het ontwerpen van toegankelijke, rechtvaardige participatieprocessen.**

**Tegelijkertijd weten we: er bestaat geen 'perfecte' vorm van participatie. Elk traject is contextafhankelijk en raakt aan bestaande machtsverhoudingen, tijdsdruk en beleidskaders. Maar juist daarom is de rol van Haag Wonen zo belangrijk. Niet als uitvoerder van plannen, maar als bondgenoot van bewoners. Als organisatie die ruimte durft te maken voor stemmen die niet vanzelfsprekend gehoord worden.**

**Want participatie draait niet om wie het hardst praat, maar om wie er nog níet spreekt.**

**Door opdrachtgeverschap toekomstgericht te herdefiniëren, kan Haag Wonen laten zien dat inclusie geen losse ambitie is, maar een manier van werken. Een houding. Een belofte.**

**Iedere bewoner verdient een stem. Iedere stem verdient een plek aan tafel.**

**De vraag is nu: hoe gaan we luisteren? En wie krijgt er morgen de ruimte om mee te bouwen aan zijn of haar buurt?**

*Dit booklet is ontwikkeld als communicatieproduct in het kader van de masterthesis: Inclusive Placemaking for Ageing in Place*

*Het maakt onderdeel uit van het afstudeertraject van de opleiding MSc Architecture, Urbanism and Building Sciences aan Technische Universiteit Delft, uitgevoerd in samenwerking met Haag Wonen en Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest.*

*De inhoud is gebaseerd op kwalitatief onderzoek, uitgevoerd in 2024-2025, onder bewoners van het appartementencomplex Lozerlaan in Den Haag Zuidwest.*

*Doel van dit booklet is om inzichten en aanbevelingen over te brengen op een toegankelijke manier, met bijzondere aandacht voor inclusieve participatie en toekomstgericht opdrachtgeverschap.*

*Student: Hongjing Spaaij  
Studentnummer: 5051746  
Eerste mentor universiteit: Reinout Kleinhans  
Tweede mentor universiteit: Luisa Calabrese*

*Let op: De inhoud van dit booklet is gebaseerd op een academische casusstudie en vertegenwoordigt niet per definitie het officiële standpunt van Haag Wonen.*

**Ontwerpprincipes voor Cirkelflat, Lozerlaan**



## Waarom deze ontwerprichtlijnen?

Deze set ontwerprichtlijnen is gebaseerd op veldwerkonderzoek naar de leefervaringen van bewoners aan de Lozerlaan. Een belangrijke bevinding is dat er een voortdurend gevoel van onveiligheid en wanorde heerst, dat het dagelijks leven beïnvloedt en bewoners belemmert om te dromen over een toekomst voor hun leefomgeving. Deze urgentie moet worden aangepakt voordat de fysieke renovaties beginnen. Ontwerp heeft de kracht om te versterken, niet alleen fysiek, maar ook sociaal en emotioneel. Met een **placemaking**-benadering kunnen we het vertrouwen herstellen, de publieke ruimte herwinnen en een basis leggen voor **veiligheid en zorgzaamheid**.

Ontwerp kan zorg stimuleren, niet door van bovenaf orde op te leggen, maar door bewoners **eigenaarschap en zeggenschap** te geven. Door in een vroeg stadium van de transformatie in te zetten op gemeenschapsgericht ontwerp, creëren we voorwaarden waarin bewoners zich opnieuw thuis kunnen voelen en weer durven dromen.

Een tweede belangrijke bevinding is dat de Lozerlaan een diverse populatie huisvest, qua taal, cultuur en leeftijd. Het ontwerp moet een balans vinden tussen twee kernprincipes:

- Ruimte bieden voor ontmoeting en verbinding, om sociale isolatie onder ouderen tegen te gaan.
- De behoefte aan vreedzaam samenleven en autonomie respecteren, zodat bewoners zelf kunnen kiezen of ze sociaal contact willen of juist rust en privacy.

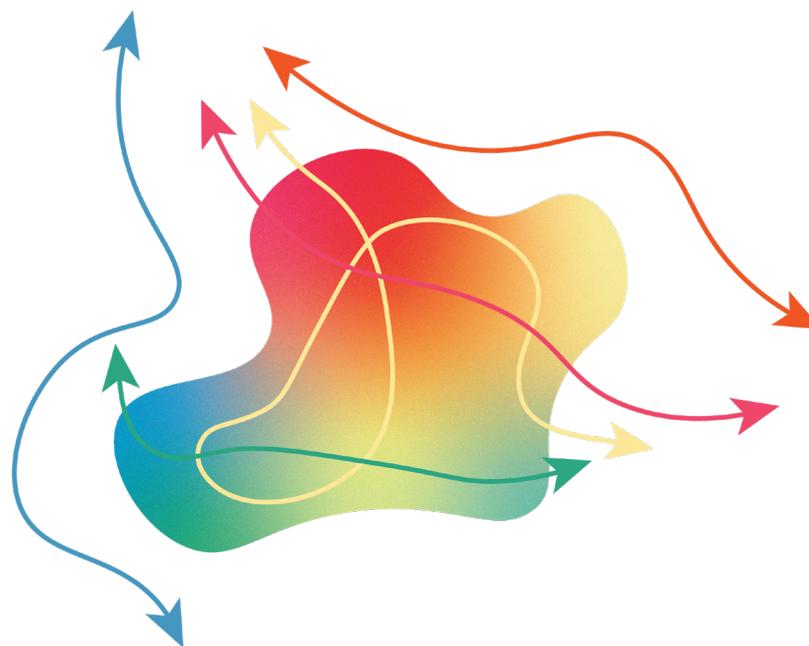
Voor oudere bewoners is het **behouden van autonomie** cruciaal. Dit betekent bijvoorbeeld de vrijheid om anderen met dezelfde taalachtergrond te ontmoeten in een veilige en herkenbare omgeving. Dit kan het makkelijker maken voor hen om hulp te vragen aan een buur zonder het risico te lopen op opmerkingen dat ze zouden moeten "integreren". Ontwerp moet ondersteunende zorgnetwerken mogelijk maken, niet uitwissen.

Deze richtlijnen zetten daarom in op ontwerpen met waardigheid, diversiteit en zeggenschap als uitgangspunt en leggen zo de basis voor een rechtvaardige en leefbare toekomst aan de Lozerlaan.



*Veiligheid & Zorgzaamheid  
Safety & Care*

*Eigenaarschap & Zeggenschap  
Ownership & Agency*



*Ontmoeting & Naast Elkaar  
Encounter & Co-Existence*

## Why these design guidelines?

This set of design guidelines is grounded in fieldwork-based research into the lived experiences of Lozerlaan residents. A key finding is that a prevailing sense of unsafety and disorder deeply affects daily life and undermines residents' ability to envision a better future for their environment. This sense of urgency must be addressed before physical renovations begin. Design has the potential to uplift, not just physically, but emotionally and socially. Through a **placemaking** approach, we can begin restoring trust, reclaiming public space, and creating a foundation of **safety and care**.

Design can teach care. Not by imposing order from above, but by giving residents **ownership and agency**. By embedding community-oriented design in the early stages of the transformation process, we create the conditions for residents to feel at home and to dream again.

A second essential finding is that Lozerlaan is home to a diverse population, in terms of language, culture, and age. The design must balance two core goals:

- Creating opportunities for connection and encounter, to combat social isolation among elderly.
- Respecting the need for peaceful coexistence and autonomy, allowing residents to choose whether to engage socially or maintain personal space.

For elderly residents, **maintaining autonomy** is key. This includes the freedom to meet others from the same linguistic background in spaces where they feel comfortable and unjudged. For example, asking a neighbour for help in their shared language without facing pressure to "integrate" linguistically. Design should enable support networks, not erase them.

These guidelines, therefore, focus on designing with dignity, diversity, and agency at the forefront, laying the groundwork for a just and livable future at Lozerlaan.

**“Het is gewoon een afwerkplek hier achterin de parkeerplaats. Elke avond komen er hier vreemde auto’s. De buurvrouw op de eerste verdieping durft niet eens op haar balkon te zitten.” “Hierachter in de bosjes slapen asielzoekers in tenten en die eten alle honden en katten uit de buurt op... Ja dat is echt hoor.” “De hal en de gangen zijn ECHT vies, hebben wij geen huismeester meer?” “Vroeger zat iedereen gewoon buiten te praten met iedereen. En dan maakt het niet uit welke nationaliteit je hebt. Maar dat is zo afgenomen in de laatste 15-20 jaar.” “Heel mooi, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee.” “Ik wil misschien terug naar Turkije. Ik heb geen familie hier. Zorg is hier niet goed, ik word ouder.” “Belangrijkste is veiligheid, de rest komt wel.” “Mijn overbuurman is Marrokaans, die is wel rustig, die mag ik wel... Er zitten er ook goede bij.” “Er is al een hoop verbeterd sinds dat jullie hier rondlopen”**

## **Inhoud**

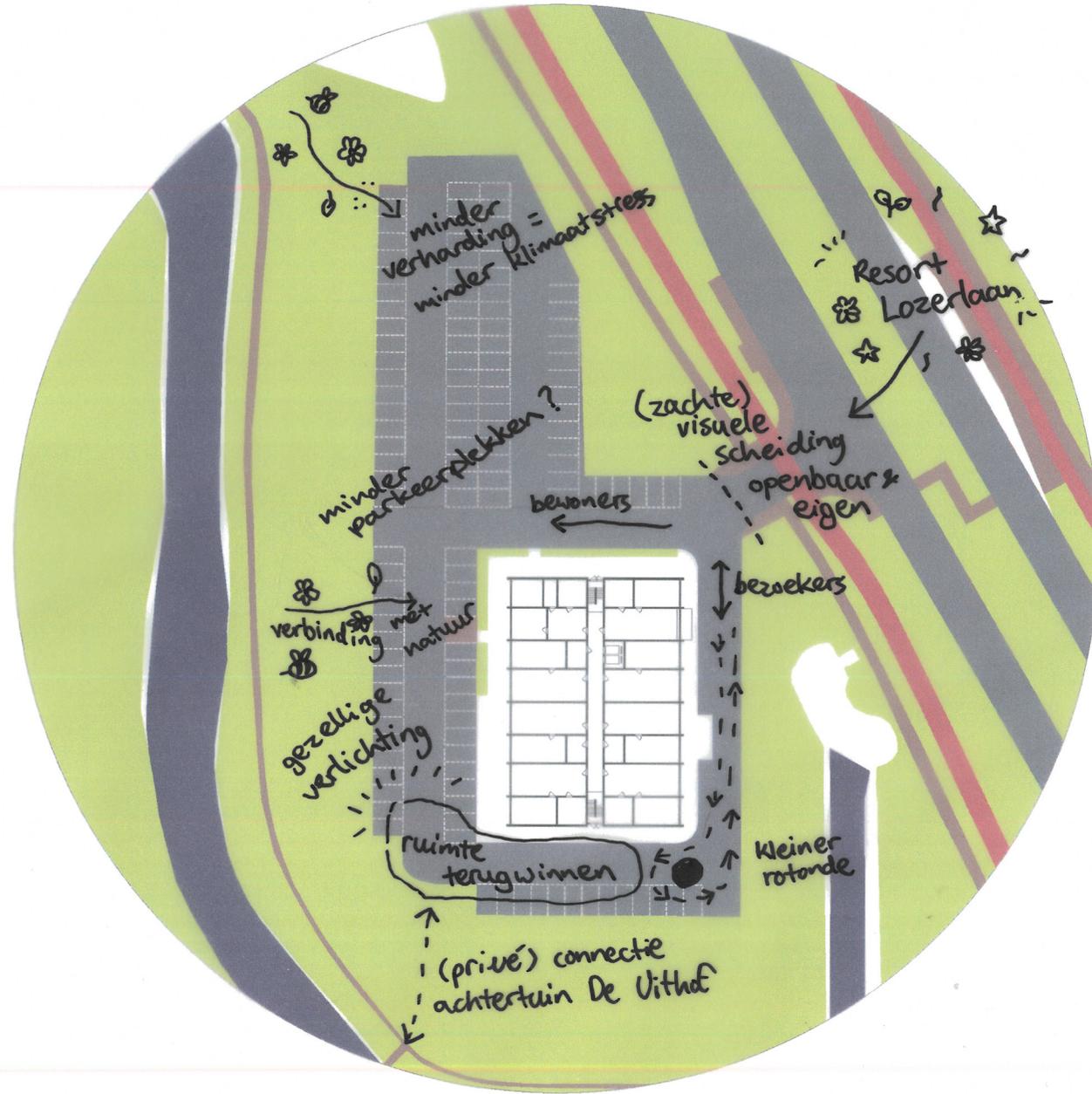
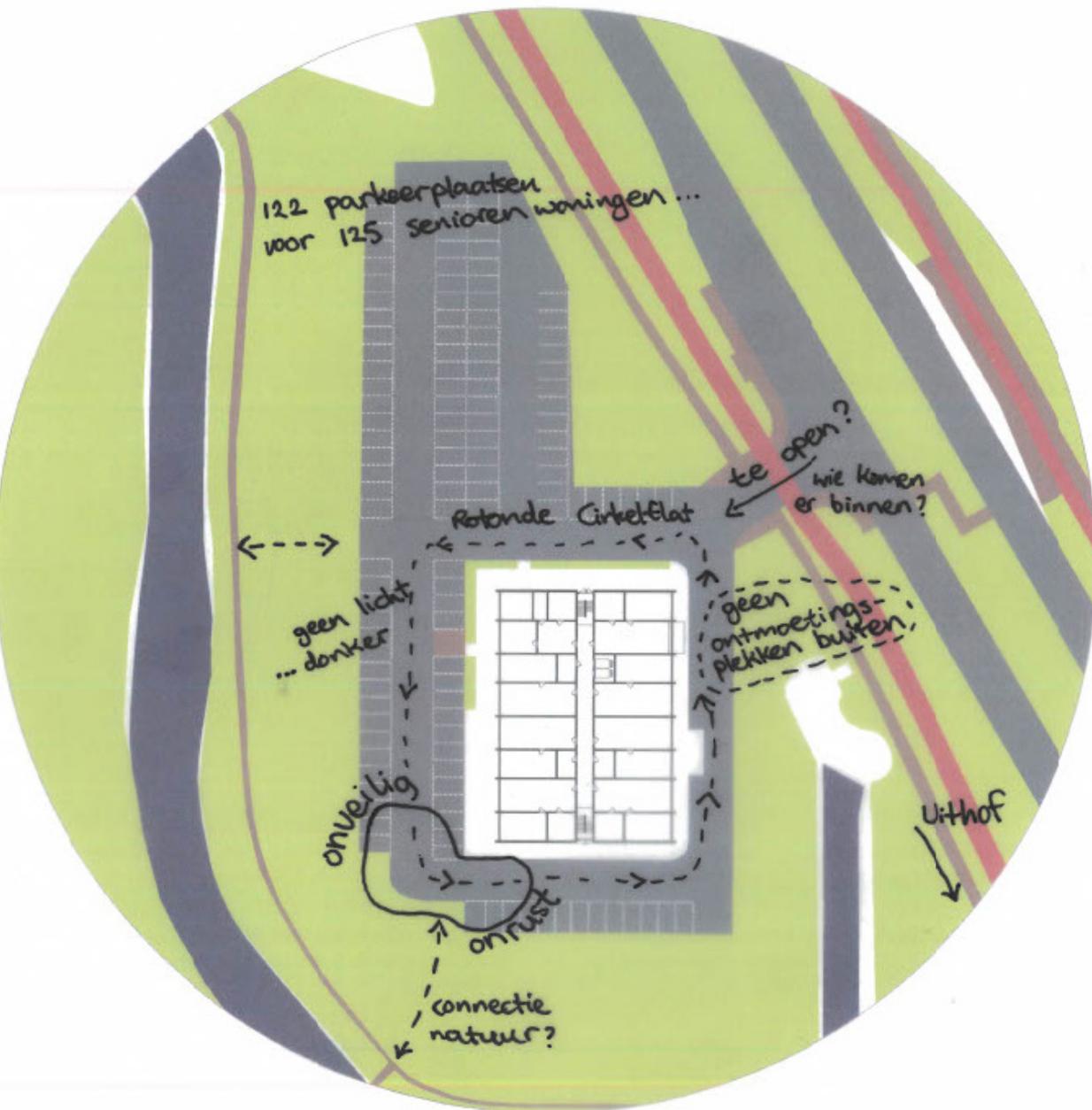
### **Buitenruimte**

*Huidige situatie  
Toekomstscenario  
Ontwerpprincipes*

### **Beganegrond & gevels**

*Huidige situatie  
Toekomstscenario  
Ontwerpprincipes*

### **Impressies**



Buitenruimte

Vergroening & klimaatadaptatie



Groenonderhoud  
verbruikt weinig/  
geen (drink)water



Gekozen flora  
heeft weinig/  
geen onderhoud  
nodig



Meer bomen  
minder verharding  
tegen hittestress



Aantrekkelijke  
flora voor de mens,  
bijen en vlinders

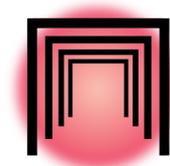
Verbinding & Toegankelijkheid



Betere verbinding  
met De Uithof



Betere verbinding  
buitenruimte en  
binnen



Visuele scheiding  
tussen privé terrein  
en openbare weg



Scheiding toegang  
bewoners en  
bezoekers

Herwaardering van ruimtegebruik



Ruimte terug-  
winnen voor  
sociale en  
groene functies



Nieuw balans  
tussen autogericht  
en mensgericht  
buitenruimte

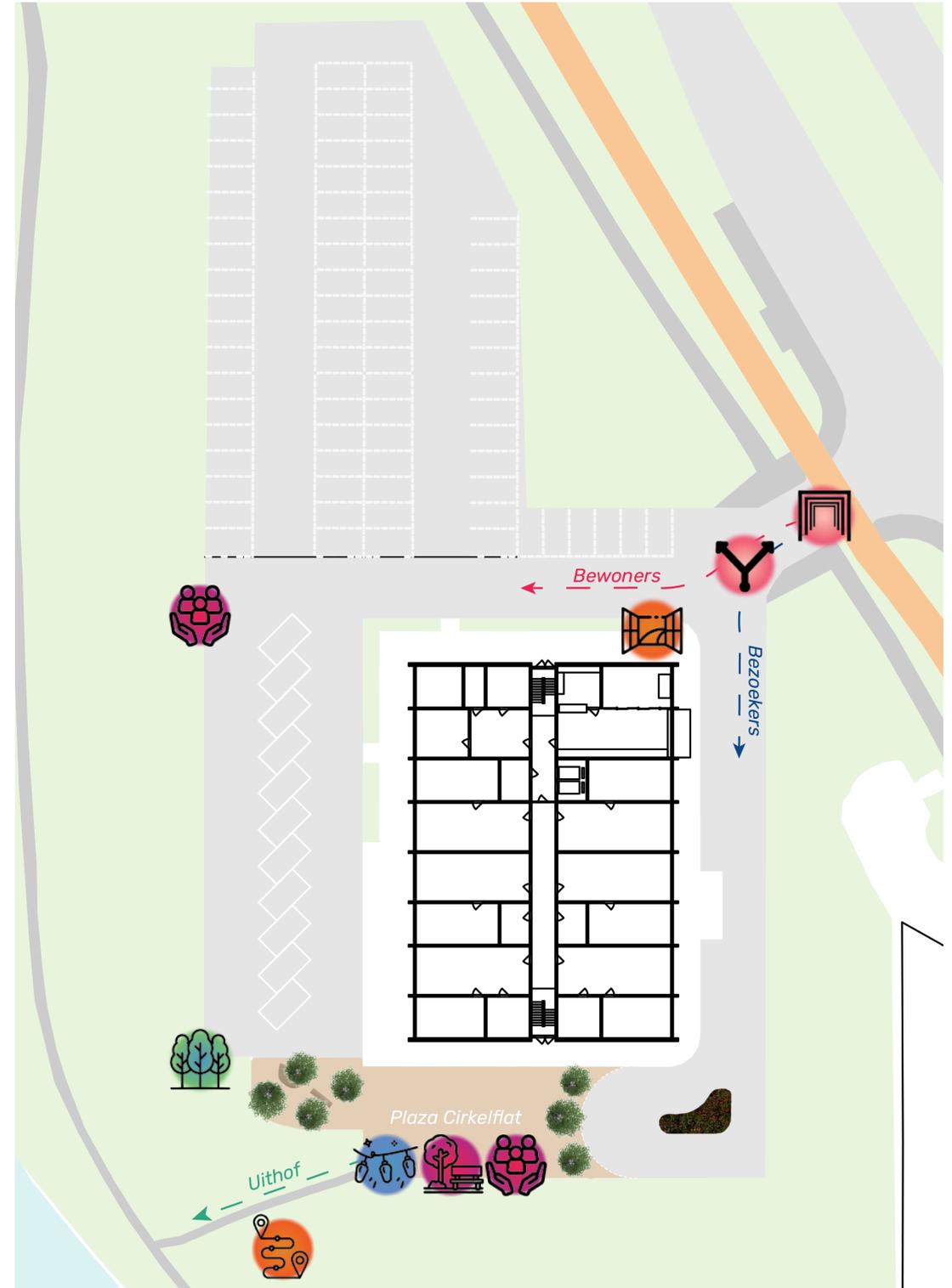


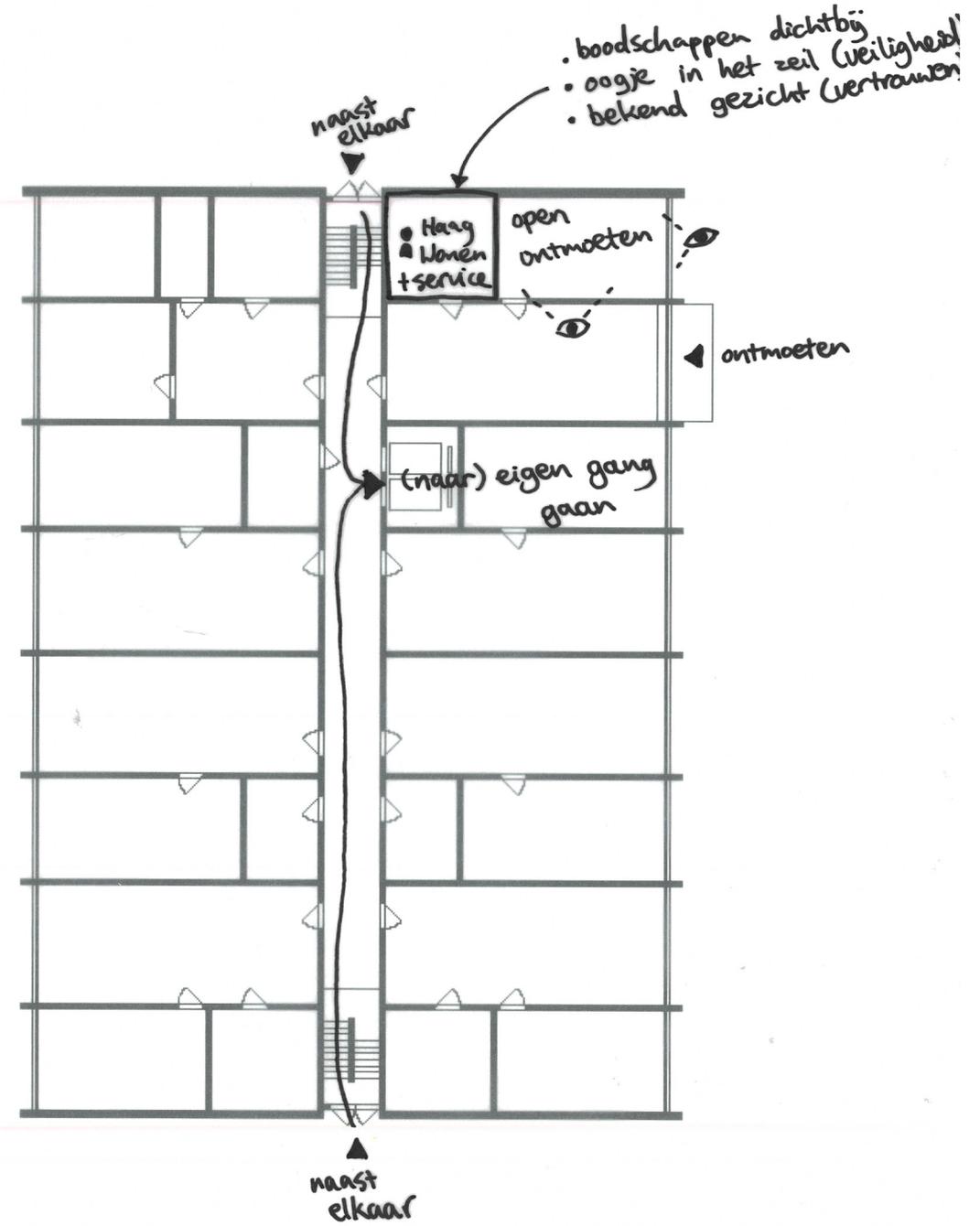
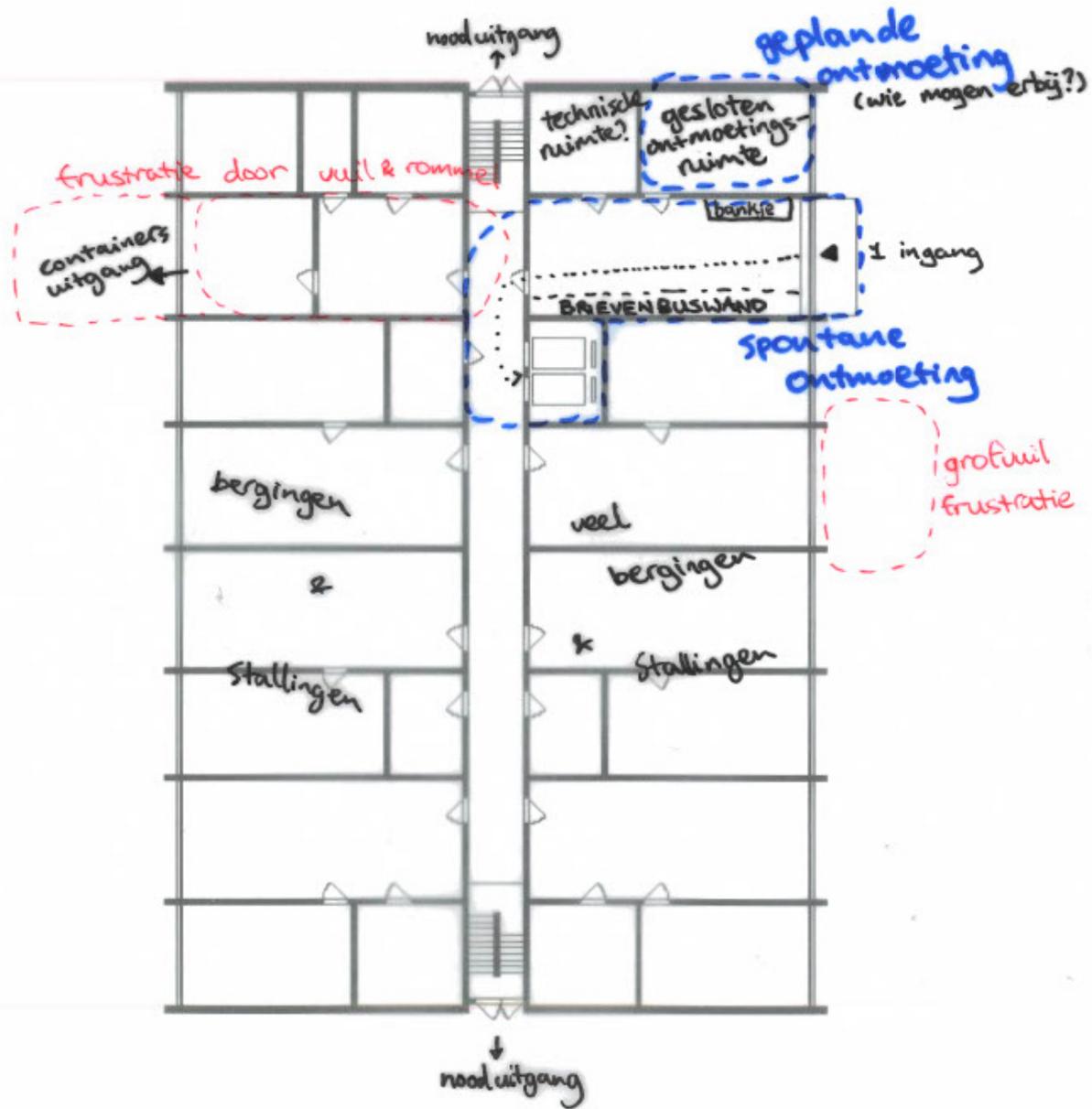
Gezellige verlichting



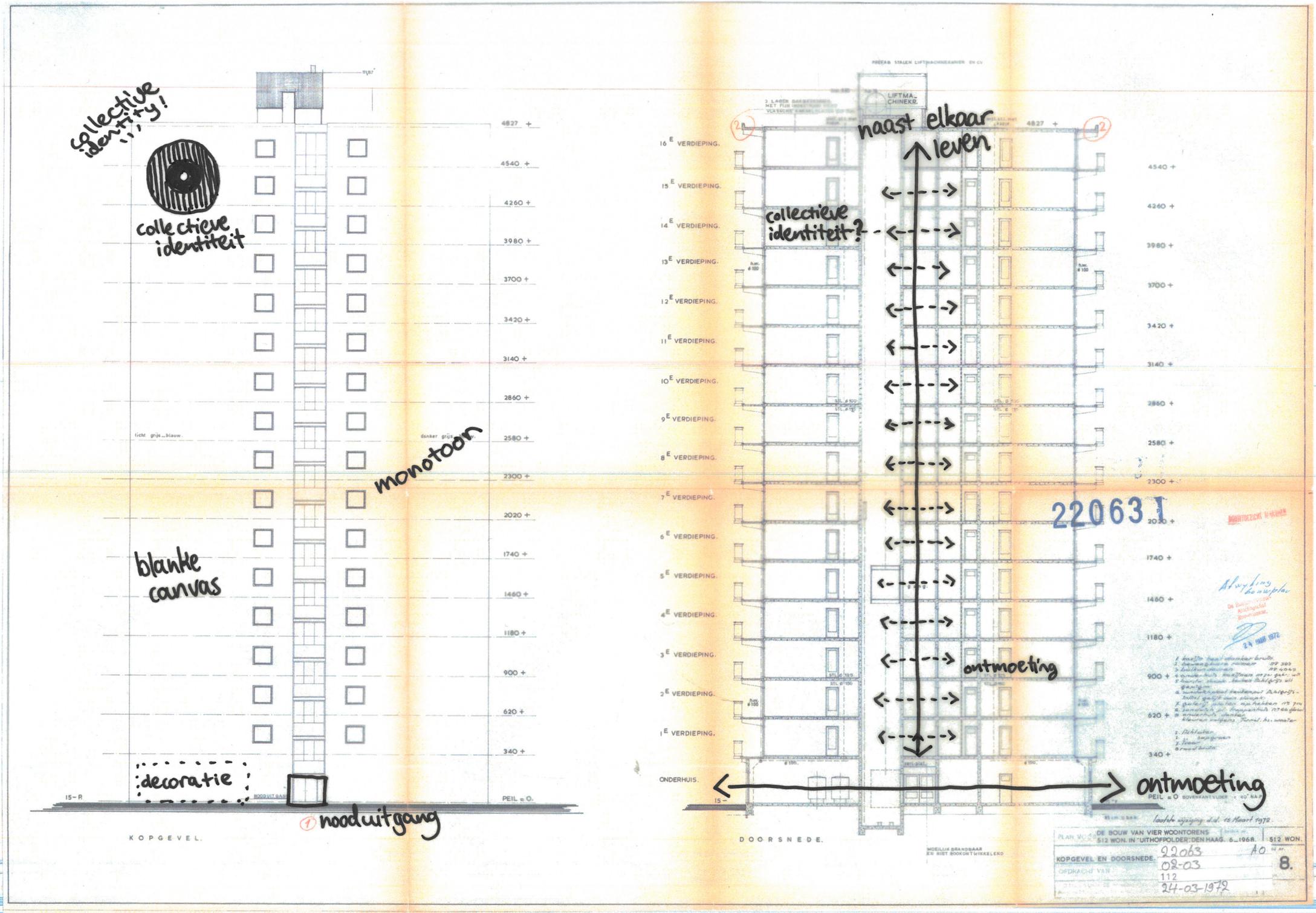
Schone en  
nette buitenruimte

Comfort, rust en veiligheid

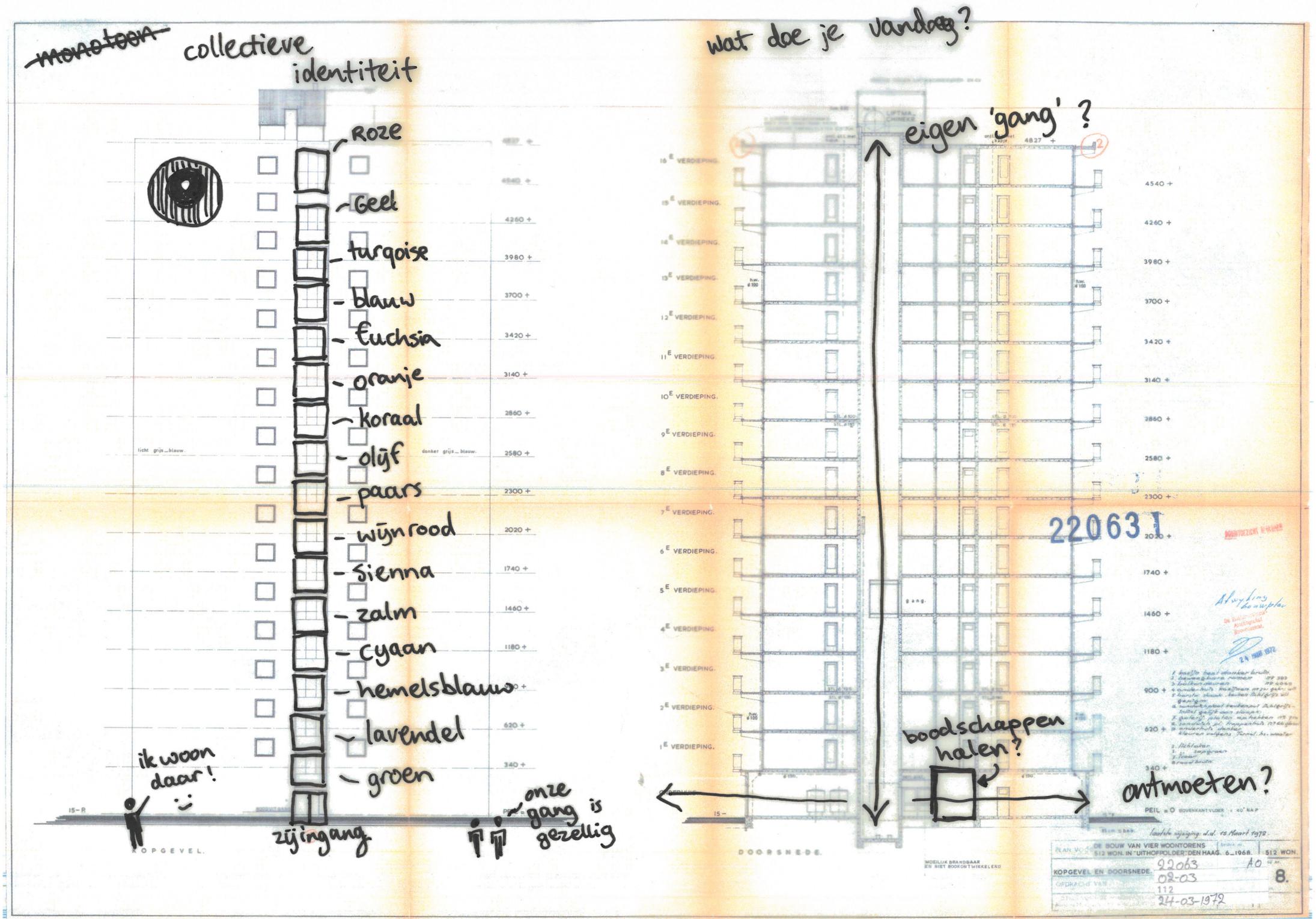




Gevels



Gevels



# Ontwerpprincipes

## Binnenruimte

### Actieve plint & ontmoetingsruimte



Ondersteunende diensten



Flexibiliteit



Inclusiviteit

### Sociale veiligheid



Vertrouwd gezicht



Transparantie



Naast elkaar



Met elkaar

### Ontmoetingsautonomie

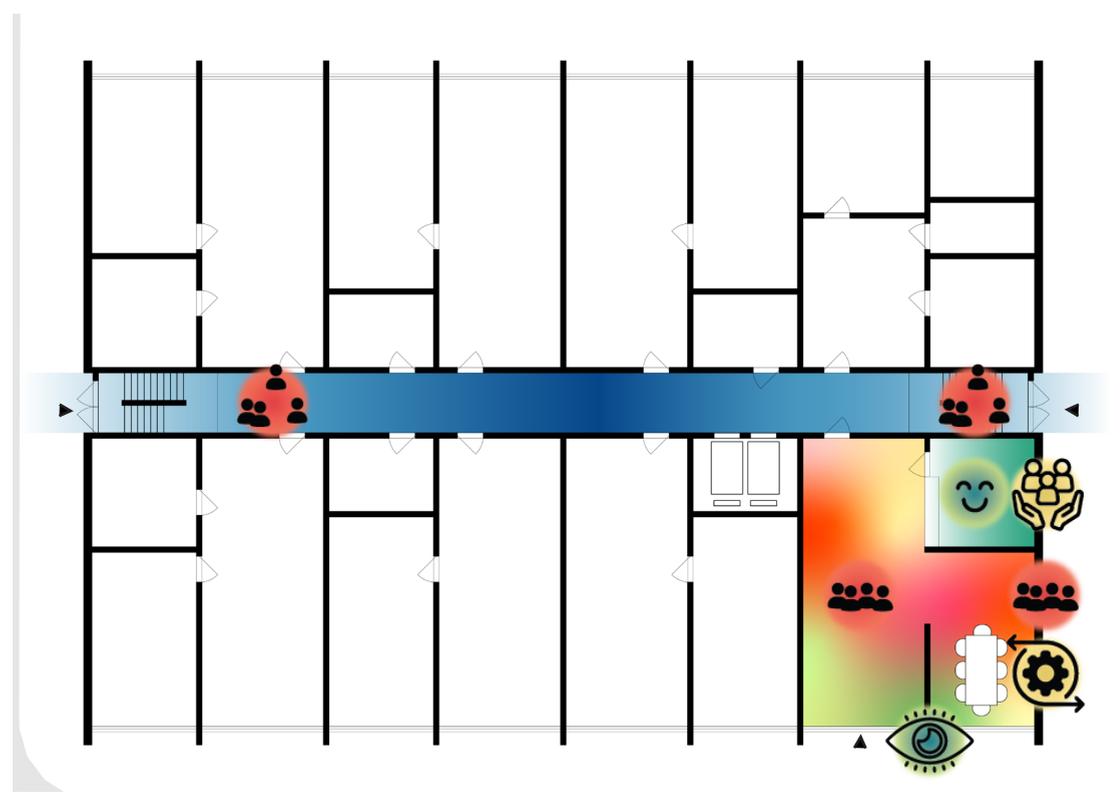
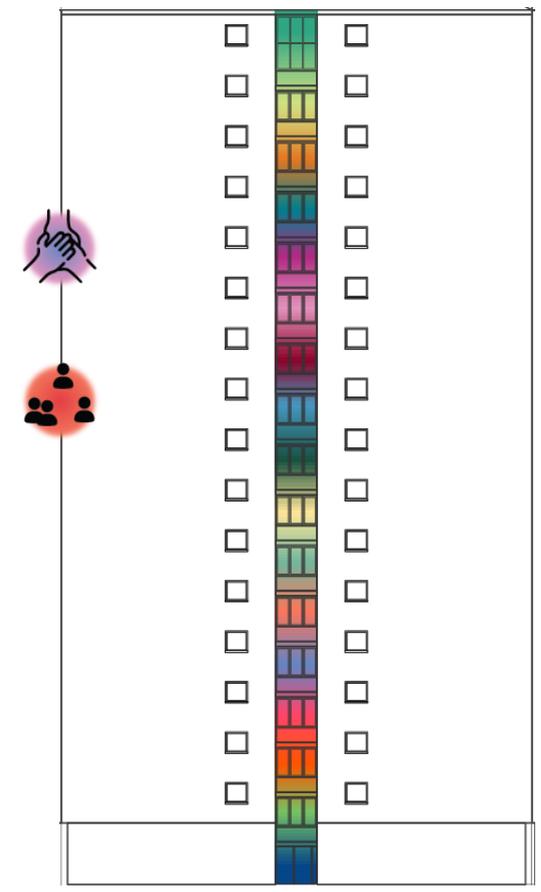
### Verbondenheid



Verbondenheid door collectieve identiteit

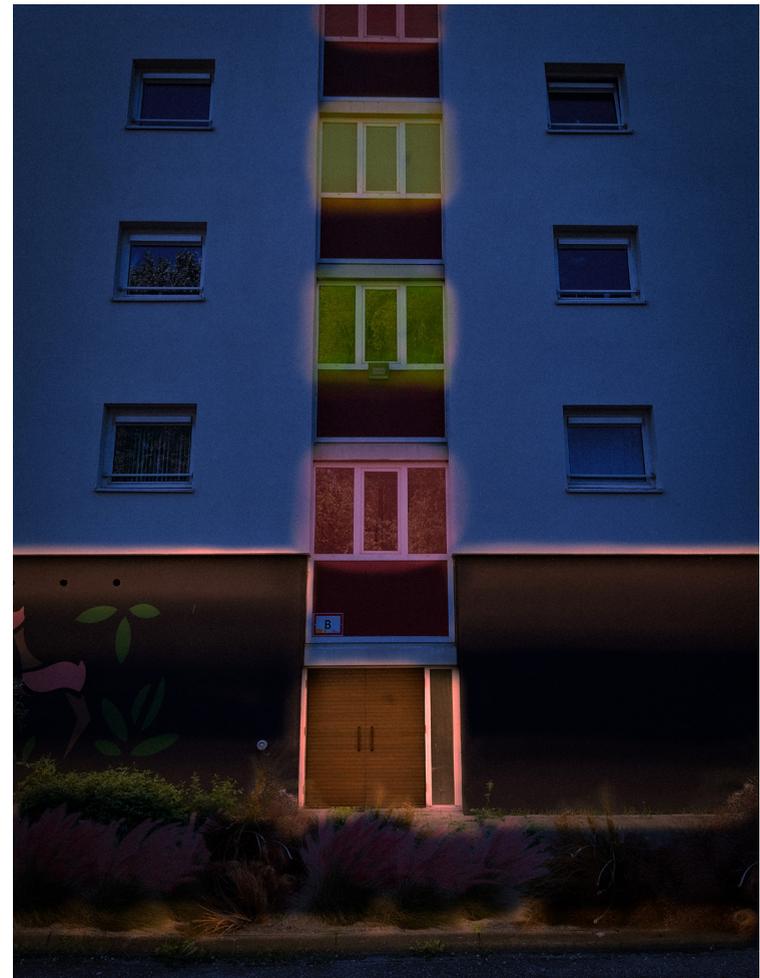
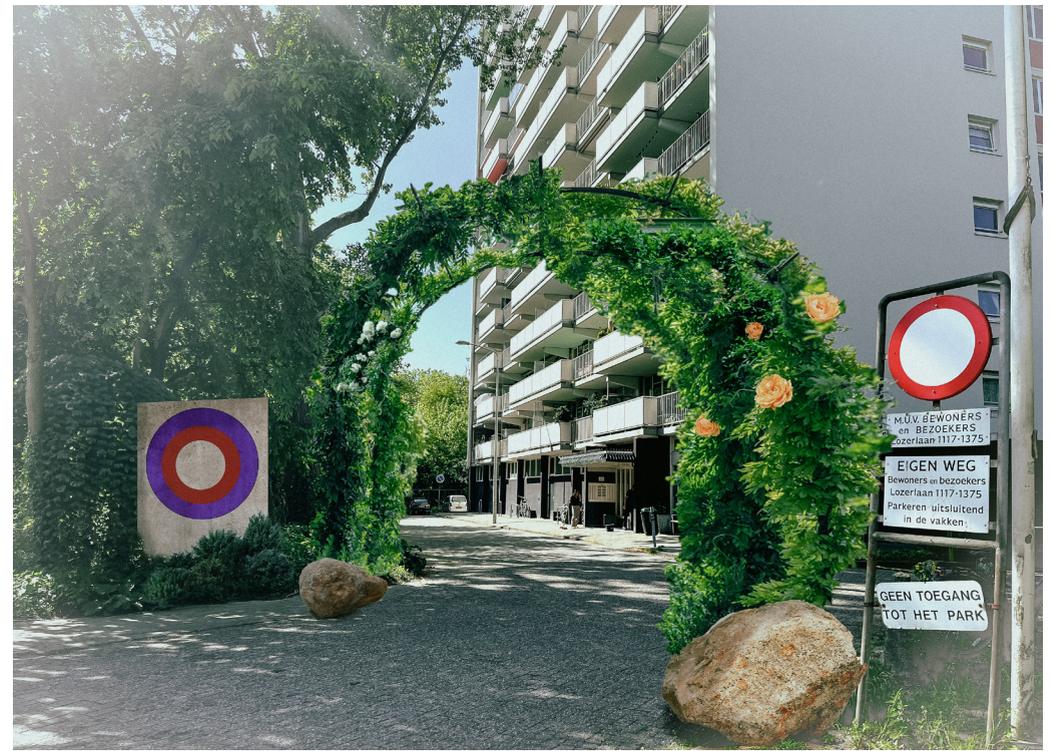
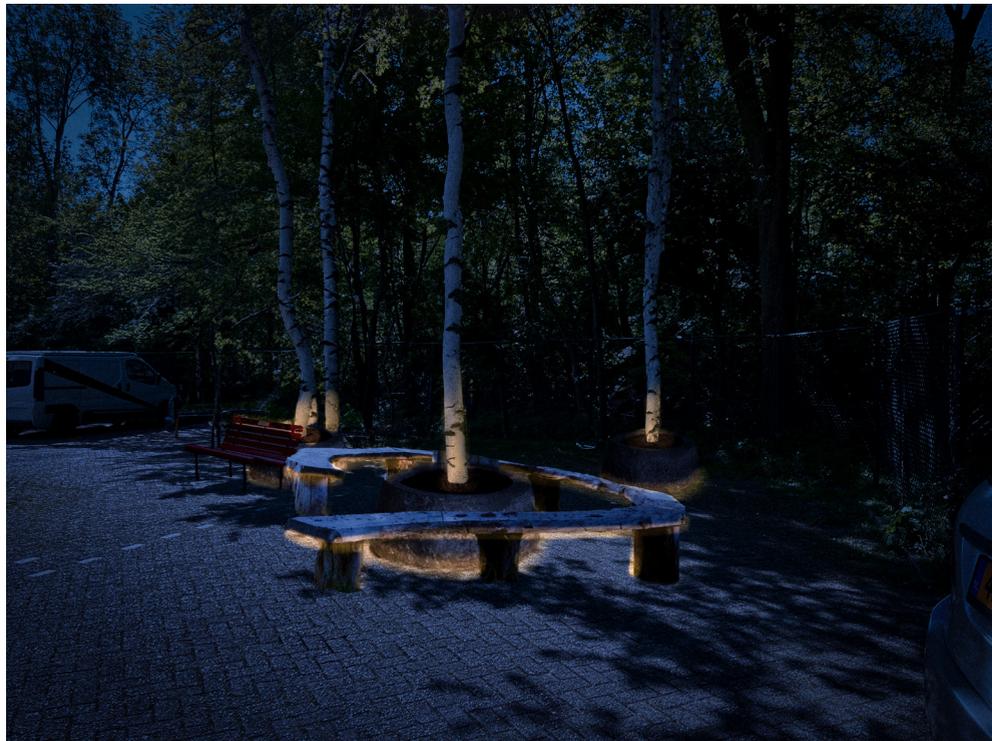
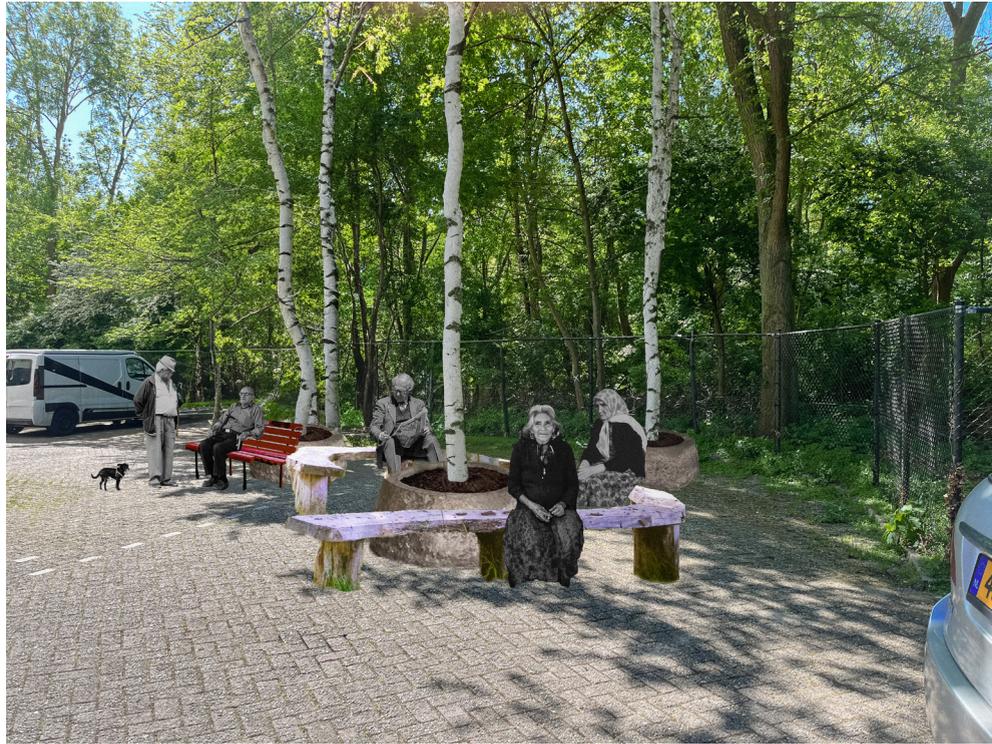


Verbondenheid met de fysieke omgeving



# Impressie

## Buitenruimte



Beganegrond



*Dit booklet is ontwikkeld als communicatieproduct in het kader van de masterthesis:  
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*© 2025 Alleen voor educatieve en niet-commerciële doeleinden.*

**De Uithof bekeken vanaf Lozerlaan**  
*Een uitnodiging aan de Gemeente Den Haag*



## Voorwoord

De Uithof is voor velen in Den Haag een recreatiegebied. Maar voor de bewoners van Lozerlaan is het meer dan dat: het is hun achtertuin. Een plek die dichtbij ligt, maar soms ook ver voelt. Een plek van rust, maar ook van zorgen.

Met dit boekje willen we een ander perspectief geven op De Uithof. Geen plan, geen ontwerp, maar een uitnodiging om te kijken vanuit het dagelijks leven van ouderen, migranten en anderen die hun dagen doorbrengen aan de rand van de stad.



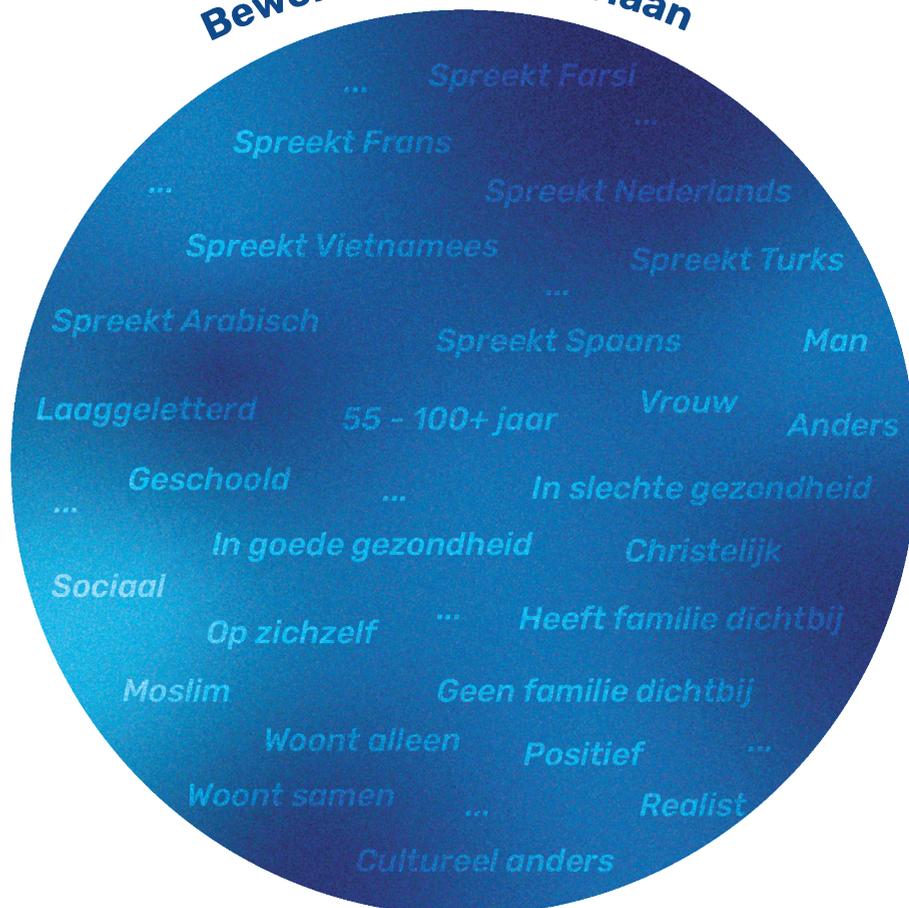
Dit boekje is onderdeel van een reeks van vier, ontwikkeld vanuit een afstudeeronderzoek aan de TU Delft over inclusieve placemaking. Deze reeks is bedoeld om gesprekken te starten, perspectieven te verbreden, en samenwerking te verdiepen.

## Wie zijn de bewoners van Lozerlaan?

Aan de Lozerlaan in Den Haag Zuidwest staan vier markante flatgebouwen van zestien verdiepingen hoog. Gebouwd in 1970 als luxe appartementen, zijn ze inmiddels in gebruik als seniorenwoningen voor bewoners van 55 jaar en ouder. De gebouwen vormen samen één complex, maar liggen fysiek ver van elkaar – en dat is voelbaar. Elk gebouw heeft zijn eigen dynamiek, zijn eigen bewonersgroep, en zijn eigen verhaal.

De bewoners vormen een rijke, maar complexe gemeenschap. Er wonen mensen van allerlei achtergronden: van geboren en getogen Hagenaars tot bewoners met wortels in Turkije, Marokko, Suriname, de Antillen en daarbuiten. Sommigen zijn vitaal en actief in de buurt, anderen leiden een meer teruggetrokken leven, soms vanwege gezondheid, taalbarrières of wantrouwen richting instanties.

### Bewoners van Lozerlaan



## De Uithof als achtertuin: bewoners aan het woord

### Wat maakt dat u zich thuis voelt?



Natuur



Goede fietspaden



Gemellige winkels



Een iel eker te kunnen gaan



Hier en daar bankje



Deze afbeeldingen zijn resultaten van een serie workshops die ik tijdens mijn scriptie in de Cirkelflat, Lozerlaan heb georganiseerd.

In deze workshops heb ik de bewoners gevraagd drie vragen te beantwoorden op een manier die zij willen:

- Wat maakt dat u zich thuis voelt?
- Wat heeft u nodig om hier gelukkig ouder te worden?
- Hoe ziet een perfecte dag eruit voor u?

De deelnemers van de workshops spraken verschillende talen.



### In de buurt

we hebben een mooi park dat vind ik fijn en de bus voor de deur

## كيف تبدو لك اليوم المثالي؟

## "Hierachter in de bosjes slapen asielzoekers in tenten en die eten alle honden en katten uit de buurt op... Ja dat is echt hoor."

استر بيوم مثالي، او بيدي لي  
عندما استيقظ بنشاط دون ألم -  
بصدا الصداة - فالرياضة - وتناول الطعام  
النظر منه وراه الوافذ الى مناظر الطبيعة  
المضاه ومعرفة الناس والطقت الجبل  
البلور والشرفات بالورد والنظرة  
الشمس تعطى الطاقة والحرارة والعمل  
عندما ازرع الورد  
عندما استر في البلاستيك ازيد  
بيني بالورد  
الورد يعد

I feel like having a perfect day, or at least to me, when I wake up energetically without pain. And after prayer, exercise and breakfast, I look out the windows to the green public scenery, the movement of people, the beautiful weather, the balconies with flowers and the view.  
The sun gives energy, movement and work. When I plant roses.  
When I bought a platter, I decorated it with roses. Roses make me happy.

## Wat maakt dat u zich thuis voelt?

¿قأ



Binnen Adentro



In de buurt En las cercanías

13 AÑOS VIVIENDO Lived here for 13 years now

- TRANQUILIDAD - SENTARSE EN LA SILLA.  
- MIRAR EL PARQUE.  
- USAR EL BALCÓN.
- COCINAR -
- HABLAR CON LA FAMILIA.
- ESTA A GUSTO EN SU CASA -
- TENER LIBERTAD PARA DECIDIR.

tranquility - sit in chair  
- look at the park  
- use the balcony

to cook  
talk with family  
it is comfortable in their house  
have freedom to decide

- EL PARQUE (REFREZCAR LA CABEZA)  
↳ ELLA VA AL PARQUE CON LA HIJA Y EL NIETO.  
↳ CAMINAR
- LA TIENDA O EL SUPERMERCADO. | VA EN CARRO CON LA HIJA.
- NO HABLA MUCHO EL IDIOMA.  
↳ SHE DID NOT MANAGE TO LEARN THE LANGUAGE.

the park (to refresh your head)  
- goes to the park with their daughter and grandson  
- walk

the store or the supermarket  
- goes by car with daughter

I don't speak much of the language  
- did not manage to learn the language

## Hoe ziet een perfecte dag eruit voor u?

## ¿Cómo es para ti un día perfecto?



En primavera  
In de lente

LAS FLORES CUANDO SALEN, JUNTO A LAS HOJAS DE LOS ARBORES.

- CADA 2 AÑOS VISITA SANTO DOMINGO  
9 HIJOS  
7 NIETOS

see the flowers when they come out, along with the leaves on the trees

every two year visit Santo Domingo  
9 children  
7 grandchildren

TOMAR EL SOL SENTADA EN EL PARQUE O EN UNA TERRAZA. EN EL BALCON TOMANDO CAFÉ.

sunbathing sitting in the park or on a terrace on the balcony drinking coffee



In de zomer  
En verano

EVERY SEASON IS THE SAME FOR HER

enjoy the winter, it's romantic

with snow on the street  
christmas with a tree with lights

DISFRUTA EL INVIERNO ES ROMÁNTICO

↳ CON NIEVE EN LA CALLE  
↳ NAVIDAD CON ARBOLITO CON LUCES

favourite season  
FAVORITA

In invierno

Tijdens herfst

Durante el otoño



TIEMPO PARA PENSAR  
↓  
EN COSAS NUEVAS

time for thinking for new ideas

In de winter



## Wat maakt dat u zich thuis voelt?

"Uithof, natuur dichtbij is geweldig. Reden om hierheen te verhuizen voor meerdere bewoners"



Binnen



In de buurt



picnic in the park

see little animals



love to be outside and to photograph the nature



LET'S GO



see little foxes in the park



cycling, be active

"Belangrijkste is veiligheid, de rest komt wel."

## Wat gebeurt er al?

In het voorjaar van 2025 organiseerde de gemeente Den Haag een participatiewandeling met bewoners van Lozerlaan door De Uithof. Daarna werd in de ontmoetingsruimte van de Cirkelflat verder gepraat over wensen en zorgen.

Sindsdien zijn de wandel- en fietspaden tussen de flats verbeterd. Dit wordt door veel bewoners zeer positief ervaren.

Deze initiatieven laten zien: er wordt geluisterd. Het gesprek is begonnen.

## Bijdrage aan het Ambitiedocument

Dit boekje laat de geleefde ervaringen van de bewoners zien door middel van citaten die zijn verzameld tijdens veldwerk, en brengt de stemmen van bewoners letterlijk naar de gemeente. Dit product wil bijdragen aan "het Ambitiedocument" dat ideeën van bewoners, bezoekers, ondernemers en lokale verenigingen over het gebied De Uithof bevat, het voorwerk van de ontwikkelingsstrategie.



## Aanpassing ontwerpogave

### Lozerlaan & De Uithof, Van eilanden naar verbonden leefomgeving

De vier wooncomplexen aan de Lozerlaan bevinden zich aan de rand van Den Haag, ingeklemd tussen de vierbaansweg Lozerlaan, N-wegen en het recreatiegebied De Uithof. De flats liggen 400 tot 500 meter uit elkaar en functioneren als stedelijke eilanden: elk met een eigen bewonerssamenstelling, sociale dynamiek en ruimtelijke context.

Deze fysieke spreiding biedt kansen voor zelfstandigheid, maar creëert ook uitdagingen op het vlak van onderlinge verbondenheid en aansluiting op de stad. Elke flat heeft een eigen identiteit, maar mist vaak de middelen of infrastructuur om echt onderdeel te zijn van een groter geheel.

De Uithof, door bewoners en Haag Wonen omschreven als "de achtertuin van de Lozerlaan", biedt hierin een unieke kans. Het gebied wordt gewaardeerd om zijn rust en natuur, maar ook ervaren als onveilig of onduidelijk in gebruik. Huidige functies (zoals de sporthal, manège en het dierenasiel) bestaan naast elkaar, maar vormen nog geen samenhangend geheel vanuit het perspectief van de bewoners.

### Voorstel wijziging ontwerpvisie De Uithof:

Versterk De Uithof als verbonden, toegankelijke achtertuin voor de bewoners van de Lozerlaan, waarin rust, veiligheid en natuurlijke ontmoeting centraal staan.

Ontwikkel de omgeving niet alleen als recreatiegebied voor de stad, maar ook als actieve schakel tussen de vier wooncomplexen, waarin ruimte is voor ontmoeting, stilte, herkenning en verzorgde toegankelijkheid.

Van "De Uithof als stedelijke rand" naar een gedeelde, geleefde ruimte. Deze kleine verschuiving in perspectief kan bijdragen aan een grotere opgave: het verbinden van mensen, plekken en leefwerelden in een superdiverse stad die steeds meer vraagt om nabijheid, zorg en meerstemmigheid in ontwerp.

## Een stad van velen

Den Haag is een superdiverse stad. Mensen met verschillende achtergronden, gewoonten, talen en rituelen delen hier dezelfde straten, gebouwen en openbare ruimten. Die culturele diversiteit is geen probleem dat opgelost moet worden, maar een essentieel onderdeel van de identiteit van de stad.

Toch wordt bij ruimtelijke opgaven multiculturaliteit vaak benaderd als iets wat 'meegenomen' moet worden, als een vinkje op een participatielijst. Maar in een stad als Den Haag mag diversiteit niet het eindpunt zijn van beleid, het moet het beginpunt zijn. Een vanzelfsprekend uitgangspunt voor hoe we ontwerpen, beheren en denken over gedeelde ruimte.

Dat geldt ook voor De Uithof.

Bewoners met verschillende culturele achtergronden hebben ook verschillende gebruiken en relaties met de natuur. Sommigen laten bijvoorbeeld brood achter op het gras, niet uit onverschilligheid of vervuiling, maar omdat zij het liever 'teruggeven' aan de natuur of aan dieren, dan het als afval te zien. Zulke handelingen kunnen bij andere gebruikers onbegrip of ergernis oproepen.

Maar het straffen of verbieden van dit soort rituelen leidt vaak tot uitsluiting en frustratie, het versterkt de kloof tussen groepen. Juist in een openbare ruimte als De Uithof, waar mensen elkaar ontmoeten zonder dat ze elkaar kennen, is het belangrijk om verschillen niet te negeren, maar zichtbaar te maken en te begeleiden met zorg en begrip.

We stellen dan ook de vraag:

### **Hoe kunnen we De Uithof ontwerpen en beheren als plek waar verschillen naast elkaar mogen bestaan?**

Dat is geen makkelijke opgave. Het vraagt geduld, dialoog, verbeeldingskracht en soms ook het loslaten van standaardoplossingen. Het biedt ook kansen: om botsingen te voorkomen, om elkaar beter te begrijpen en om van De Uithof een plek te maken die echt van iedereen is.



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Inclusive Placemaking for Ageing in Place*

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Urbanism and Building Sciences aan Technische Universiteit Delft, uitgevoerd in  
samenwerking met Haag Wonen en Scriptiewerkplaats Den Haag Zuidwest.*

*De inhoud is gebaseerd op kwalitatief onderzoek, uitgevoerd in 2024–2025, onder  
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*Doel van dit booklet is om inzichten en aanbevelingen over te brengen op een  
toegankelijke manier*

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# Appendix D:

# Data Analysis Framework

Theme	Theoretical background	Barriers	Barriers (pictures)	Facilitators	Facilitators (pictures)	Interpretation
<b>Place</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Physical aspects of the living environment (Korhonen et al., 2019; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024; Pan-Harman et al., 2020)</li> <li>Emotional and social connections associated with a particular location (Kleinmans et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2022; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024; Pan-Harman et al., 2020)</li> <li>Three levels of attachment to place: home, home environment &amp; neighbourhood (Wheeler et al., 2017)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Herscheren in de loopjes slagen ontvoekers in teken en de een alle handen en katten uit de buurt op...Ja dat is echt hard."</li> <li>"Ik ben zelf ook buitenlander ik kan het zeggen. Al die ***** hier maken de flat vies, ze zetten oever vol met meubels... Het is discriminerend niet, ik ben er niet bij mee als er bijvoorbeeld sachtstafel van het straatfeest van de buitenlanders open in de vakantieruimtes liggen."</li> <li>"Het is gewoon een afwijking van de andere parkeringsplaats. Elke avond komen er hier vreemde auto's. De bouwruimte op de eerste verdieping durft niet eens op haar balkon te zitten."</li> <li>"De container (tijdelijk kantoor/interlocutor Haag Wonen) die hier staat doet er niet uit, wanneer wordt het weggehaald?" "Het heeft 2 parkerenplaatsen."</li> <li>"De gemeenteraad die boden niet op na werkzaamheden. Het is een sociale boel hier." "En er worden al zoveel woonwoningen hier."</li> <li>"Da hi al de gangen zijn ECHT vies, hebben wij geen huismeester meer?"</li> <li>"Dit is het volk van een Loosdrecht" said during one "Acties de Voorloper gesprekken" where there was constant construction noise in the building. Due to high turnover rate within this complex and poorly sound-treated apartments, almost all residents complain about construction noise. "de hebt gewoon geen woonwoning."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Uitvoer, natuur dichtbij is geweldig. Blijven om hierheen te verhuizen voor meerdere generaties</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to attachment and connection to place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Feeling of safety</li> <li>Uncleanliness and disorder in living environment</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to attachment and connection to place: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Neighbourliness</li> <li>Functional living space</li> <li>Stability and order within their living environment</li> <li>Music</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Belonging</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a "sense of place" or "thuisgevoel" (sense of belonging) (Fang et al., 2018)</li> <li>"insiderness," where people feel they belong, leading to inclusion, security, safety, and stronger identity feelings</li> <li>"outsiderness," where individuals feel separated or alienated (Reyn, 1978)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Vroeger zat iedereen gewoon buiten te praten met iedereen. En dan maakt het niet uit welke nationaliteit je hebt. Maar dat is zo afgelopen in de laatste 15-20 jaar."</li> <li>"Ik heb het in de slaapkamer jaar zo veel zien veranderen." "Wat stopt de corporatie hier allemaal in je?"</li> <li>"Het is gewoon een afwijking hier achter de parkerenplaats. Elke avond komen er hier vreemde auto's. De bouwruimte op de eerste verdieping durft niet eens op haar balkon te zitten."</li> <li>"De gemeenteraad die boden niet op na werkzaamheden. Het is een sociale boel hier." "En er worden al zoveel woonwoningen hier."</li> <li>"Da hi al de gangen zijn ECHT vies, hebben wij geen huismeester meer?"</li> <li>"Dit is de toekomst, dat moet wel toch niet meer."</li> <li>Prior to the Spanish workshop we tried to personally invite Spanish speakers from the building. One resident thanked us for the invitation but refused to participate because: "I don't want to share my personal life with other people. It will get around and they will gossip about me." (Block off level in the community)</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Oude mensen zijn niet kinderen hoor, je wilt niet weten wat er allemaal om gaat hier."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Er is een hoop verbeterd sinds dat jullie hier rondlopen" A resident said to us students.</li> <li>other similar compliments</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to sense of belonging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language barrier (beyond barrier)</li> <li>Willingness to interact with others</li> <li>Cost of living (economic and political)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to sense of belonging: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Peace and order</li> <li>Feeling of safety</li> <li>Feeling of gratitude</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Trust</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>(Dis)trust in institutions, authorities and the success of initiatives (Hofst &amp; Kaufman, 2022; Chisholm et al., 2023; Dushnayan, 2024)</li> <li>Strategies include regular meetings, open communication, demonstrating that all voices are valued, and acknowledging power imbalances (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> <li>skepticism about research (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Haag Wonen geeft veel te weinig aandacht aan onze woonwoning."</li> <li>"We zien de huismeester hier."</li> <li>"De gemeenteraad die boden niet op na werkzaamheden. Het is een sociale boel hier." "En er worden al zoveel woonwoningen hier."</li> <li>Residents often walk-in to complain about previously indicated problems that are not solved yet by Haag Wonen. These could be problems from last week or even ago.</li> <li>"Da hi al de gangen zijn ECHT vies, hebben wij geen huismeester meer?"</li> <li>"Dit is de toekomst, dat moet wel toch niet meer."</li> <li>Prior to the Spanish workshop we tried to personally invite Spanish speakers from the building. One resident thanked us for the invitation but refused to participate because: "I don't want to share my personal life with other people. It will get around and they will gossip about me." (Block off level in the community)</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Oude mensen zijn niet kinderen hoor, je wilt niet weten wat er allemaal om gaat hier."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Er is een hoop verbeterd sinds dat jullie hier rondlopen" A resident said to us students.</li> <li>other similar compliments</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to sense of trust: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Communication difficulty with communication</li> <li>no or delayed result</li> <li>gossip</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to sense of trust: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Active listening</li> <li>Government presence</li> <li>Perceived positive change</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Cross Cultural Understanding &amp; Communication</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Community demographics, cultural groups' concerns, communication styles, and power dynamics (Purnanarath et al., 2020)</li> <li>Language barriers, cultural adaptation challenges, and potential discrimination (Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Vroeger zat iedereen gewoon buiten te praten met iedereen. En dan maakt het niet uit welke nationaliteit je hebt. Maar dat is zo afgelopen in de laatste 15-20 jaar."</li> <li>"Ik heb het in de slaapkamer jaar zo veel zien veranderen." "Wat stopt de corporatie hier allemaal in je?"</li> <li>"Het is gewoon een afwijking hier achter de parkerenplaats. Elke avond komen er hier vreemde auto's. De bouwruimte op de eerste verdieping durft niet eens op haar balkon te zitten."</li> <li>"De gemeenteraad die boden niet op na werkzaamheden. Het is een sociale boel hier." "En er worden al zoveel woonwoningen hier."</li> <li>"Da hi al de gangen zijn ECHT vies, hebben wij geen huismeester meer?"</li> <li>"Dit is de toekomst, dat moet wel toch niet meer."</li> <li>Prior to the Spanish workshop we tried to personally invite Spanish speakers from the building. One resident thanked us for the invitation but refused to participate because: "I don't want to share my personal life with other people. It will get around and they will gossip about me." (Block off level in the community)</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Oude mensen zijn niet kinderen hoor, je wilt niet weten wat er allemaal om gaat hier."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Nu is mijn volgende vraag kan Haag Wonen hier in de flat een brief laten rondgaan in de volgende weken. Turkse, Marokkaanse, Indiase, Oekraïense, Iraanse, Engelse, Hebreeuwse. Met het verkeer om verkeer te maken in de parkerenplaats te gooien. Nog een taal, Surinaams, (ik me toch logisch is maar een vraag."</li> <li>"Mijn overbuurman in Marokko, die is wel nuttig, die mag ik. Er zitten er ook goede bij."</li> <li>"Ik heb een Marokkaanse schoonzoon, die heeft een handwerkende man die ik ken, heb five schoonzoon." "Ik vind het wel eens om de buurman, en daar ook ben ik wel meer regelgeer gaan kijken over de Marokkanen, hi buurman?"</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to Cross Cultural Understanding &amp; Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language barrier (beyond barrier)</li> <li>Willingness to interact with others</li> <li>Cost of living (economic and political)</li> <li>Willingness to interact with others</li> <li>Willingness to interact with others</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to Cross Cultural Understanding &amp; Communication: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Positive experiences</li> <li>Personal characteristics</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Accessibility</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Geographic proximity of support systems, social networks and community engagement opportunities</li> <li>Reduced accessibility: Disruption of existing support systems and social networks due to urban regeneration (Fang et al., 2016; Haiman et al., 2018; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024; Pan-Harman et al., 2020)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Het is er ook alleen in het Nederlandse DK is te moeilijk voor mij."</li> <li>"Ik durf niet naar de overkant hoor, een pendelbus zou geweldig zijn"</li> <li>Almost all participants of the different workshops want to have shops closer to their building.</li> <li>Multiple participants in the Arabic workshop have noted multiple times that they are alone and feel lonely. Some noted that they don't have Dutch friends</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Ik ben 80 en nog goed hier, maar er zijn genoeg anderen die niet goed hier zijn."</li> <li>"Ik heb zelf gekozen om hier naartoe te komen, ik heb riks te klagen."</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>amenities are geographically far</li> <li>Language</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to accessibility: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Good public transport, cycling lanes and walking routes</li> <li>Food and shops nearby</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Personal Characteristics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Individual factors such as resilience, adaptability, and independence (Purnanarath et al., 2020)</li> <li>Health status and financial resources (Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024, pp. 1-2-7; Pan-Harman et al., 2020, p. 2-30)</li> <li>Socioeconomic disparities also influence access to resources and support (Kleinmans et al., 2018, p. 4; Lewis et al., 2022, p. 3; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024, pp. 1-2-8-9; Pan-Harman et al., 2020, p. 2-30)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Ik vind hebben heel leuk om te doen, maar alles is te duur hier."</li> <li>"Ik wil misschien terug naar Turkije, ik heb geen familie hier. Zorg is hier niet goed, ik word ouder."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Ik ben 80 en nog goed hier, maar er zijn genoeg anderen die niet goed hier zijn."</li> <li>"Ik heb zelf gekozen om hier naartoe te komen, ik heb riks te klagen."</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Personal barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Financial constraints</li> <li>far away family members</li> </ul> </li> <li>Personal facilitators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Health</li> <li>Stability</li> <li>sense of autonomy, independence</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Support Systems</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Formal (professional services) and informal (family, friends, community) support (Kleinmans et al., 2018, p. 4; Lewis et al., 2022, p. 3-7-8; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024, pp. 1-2-5-7; Pan-Harman et al., 2020, p. 2-29-30)</li> <li>The availability and accessibility of these systems (Van Tongeren, 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Ik wil misschien terug naar Turkije, ik heb geen familie hier. Zorg is hier niet goed, ik word ouder."</li> <li>"Vroeger zorgden wij voor elkaar. Als we iemand een dag of twee niet zien dan gaan wij even langs om te kijken of alles goed gaat. Dat konen ik niet meer. Maar tegenwoordig, al die nieuwkomers, al die nieuwkomers, die doen dat niet meer."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Ik ben 80 en nog goed hier, maar er zijn genoeg anderen die niet goed hier zijn."</li> <li>"Ik heb zelf gekozen om hier naartoe te komen, ik heb riks te klagen."</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers linked to support system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>far away family members, lack of support system and/or social networks</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators linked to support system: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>close connection to family (geographically close or close contact)</li> <li>good connection with neighbours</li> <li>way to communicate needs (people who speak the same language)</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Community Empowerment</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Co-creation of knowledge (Fang et al., 2018)</li> <li>Ownership, reclaiming public space (Project for Public Spaces, 2016; Tools, 2017)</li> <li>Community-led processes (Hainaut et al., 2019)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Prior to the Spanish workshop we tried to personally invite Spanish speakers from the building. One resident thanked us for the invitation but refused to participate because: "I don't want to share my personal life with other people. It will get around and they will gossip about me."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Example includes El Karbor: they arranged a bench, plants and planters as a surprise for the residents. During the workshop of El Karbor, we got to decide together with the residents where the bench and planters should go. After a decision is made, we moved the bench and planted the plants together. It got 100% positive reactions from everyone who participated and I immediately complain from a resident who lives above the newly placed bench. After a day, the bench had to be placed inside again, waiting for a new location, due to complaint.</li> <li>In connection with the collaboration between TU Delft students through Thisis Workshop Don Haag Zuidoost and Haag Wonen, which involves various research projects on the residents of Loosdrecht, we wanted to give something back to the residents. In consultation with the final presentation of MSC Architecture course given at Bouwkunde, TU Delft, Haag Wonen collaborated with Sportvereniging Don Haag Zuidoost to make a fun outing for residents at the same time. 10 residents went along and everyone watched in admiration during the hour given by students and asked a lot of questions. Afterwards, they also listened to the students' results and could see themselves reflected in the final products during the presentation.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to community empowerment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Lack of trust in the community</li> <li>Conflict with non-participating residents</li> <li>Lack of procedural support (what happens after complaint?)</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitator to community empowerment: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Collaborative decision making</li> <li>Immediate action (placement)</li> <li>Driving back (knowledge exchange, access to research outcomes, active engagement)</li> <li>Positive affect and enjoyment</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Power-Aware Inclusion</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Shared ownership and viewing stakeholders as experts (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the first times on site, I introduced myself as a student from TU Delft "Oh, ben je zo zier!"</li> <li>"Ik heb riks, ik kan riks klagen."</li> <li>"Ik heb zelf gekozen om hier naartoe te komen, ik heb riks te klagen."</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One participants let me know that she doesn't want to write or draw. She prefers to talk. We wrote down the persons on the sheets for her.</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to power-aware inclusion: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>perceived hierarchy</li> <li>deference</li> <li>Internalized power dynamics</li> <li>perceived influence</li> <li>lack of reflection of community urgency</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Creative, flexible &amp; Engaging Methods</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Utilizing creative methods (e.g., art, storytelling, theatre) can enhance engagement and bridge cultural differences (Shay et al., 2024; Lewis &amp; Purnanarath, 2020)</li> <li>Flexible methods and a willingness to adapt to site-specific needs (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Wat dit het? Ik ben niet ik heb al veel geschreeft."</li> <li>"Dat duurt me te lang, het is knoud hier."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One participants let me know that she doesn't want to write or draw. She prefers to talk. We wrote down the persons on the sheets for her.</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Methods as barriers: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>length of workshop and activities</li> <li>comfort of space</li> </ul> </li> <li>Methods as facilitators: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>flexibility in activities</li> <li>Perceived neat organisation</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Knowledge sharing and upscaling</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Creating publicly accessible resources, presenting findings to policymakers, and working to implement the co-created solutions (Lewis &amp; Haiman, 2020)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Beter is te vertellen, de rest komt wel."</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Heel veel impressies in de foto's."</li> <li>"Heel leuk wat jullie allemaal op de begane grond willen doen, maar ik wil gewoon weten wat er met mijn woning gaat gebeuren."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Coffee moments on site to coordinate initiatives + share experiences and learnings</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Facilitators to knowledge sharing and upscaling: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>connection on site</li> <li>coordination and communication</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Shared understanding</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clear, accessible definitions of co-creation (Shay et al., 2024; Lewis &amp; Purnanarath, 2020)</li> <li>Shared understanding of the project's aims (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>"Beter is te vertellen, de rest komt wel."</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Heel veel impressies in de foto's."</li> <li>"Heel leuk wat jullie allemaal op de begane grond willen doen, maar ik wil gewoon weten wat er met mijn woning gaat gebeuren."</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One participants let me know that she doesn't want to write or draw. She prefers to talk. We wrote down the persons on the sheets for her.</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to shared understanding: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>different priorities of problems to address</li> <li>mismatch in institutional time frames and community urgency</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Competing Priorities</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Stakeholders may prioritise other objectives (e.g., language acquisition) over the project's goals, leading to limited participation or site drop-out (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>During the preliminary design workshop with El Karbor the idea of a collective "DIY" space was mentioned by a few residents. One participant walked away "his words or maybe didn't get going."</li> <li>Only one participant came to the Turkish workshop. "I think people are already preparing for Eid, or Ramadan." "Some people also don't want to participate in anything or let themselves be seen because they have multiple people living in their house." (Reynard, 2018)</li> <li>"Beter is te vertellen, de rest komt wel."</li> <li>"Heel moed, maar dat duurt nog zo lang. Dat maak ik niet meer mee."</li> <li>"Heel leuk wat jullie allemaal op de begane grond willen doen, maar ik wil gewoon weten wat er met mijn woning gaat gebeuren." (during El Karbor presentation)</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>One participants let me know that she doesn't want to write or draw. She prefers to talk. We wrote down the persons on the sheets for her.</li> <li>"Het is heel georganiseerd, net als Nederlandse, goed georganiseerd" About the arabic workshop.</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to addressing competing priorities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>mismatch in institutional time frames and community urgency</li> <li>mismatch in project objectives/different priorities of problems to address</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<b>Social Networks</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strong social connections are consistently identified as an essential element for successful aging in place (Makrinos et al., 2024)</li> <li>Emotional support and practical assistance</li> <li>Social infrastructure (libraries, community centers, cafes), facilitators of social networks (Kleinmans et al., 2018; Lewis et al., 2022; Neeboer &amp; Craam, 2024; Pan-Harman et al., 2020)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Multiple participants in the Arabic workshop have noted multiple times that they are alone and feel lonely. Some noted that they don't have Dutch friends.</li> <li>One participant kindly invited me to dinner with her sometimes and let me know that I am always welcome to visit them. They also noted that they would love some visitors from time to time as they are quite lonely here.</li> <li>Participants of the Arabic workshop all said they don't know other people who speak the same language in their building. When generally inviting residents (2) of the same building to participate in the Spanish workshop, they both said they don't know other Spanish speakers in the building.</li> </ul>	<p><i>Handwritten note:</i> "Ik vind dat onze huiseigenaars niet meer voor de huurders denken... In dat een grote planning dat... * En wanneer gefortijd of een... * Het was het... * Het was het..."</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Observation from Arabic workshop: Participants exchanged telephone numbers with each other. One participant quickly went upstairs to grab a small container of food to get to another participant they met in the workshop</li> </ul>		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Barriers to social networks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>lack of shared language</li> <li>no perceived value/direct community in the building</li> <li>limited opportunities for connection</li> <li>social isolation</li> </ul> </li> <li>Facilitators to social networks: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>good connection with neighbours</li> <li>friendly people to do activities with = participation as opportunity for social connection</li> </ul> </li> </ul>

# Appendix E:

## HREC Approval

Date 12-Jan-2025

Correspondence hrec@tudelft.nl



Human Research Ethics  
Committee TU Delft  
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*Ethics Approval Application: Aging in Place: Inclusive Place-Making for Elderly Residents of The Hague Southwest*  
*Applicant: Spaaij, Jing*

Dear Jing Spaaij,

It is a pleasure to inform you that your application mentioned above has been approved.

Thanks very much for your submission to the HREC which has been approved. We do additionally note/advise the following:

Please make sure that combining elements (e.g. pictures and descriptions of participants) do not increase the risk of re-identification.

In addition to any specific conditions or notes, the HREC provides the following standard advice to all applicants:

- In light of recent tax changes, we advise that you confirm any proposed remuneration of research subjects with your faculty contract manager before going ahead.
- Please make sure when you carry out your research that you confirm contemporary covid protocols with your faculty HSE advisor, and that ongoing covid risks and precautions are flagged in the informed consent - with particular attention to this where there are physically vulnerable (eg: elderly or with underlying conditions) participants involved.
- Our default advice is not to publish transcripts or transcript summaries, but to retain these privately for specific purposes/checking; and if they are to be made public then only if fully anonymised and the transcript/summary itself approved by participants for specific purpose.
- Where there are collaborating (including funding) partners, appropriate formal agreements including clarity on responsibilities, including data ownership, responsibilities and access, should be in place and that relevant aspects of such agreements (such as access to raw or other data) are clear in the Informed Consent.

Good luck with your research!

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