

**'It used to be very pleasant and then there were also – I hate the word – foreigners'
Mixed and changing feelings about neighbourhood change**

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BOOK OF ABSTRACTS

‘It used to be very pleasant and then there were also – I hate the word – foreigners’. Mixed and changing feelings about neighbourhood change

18. Minority Ethnic Groups and Housing

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The changing composition of the population affects the appreciation and reputation of neighbourhoods. In studies about social mix and state-led gentrification the focus is often on the effects for the residents and the neighbourhood of the changes caused by the new built dwellings and their residents. In this paper, based on a qualitative case study in a post-World War II district that has been part of a major urban renewal operation, the effects of the changing inflow of residents in the still existing social rental stock are highlighted in contrast with the changing population as the result of urban restructuring. The perceived change in the inflow of new residents in the social rental dwellings is shared by almost everyone, old residents and newcomers, native Dutch and residents that belong to an ethnic minority. All are critical about the occurring concentration of the latter, based on different considerations. In-depth interviews provide insight in the changing feelings of the residents. Loss of respectability and of shared norms and values of how to live in the neighbourhood play an important role in the critical stance of a part of the, mostly older Dutch native, residents. Also residents with a migrant background criticize the concentration as a negative influence for their integration in Dutch society. Other residents relate negative changes more to class than to ethnicity. A negative assessment of the neighbourhood change however, does not have to have much impact on the behaviour of these residents and their ‘doing’ neighbourhood. The heated debates in society at large – about the Dutch identity and immigration – influence the way how residents cope with their changed assessment of the neighbourhood and feelings of belonging.

Keywords: neighbourhood change, ethnic minorities, belonging, feeling rules, social housing.