



*The City, the Neighbourhood, and the  
Citizen Initiative in the Biezen, Nijmegen*

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# *Neighbourhood, Sustainability and the Citizen Initiative in the Biezen, Nijmegen*

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*“This is where I belong, wherever I go, this is where I belong.*

*I know the people here; I know their thoughts. They will think ‘perhaps’ although hearing ‘yes’. Certainty is fluid, always remember. You can also wait, see where it goes. Good people have many shapes, so do bad ones, they can be okay. In the end it’s fine, they are mine. I belong to them as the soil by the tree. Together we worry, yes, we complain. Change may come after long times. But we can be proud of what we reach together, although we won’t show off*

*This is where I come home, this is where I belong, wherever I go, this is where I belong”*

- Gerard van Maasackers, Dutch regional artist and song text writer, 2017. From: Hier heur ik thuis)

## *Preface*

Since the beginning of my studies in 2015, I developed the following three major interests: sustainability, history of landscape and its architecture and human dynamics in their living environment and their sense of belonging. After my bachelor in Spatial Planning, I tried to learn more about all three directions, which brought me to two different countries, three different cities and three different universities. Looking back, I am immensely grateful for all the lectures I had, the field excursions in and outside the Netherlands and all research methodologies that I got into acquaintance with during my studies. After my first master thesis in landscape history, I hesitated a little to begin my second master degree in human geography, because I feared writing another master thesis. With fear comes, in my case, the postponement of work. That is where I took another six months of courses focussed on sustainability outside of the Netherlands. Therefore, 2020 started off for me with an additional minor in sustainability and innovation in the city of Bergen, Norway. This city aims to be carbon neutral by 2030. Because of this, the city has the most ambitious sustainability goal in the whole of Europe. I actively worked on the courses and projects with stakeholders from Bergen to develop heritage sights into a more accessible sustainable user space. Unfortunately, due to the rise of Covid-19, I had to move back to the Netherlands after only three months. During the first 'intelligent' lock-down in the spring of 2020, I started to walk around in my own neighbourhood and my own city. That was when I decided to learn more about sustainability, human geography and urban planning in the city of Nijmegen.

This determination resulted in an internship at project bureau and social enterprise Lentekracht in the autumn of 2020. There, I learned much about daily sustainability business. I was hired to write my thesis about sustainable citizen initiatives in the city of Nijmegen and simultaneously supervise initiatives within the sustainable neighbourhood participation programme newly launched by the municipality of Nijmegen. Unfortunately during my internship, another infection-wave of Covid-19 hit which caused another lock-down period, leaving me no choice than to focus on projects that had already been executed in 2018-2019 by my colleagues. Nevertheless, I am very content with this thesis and I am grateful for my colleagues' help to shape my thesis research. In particular I would like to thank Franziska Piarowsky for helping me shape my theoretical framework, Dorien Kuster for her advice for conducting on-street conversations and Bram Lamberts for his feedback and support during my internship and thesis writing.

I also want to thank all interviewees and all the people I have met on the streets that were willing to answer my questions and have a conversation with me. I also would like to thank Ashley Price for her feedback on my written chapters. I want to thank my thesis supervisor dr. Olivier Kramsch for making time to discuss every step of my thesis research with me when I needed some guidance or support. Finally, I would like to thank my fiancée Daan Verwaaij for his unconditional trust during this whole journey.

## Summary

In this thesis one citizen initiative in the neighbourhood the Biezen, fitting the My Green Neighbourhood Programme of the city of Nijmegen 2019, is being researched within the context of the neighbourhood, neighbourhood attachment of the participants, the participation process and the use of the concept sustainability. Summarized in the main research question: *'How is the citizen initiative Biezen-Maasstraat in Nijmegen implemented and how does that fit the broader context of sustainable citizen participation programmes?'*

The answers are being explored by interpreting historic sources as newspapers and maps, interviewing the participants of the citizen initiative, the involved professionals and talk to people who live in the streets but who were not involved in the citizen initiative. The context in which a green citizen initiative takes place influences the outcomes and success of the implementation. People who are involved in the green citizen initiative feel attached to the neighbourhood, identify with the importance of sustainability and are able and willing to contribute to sustainability on a local scale. For the maintenance of common greenery, the importance of social cohesion as a motivation to participate and the ability and resources to do this maintenance is crucial.

Within the process of the citizen initiative, professionals should communicate clearly which steps need to be taken to get an idea implemented. Professionals should try to make the process more inclusive to explore possibilities how sustainability can be framed to different groups of people and how different groups of people should be asked to start an initiative. Lastly, the professional should pay attention to the relationships between the participants and the other inhabitants and try to keep the non-involved up to date.

# Table of content

Neighbourhood, Sustainability and the Citizen Initiative in the Biezen, Nijmegen .....	1
Preface.....	4
Summary .....	5
Glossary .....	9
1. Introduction.....	12
1.2. Societal relevance.....	13
1.3. Scientific relevance.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
1.4. Research questions.....	16
1.5. Structure of thesis .....	17
2. Theoretical Framework .....	18
2.1 The neighbourhood.....	18
2.1.1 State of the debate.....	20
2.1.2 Conceptual framework.....	18
2.2 Participation .....	20
2.2.1 State of the debate.....	26
2.2.2 Conceptual framework.....	21
2.3 Sustainability .....	28
2.3.1 State of knowledge.....	28
2.3.2 Conceptual framework.....	30
3. Methodology .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Research strategy; qualitative method & Case study .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
From concepts to variables .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Sampling method: Selection of the initiative .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Data sources .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Policy document and archival material.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Interviews & Street conversations .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Validity and reliability.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Limitations of the method.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
General ethical issues.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
4. <i>Historic, socio-spatial neighbourhood context</i> .....	40
4.1. <i>Situating the neighbourhood within the city of Nijmegen</i> .....	40
4.2 <i>The pre-war Twentieth century developments</i> .....	42
4.3 <i>Post-war in the Twentieth century</i> .....	46
4.3.1 Emergency housing and the Reconstruction Period (1945-1960) .....	46

4.3.2 The downward spiral of the neighbourhood 1970-1990 .....	47
4.3.3. The improvement programs start to turn the tide (1990) .....	49
4.4 <i>The Twenty-first century and the planned future</i> .....	50
5. <i>Individual attachments in the neighbourhood</i> .....	52
5.1 <i>Territorial bonds: Economic Bond</i> .....	52
5.2 <i>Territorial bonds: Functional bond</i> .....	53
5.3 <i>Territorial bonds: Political bonds</i> .....	57
Involvement/engagement with neighbourhood.....	57
Local newspaper .....	57
5.4 <i>Territorial bonds: Social bonds</i> .....	60
Greeting the transient and direct neighbours .....	60
Connections with other people than direct neighbours .....	60
Professionals dealing with the social practice in the neighbourhood.....	61
5.5 <i>Territorial bonds: Cultural bonds</i> .....	62
Differences in time, place and inhabitants: Personal characteristics.....	64
Resident's roots, housing ambitions for the future and family situation.....	64
5.6 <i>Concluding summary of Neighbourhood</i> .....	67
6. The initiative.....	68
6.1 Overview of the process.....	68
6.2 Enabled to.....	71
General Participation Policy in the municipality of Nijmegen.....	71
Participation Policy within the My Green Neighbourhood programme .....	72
The citizen initiative Maas-Biezenstraat and the My Green Neighbourhood programme.....	74
6.3 Asked by .....	75
The general invitation.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
6.4 Like to .....	77
The main motivations to join the initiative .....	77
Positive rewards of contributing to the initiative .....	78
Versatility of this initiative.....	78
6.5 Have to .....	79
Resistance to the initiative .....	79
6.6 Can do.....	81
The initiator .....	81
Range of participants.....	82
6.7 Responded to .....	84
Lentekracht.....	84



Municipality .....	86
The facilitators/professional parties involved responded to the participants <b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>	
6.8 Sub-conclusion .....	90
7. Sustainability .....	68
7.1 Thinking about sustainability.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Defining sustainability .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Sustainable adjustments in lifestyle .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Importance of sustainability.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
7.2 Considering sustainability within the context of city and neighbourhood ...	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
7.2.1 The city .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
7.2.2 Sustainability in the neighbourhood .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
8. Discussion, Conclusion, Recommendations .....	68
Sustainability Paradigm & Neighbourhood Context .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Recommendation for professionals .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
The process.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Literature .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Sources .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Source List of figures .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Attachment 1 - Operationalising the concepts into variables.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
CLHEAR-Model .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Neighbourhood Attachment .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Attachment 2 - From concept to sensitizing concept .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
CLHEAR-Model .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Neighbourhood Attachment .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Attachment 3 – Topic List for Interviews .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Algemeen.....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Attachment 4 – Topic list for street conversations .....	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>

Figure 1: Conceptual scheme of neighbourhood attachment .....	19
Figure 2: CLEAR-model .....	22
Figure 3: The CLHEAR-Model, de CLEAR-model complemented with the SDT-Model .....	25
Figure 4: Environment equally important	Figure 5: Environment more important .....
Figure 6: Sustainability conceptualisation for participants of the citizen initiative .....	30
Figure 1: Situating the Biezen within Nijmegen's municipal borders	<b>Fout! Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Figure 2: Birds-eye view of the Roman city Ulpia Noviomagus, reconstruction of 160-170 A.D.....	<b>Fout!</b>
	<b>Bladwijzer niet gedefinieerd.</b>
Figure 3: Situating the neighbourhood on the cadastral map form 1870 .....	41
Figure 4: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood dating from 1930.....	43
Figure 5: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood in 1944 .....	45
Figure 6: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood from 1960 .....	47
Figure 7: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood 1990.....	48
Figure 7: Tweet of the Wester, the start of the citizen initiative.....	74
Figure 8: Map for the distribution of invitations to join the citizen initiative .....	75
Figure 9: Invitation letter to join the citizen initiative.....	75

## *Glossary*

**Plant bed** (Plantvak in Dutch): small field constructed in former pavement to plant flowers in order to add greenery in the streets. These places for plants, cannot be called planters because there is no raised edge nor bottom to keep the plants together. These patches are the result of removing pavement tiles and adding some loam.

**Tree bed** (Boomspiegel in Dutch): mini garden underneath trees. Right underneath trees placed on pavements, some tiles are removed to give the tree some space to grow. In the municipality of Nijmegen, a tree bed can be adopted, meaning that inhabitants can plant flowers and small plants in this tree bed.

**Initiator:** someone who cause a process or action to begin. In this thesis the finder of the initiative, having the first idea for greening the neighbourhood, spreading her idea, causing the citizen initiative to start.

**Green advisor** (Groenadviseur in Dutch): an employee of the Municipality of Nijmegen responsible for calculating, researching and planning new parts and bits of greenery within the municipal borders. This employee is an expert in plant and tree species and their needs.

**MGPN, My Green Neighbourhood programme** (Mijn Groene Wijk or MGW in Dutch): municipal funded programme to encourage inhabitants to start green/sustainable citizen initiatives.

**Neighbourhood director** (Wijkregisseur in Dutch): an employee of the Municipality of Nijmegen responsible for communication between inhabitants and the municipality on topics related to public space. One director has either some neighbourhoods or one city district to be responsible for. In this case the neighbourhood director is responsible for the whole city district of Oud-West.

**Ribbon Village** (Lintdorp in Dutch): settlement or village, build along one road, river or dyke. All houses are adjacent to the main street, causing the parcels to flow as rectangles in the opposite direction of the street (Bont, 2004).

**Place attachment:** the way people are connected to their environment and the value they connect to those places. It can occur on every geographical scale. Attachment consist of factors that transform a space into a place for people. People don't have to know others to stay in a nice way at a certain place and to connect with their environment. When it does, the connection of people with the place, defines their relationship with others that experience similar attachment to place. With to intense contact between neighbours and place, irritations and fights can occur (Reijnders & Reinders, 2010, p.19).

**Social cohesion:** relationships between people. It is based on societal solidarity nabuurschap en hulpbetoon. That eventually has results in the cohesion between people and place, but not place dependent (Reijnders & Reinders, 2010, p.19).

**Sense of place:** based on stories that enrich expectations that people construct to a certain place by (un)consciously weighing the 'clues' of space. (Reijnders & Reinders, 2010, p.20)

**Place making:** The idea that place is creatable by professionals by designing an urban space and spreading a coherent vision for the space, using the power of people to spread these ideas (Reijnders & Reinders, 2010, p.24).

**Place branding:** Using visions and strategies to frame places in an attractive way, aiming to attract the right people to the right place.

**Public trust of place:** the difference in feelings of belonging and behaviour influenced by movement of the daily patterns of different groups of people. This movement of groups defines the experience of space. For example a busy street is busy between the rush hours and in the remaining time is quite because the movements of groups of people differ in the time of day (Reijnders & Reinders, 2010, p.21).

**Workers District/neighbourhood:** City district or neighbourhood where low educated people live that work in factories

**Workers Houses:** Small cheap homes made by factory owner or owned by public housing company

# *1. Introduction*

In the period 1900-2010, the Dutch population has more than tripled in size, from 5.1 million to 16.6 million (CBS, 2010). To fit all these people in a nation that only is 41.000 km<sup>2</sup> big, cities faced a century of urbanisation of the surrounding rural areas. These cities developed neighbourhood after neighbourhood, tightly packed with the extra millions of Dutch citizens in the rapidly growing nation. Nowadays, 91% of the Dutch inhabitants live in urbanised areas (Landenweb, 2017). Since two thirds of Europeans live in cities, the quality of life in cities has become more and more important (Green Capital, 2018-I).

During the same period, consumerism on a societal scale was on the rise, just as the corresponding industrialised production of products and goods. In the last sixty years, the revelation of its downside became more noticeable. The signs of depletion of natural resources, global warming and climate change all point toward the exhaustion of the earth. The word sustainability became more apparent in the world of policymaking, pointing at green policies, adapting and mitigating the climate crisis (Caradonna 2016).

Another trend was individualism. In the Netherlands, this individualist notion of a society where the individual has the power, but also the responsibility to actively influence their own lives became known as the "participation society" (Speech from the throne, 2013). Before, local governments were only obliged to inform residents in case spatial developments in their surroundings were planned (Gemeente.nu, 2018). After the municipal elections in 2014, municipalities included citizen participation on a large scale in their coalition agreements because they wanted to be ready to anticipate on active citizens that wanted to be involved in developments in their direct environment (NRC, 2014).

At the beginning of my studies in 2015, the Environmental law (Omgevingswet) would take effect on the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2017 but was instead postponed to the 1<sup>st</sup> of January 2022 (Trouw, 2021). This one law will include all existing laws and regulatory measures concerning spatial developments. Within this new law, citizen participation will become mandatory in plans, visions and project decision-making. The assumption made is that people who use the space want qualitative developments and are willing to invest time to reach that. With this citizen involvement, a higher capacity for follow-up trajectories is expected (MIM, 2016).

These three trends of urbanisation, participation and sustainability, all come together in a neighbourhood. Assessing Dutch neighbourhoods, general information of buildings, infrastructure and the background of its inhabitants can explain much about the past and present of these areas. Every street, house and family living there have their own standards and beliefs about the way they want to live their life. For sustainability and transformations, researchers also focus on the neighbourhood, because all actions that can be done locally contribute to sustainability on a global scale (Caradonna, 2014). However how does this all takes shape in a citizen participation context?

The purpose of this case study research is to understand one sustainable citizen initiative in a historically rich neighbourhood and see how sustainability takes shape in such a context. At this stage of the research, the sustainable neighbourhood citizen initiative will generally be defined as a form of citizen participation in which the citizens initiate and implement their own ideas to improve the quality of life and contribute to an enhanced sustainability of their own neighbourhood.

## *1.2. Societal relevance*

In the last months, countries around the world faced freedom restrictions applied by governments to prevent the Coronavirus from spreading. What became visible in the last months is that relations between inhabitants and governments were put on edge. In the last month for example, the breach of the American Capitol by Trump supporters occurred during the ceremonial counting of the votes (CNN, 2021). Also, in the Netherlands, riots against the curfew unleashed violence on an unprecedented scale (NOS, 2021). All this rebellion arises from displeasure and distrust in the authorities fuelled by the social bubbles which are reinforced by the current social media (Schimmelpenninck, 2020).

These escalations of violence and distrust can occur because people live more and more individualistic, focussed on their own social networks. Especially proposed changes in space can have great impact on social relations because these developments or adjustments have a direct effect on the inhabitants' lives. Governmental blue prints lead to complex and confusing matter for the people who are not used to it. The key is to interweave these governmental, institutional vision with the usage and wishes of inhabitants, since both practices leave their marks in the actual spatial situation (Reijndorp & Reinders, 2010). Having the actual conversation, although - especially in these unpredictable times - it is one of the most difficult talks to have, is more crucial than it ever was, but where to start?

The municipality of Nijmegen started with the sustainability dialogue after the city was awarded with the European Green Capital Award in 2018 (European Commission, 2020). The municipality cleared budgets and used the social networks in place to catalyse green initiatives throughout the city and later on used the budgets to implement green ideas raised by inhabitants (Green Capital, 2018-II). This municipality attitude towards citizen initiatives fits the societal attention for sustainability and citizen participation (Salverda & Pleijte, 2015), but is the programme effective?

### *1.3. Scientific relevance*

#### The case: Participation

Participation means active involvement. Politics and professionals influenced by post-positivism and neo-liberal discourses decided that as a society we should “move away from a professional orientation that seeks to establish and act in the public interest at a strategic scale to one in which citizenry is situated at the centre of decision making (Lord, et al. 2017). This means that the citizen should be active and involved. But what is the fundamental meaning behind this? Do citizens have the knowledge and capabilities to make thought out decisions (Tonkens, 2009)? The general assumption is that citizens have the democratic right to be involved, but the quality of the involvement depends on how the process is organised.

From a policy- and political perspective this process receives much attention. Do governmental bodies only act on what is legally necessary, or how do they organise these processes (Salverda & Pleijte, 2015)? Is participation a cheap solution for urban planning in a neo-liberal world (Schinkel, 2012)? What conditions should be met before a process can be named successful (Lowndes, et al. 2006)? From a policy perspective, many reports have been written about best practices for municipalities and the steps that should be taken. Writing policy has proven to be difficult, since the citizen approach is focussed on finding solutions, whereas governments tend to concentrate on the legal restrictions applying to the place. Participation should renew democratic processes in the form of initiatives in order to make democracy work, but until now the renewal could not keep up with the development of engaged citizens (Schinkel, 2012; Van den Berg, 2013).

From a social science approach researches are interested if the involvement reflects society. They ask questions like: ‘Who is involved and by whom? Are particular citizens equally involved (Tonkens 2009)?’ This critique is justified because citizen participation in many cases face usual suspects and is often not fully inclusive (Tonkens, 2014). The why to these questions is approached by the discipline of psychology and mentalist and individualist traditions (Lewicka, 2009). From the cultural theories used in geography standpoint more attention is paid to the (spatial) context. The combination of both perspectives most-likely provides a more comprehensive understanding about the participation processes. As a geographer I believe that the socio-spatial context deeply influences a participation process. However, what personally interests me are the individual motivations. In this research I will combine these views to see if I am able to get a deeper understanding about the participation process.

#### The context: The Neighbourhood

How do you shape context? What do you see in the spatial dimension? For centuries spatial professionals like architects and urbanists, later land use and regulatory planners and landscape architects, tried to construct the city that would meet a higher quality of living standards. Wide scale strategic plans based on conceptualisations about enhancing the quality of life in the urban environment were constructed. Nowadays, we perceive these activities as harming for the physical, mental, social and economic well-being of the inhabitants due to three major critiques. The planners were unable to understand and respond to small scale developments, as were they too technocratic because professionals made land-use planning an occasion for the elite (Lord, et al., 2017). Researchers nowadays refer to these planning activities as megalomaniac and revolting towards the inhabitants who were attached to their environs (Frijhoff, 2010). Examples of concepts that were being projected on residential areas were bringing the strengths of the regional town into the city (Howard), building compact cities to save outer nature (Le Corbusier) and after

the Second World War creating low-density high-rise buildings cities with light and air but planning for social control in neighbourhood and the neighbourhood unit (Bos, Tijen & Stam-Beese). The neighbourhood and public space were seen as the meeting place and leisure space in which a sense of community could be build. However, in practice these public spaces designed for inhabitants were taken over by the private car (Reijnders & Reindorp, 2010).

Only during the Corona lock-downs in the spring of 2020 it occurred that people took back their streets. Some cities banned cars in some streets. Experts need to rethink urban life and enhance the quality of it. What is a 21<sup>st</sup> century urban lifestyle? How to incorporate the demand for energy and climate adaptation? How to live a more active lifestyle? The neighbourhood once again is seen as the cornerstone to adapt the city to climate change and build a resilient social capacity. Now it is the citizens turn to contribute to the plans with their local know-how (Hajer, et al., 2020).

This time, inhabitants and experts need to work together. We have seen in the past that expert-led conceptualisation of space does not create the city inhabitants long for. Experts need to construct building blocks which inhabitants can adjust, shape and learn to own (Reijndorp & Reinders, 2010). The urban space as an object for professional planning, with the narratives of inhabitants creating the longed-for common identity in the neighbourhood. But what if the expert cannot project his ideas on space anymore, what would then become the role of an expert? Does every neighbourhood require different strategies? How should a neighbourhood be defined? And if the conceptualisation of place attachment is still relevant, what can we learn from it in the 21<sup>st</sup> century?



## 1.4. Research questions

All of the questions mentioned above are way too extensive to answer in a master thesis. In this research I will therefore focus on one citizen initiative in one sustainability participation programme in the one neighbourhood in one city. Here, inhabitants started a sustainable citizen initiative reclaiming part of the public space in their former workers district neighbourhood, turning pavement into greenery. This case will reflect the dialogue between neighbours and professionals and explore chances for sustainability thinking on a neighbourhood scale. This brings us to the following main question:

*How is the citizen initiative Biezen-Maasstraat in Nijmegen implemented and how does that fit the broader context of sustainable citizen participation programmes?*

This question can be divided into the following three main sub questions:

1. *What makes this neighbourhood special?*
2. *Who and why are people engaged in this citizen initiative?*
3. *How is the concept of sustainability related to the spatial context of the neighbourhood and the city and how does that affect the participants involved?*

As recommended by Cresswell (2007), these sub questions are divided into the following smaller sub questions, allowing me to switch scales during my analysis in order to understand the case more thoroughly:

- 1.1. What is the historical narrative of the neighbourhood in terms of environmental and social characteristics?
- 1.2. What are current characteristics of the neighbourhood?
- 1.3. How do inhabitants think about their personal attachment to the place in terms of their personal characteristics?
- 1.4. Are the inhabitants attached to space in an economic way?
- 1.5. How do the inhabitants use the space and its functionalities?
- 1.6. In what ways are inhabitants involved and engaged or politically active?
- 1.7. What kind of social structures are in place in the neighbourhood?
- 1.8. What is the neighbourhood culture?
- 2.1 What did the citizen initiative process looked like?
- 2.2 What did the participants expect from the participation process?
- 2.3 What motivated the participants to join the participation process?
- 2.4 How did they experience the participation process?
- 2.3 How could the outcomes of the participation contribute to social networks and the spatial environment?
- 3.1 What definition of sustainability was important for participants during the process?
- 3.2 How do they think about their own neighbourhood and their city in terms of sustainability?
- 3.3 What is the importance of sustainability thinking for a greening initiative in a neighbourhood?

## *1.5. Structure of thesis*

After the introduction, the second chapter will elaborate on applied theories and the conceptual framework in which Neighbourhood attachment bonds by Lupi, et al. (2007) and neighbourhood definition by Galster (2001). The CLEAR- and SDT-model and sustainability conceptualisations are the main focus. The fourth, fifth, sixth and seventh chapter reflect the outcomes of the case study. In chapter four the socio-spatial-historical context is explored while the fifth chapter describes individual attachments to the neighbourhood. The sixth chapter explains the process of the citizen initiative and the seventh chapter is about the paradigms and practices of sustainability among participants in the participation process and within the city. The eighth chapter concludes the research, recommend possible improvements for the support of similar citizen initiatives and contextualises the research outcomes into the broader field of study.

## *2. Theoretical Framework*

This thesis exists of three theoretical themes that are researched in and approached by several scientific fields and traditions; the neighbourhood, participation and sustainability. In the following paragraphs I will elaborate per theme which concept(s) I will use and position them in the state of the debate per topic. The first theme is the neighbourhood, followed by participation and end with sustainability.

### *2.1 The neighbourhood*

#### *2.1.1 Conceptual framework*

Similar to the geographers Tineke Lupi and her colleagues (2007) and Karien Dekker (2007) I assume that neighbourhood attachment is an important factor for people to participate in a citizen initiative. Dekker defined it as social attachment and the bonds people feel in relation to spatial-emotional immediate living environment. She connected these to traditional variables as socioeconomic status, ethnicity, socio-demographics and housing characteristics and to variables important in social capital theory thus social networks, trust in people, trust in the government and shared norms. Lupi, et al. (2007) conceptualised neighbourhood attachment in different bonds, in which she recognized the territorial bond and differences in time, space and inhabitants.

The territorial bond consists of the economic bond, functional bond, social bond, political bond and cultural bond. The economic bond forms when people generate their income in the neighbourhood or in the immediate surrounding. The functional bond arises when the physical landscape contains facilities like schools, care institutions, shops, sport- and leisure facilities etc. and the inhabitant uses these facilities on a regular basis. Then there is the social bond. When people do know their neighbours, the relation between those neighbours can differ greatly. For instance, do these neighbours greet each other, do they know each other's faces, or names? These three bonds influence the political bond, which contains the (political) engagement of inhabitants. The stages of engagement differ from passively reading the local newspaper to feeling responsible for the direct living environment to actively try to mobilize neighbours to solve a problem in the neighbourhood. The last neighbourhood bond, the cultural one is about the identity of the neighbourhood and if this identity fits in the municipal opinion and public opinion about the neighbourhood. The public opinion or neighbourhood culture is often influenced by the traditional values as demographic numbers, ethnicity and statistics on social class, which were used by Dekker (2007).

These traditional values and part of the model by Lupi et al. (2007) are also overlapping by economist of the Urban Institute of Wayne University George Galster (2001) in his aim to define the neighbourhood by selecting specific characteristics that divide one neighbourhood from another. On the one hand he distinguishes the physical décor consisting of structural characteristics like residential buildings, infrastructure, non-residential buildings as factories and public services, topographical and environmental characteristics as proximities to centre functions and mobility hubs, pollution, nature and water bodies. On the other hand he distinguishes the social characteristics with the demographic, class and political context, the theatre in which personal bonds start to exist. Those personal bonds are thus represented by the territorial bonds and the difference in time space and inhabitants according to the model of Lupi, et al. (2007). Which consist of inhabitants, their age, gender, social class, household composition, house

ownership, work-care ratio, having kids, the time people stayed and are planning to stay in the neighbourhood and their personal geographic roots. The differences in time, place and inhabitants are more related to the social context in which the inhabitants live their life. Therefore, by exploring the bonds people have, needs to be done in the broader context of the neighbourhood, including the historical development of the place, the political problems and visions for the area and the narratives that exists among inhabitants (Reijndorp & Reinders, 2010).

To cover all those important characteristics to get an understanding of the neighbourhood I divided the characteristics into two chapters. In chapter 4 I will elaborate on the historical (Reijndorp & Reinders, 2010), the physical décor (Galster, 2001) and the traditional social values (Dekker, 2007). Followed by chapter 5 in which I will explore the individual attachments to the neighbourhood. The overview of variables and aspects of the individual bonds are schematically displayed in Figure 1 (Lupi, et al., 2007).

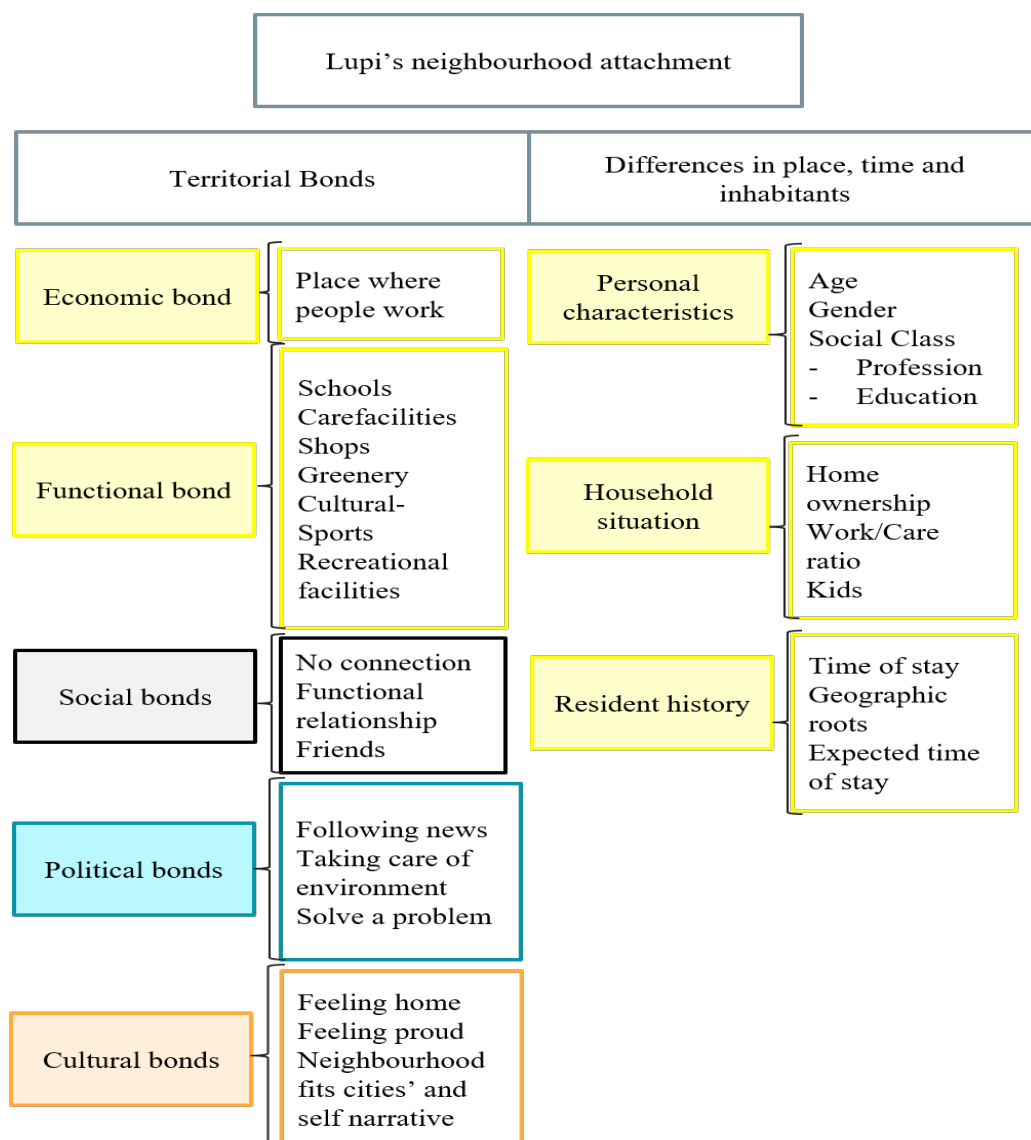


Figure 1: Conceptual scheme of neighbourhood attachment (Personal interpretation of the text of Lupi et al., 2007).

### 2.1.1 State of the debate

In the conceptual frameworks I build on three different authors with three different interpretations of the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood and especially place attachment from the individuals lies in the academic interest of sociology, environmental psychology, human geography, urban planning and philosophy (Lewicka, 2010). Due to this interdisciplinarity scientist have extensive debates how to research the space of neighbourhood because the word is used to point out an area in the town where people find a place of residence or to point out that something is close or near (Oxford Dictionary, 2020). This definition touches among others, two important geographical conceptualisations; area, better known as geographic scale and the mental relations inhabitants have with it, in this research referred to as place.

Starting with the area, the term neighbourhood is quite ambiguous because the geographic scale of neighbourhood can differ substantially from a single square or playground surrounded by a housing block, a street, and can be used for an entire sector of the city (Galster, 2001). Apart from the size neighbourhoods can differ in topographical and environmental circumstances and also in locality, atmosphere and spatial qualities (Hajer, et al., 2020). Spatial qualities are often defined by professionals examining the area, like planners and architects, basing themselves on statistics and maps, which is referred to by criticist as 'governmental approach' (Cresswell, 2008; Mayol, 2010).

As an answer or different way to conceptualise the lived space, criticist often refer to Lefebvre who argue that the usage of space arouses a certain ownership which reinvent space and spatial relations continuously, making defining the neighbourhood impossible due to uncertainty about ever changing relationships of inhabitants and their public space (Lefebvre, 1996; Mayol, 2010)

In quantitative studies the importance and predictive factors of this attachment are often researched. The predictors cover the fields of socio-demography, social connections and environmental circumstances and can be different in their predictive value for different geographic scales (Lewicka, 2010). These identified values give an overview of involved factors that are necessary for one individual to attach to a place. In qualitative studies the recognition of the bonds with place are far more important.

The research in the field of geography started with combining the physical landscape and the meaning of the place for people, a shift from men as rational objects to men with feelings, experiences and beliefs that they could attach to certain spaces (Cresswell, 2008). Later on this approach changed into a power-relation that people have with space. Places were seen as 'created things and tend to reflect or mediate the society that produces them.' (Cresswell, 2008, p.136). Meanings of dominant groups were reflected by the spatial order of materials, the public image a certain place has and the uses of the place. Taking this a step further, the material in the physical landscape is a social-political construct that excludes and displaces people that deflect the norms of the elite. Nowadays other geographers argue on a philosophical level that the reactionary behaviour of place is the result of telling the one-sided history of the place that crystalizes the 'we' and 'the other' narrative, as theorized by economic geographer Doreen Massey (Massey, 1995). When place is seen as a result of global processes, the narrative becomes more inclusive and the displacement of place can be overcome.

## *2.2 Participation*

### *2.2.2 Conceptual framework*

The strength of participation research is to combine the two perspectives. In this study the citizen perspective is the starting point to research the feasibility of a city-wide social network. Since the municipality wants to organize a program to evolve this network, preconditions need to be right. By combining the governmental focussed CLEAR-model, incorporating all recommendations for governmental organisation of a participation process and the more specific individual pivotal motivations of citizens to join the movement, insight can be given in the practice of the municipality of Nijmegen and where professional support can be improved.

#### *CLEAR-model*

The CLEAR-model has been developed as a tool to help policy makers enhance citizen engagement by investigating and understanding factors that support or hold back citizen engagement (Lowndes et al., 2006). This approach to participation has three advantages for this research.

1. The model tries to fill the gap between the world of policy makers and the experiences of citizens, by helping the policy makers understand citizen processes, which shows participation from both governmental and citizen perspectives.
2. The model is developed to diagnose participation practices, which enables me to place involved individuals in the broader trajectory of the citizen initiative.
3. It summarizes many theories upon effective participation projects. By bringing traditional socio-economic arguments, social capital and community building and the power and impact of participation together in this model, the overview and the value of diagnosing the participation trajectory is very useful. The CLEAR-model is an acronym to bring other research fields together in the words can, like, enabled, asked and responded to.

#### *Can do*

This section summarizes the argument that people engage when they feel that their skills and resources are handy and needed. The range of skills can differ from hands-on abilities like mowing grass, to writing letters. Resources include material and immaterial objects that have an added value to implement the participation process. The influence of skills and resources evolved from research outcomes that showed participants with a high socio-economic status do participate more often than people with a low socio-economic status. Skills and resources can be applied for individuals as well as for the community.

#### *Like to*

Studies show that when people feel part of a community, they are more likely to engage. The social capital theory, where formal and informal social activities contribute to a norm of trust in the community and creates a sense of togetherness, identity, loyalty and responsibility among its inhabitants. The presence of a neighbourhood community determines the willingness of people to participate, however the actual participation is always dependent on the individual life choices.

### *Enabled to*

When there are groups and organisations, these network organisations are likely to organise and facilitate participation programmes. The assemblies can ask their members what they think about a topic or can ask them to help with the development of policy.

### *Asked to*

When people are asked in person if they would like to participate, they are more likely to do so. People tend to be more likely to participate if the one responsible for the participation process is asking them to join in person. Next to this, the kind of question in itself is important. Participation forms and the kind of meetings are an important factor as well, to establish an inclusive mix of inhabitants.

### *Responded to*

People are and will stay involved for a longer period of time, when their perception is that their input matters and changes the plans. The governing party needs to listen, and make sure the view of the people has been taken into account in a serious manner.

In the following Figure 2, the categories and content of the CLEAR-model are summarized:

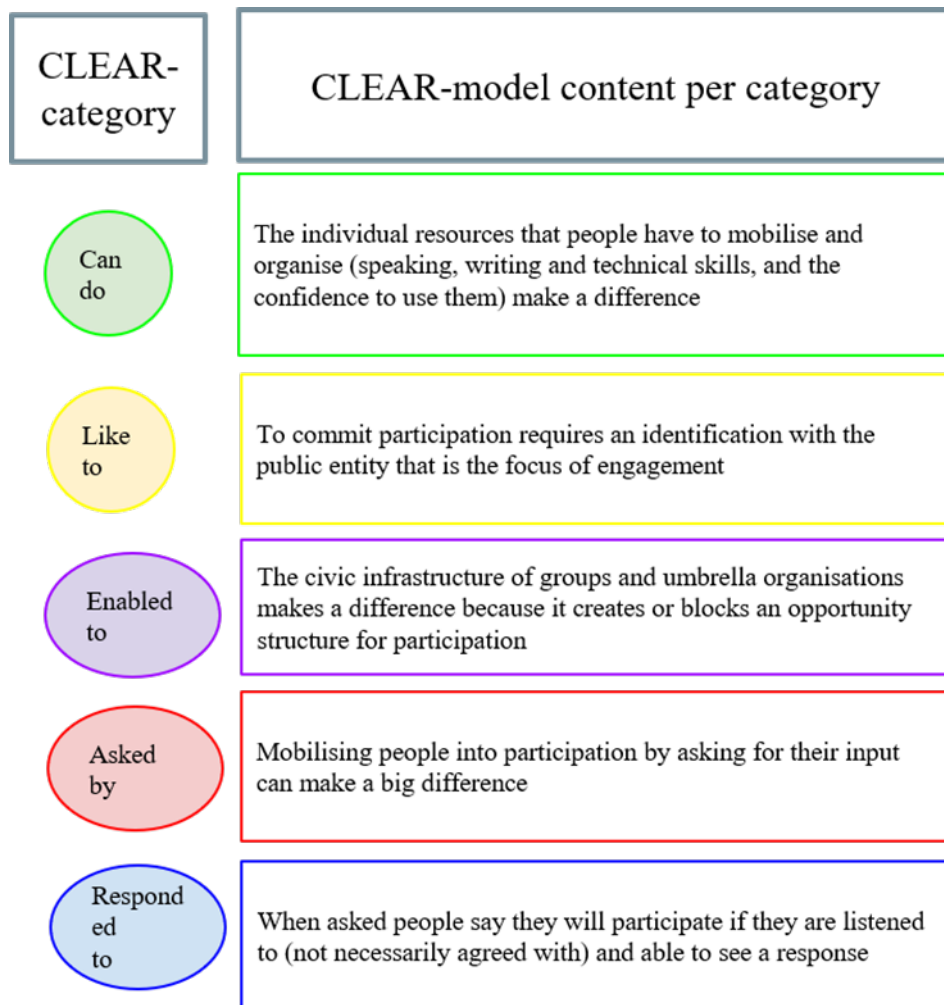


Figure 2: CLEAR-model (Lowndes, et al. 2006)

There are several limitations of this model to be used in this research. This model is developed for governments to get insight in the changes they can make to encourage people to participate. For example, the responded to chapter is not relevant in this research because the citizen initiatives are meant to be implemented, and the voices of people therefore do matter. The second shortcoming is the lack of individual decision making, like motivations and personal thoughts. The municipality might not change them, but they are in the end the decisive factors for people to join the movement.

### SDT-model

The CLEAR-model has not taken the individual decisions into account, whereas the SDT is developed to get an understanding of the individual motivations that people have. SDT is the abbreviation for self-determination-theory. This theory has been developed by psychologist Deci and Ryan in the nineteen eighties and is largely applied in environmental psychology and participation projects for sport and health programmes but also in citizen participation projects. The main assumption made is that behaviour and actions are causally related to motivations (Deci & Ryan, 2012; Schmidhuber, 2019).

Motivations develop because people want to meet their three most fundamental psychological needs; being competent, autonomous and related to others. These fundamentals are explained in paragraph 2.4. These three fundamental needs influence the kind of motivation people have. Motivations can be generally divided into three main categories: autonomous motivation, controlled or promoted motivation, or amotivation. The most determining factor for the kind of motivation to develop is the social context of the individual (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

In this research the main focus is the social context and the development of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations as an influence for having autonomous motivation or controlled or promoted motivation. For the categorization of intrinsic and extrinsic motivations two main assumptions are made. First, people are active and engaged in their environment, second, people have the ability to internalize new knowledge and ideas of others. Intrinsic motivations are defined as actions which give an inherently satisfactory feeling, which sustains the satisfaction until the goal is reached. On the contrary, extrinsic motivations have separated actions from goals, here either the behaviour to reach the goal, or the goal itself is regulated by external agents. There are several types of extrinsic motivations. The first is external regulation, in which either the goal is mandatory or the trajectory to reach the goal is controlled by external agents. Second, the introjection, behaviour feels like an autonomous decision, but is the product of fully internalized norms and values by external parties. Third, identified regulation, in this type of extrinsic motivation understands the individual the importance of and accepts that certain behaviour is needed (Deci & Ryan, 2012).

These internal and external motivations are influenced by the individual orientation of the environment. If people see their environment as a threat to their personal goals, they are less motivated to act in a certain way. The extent to which people perceive their environment to be supportive is divided in three steps. The autonomy orientation in which the individual feels supported, the controlled orientation in which the individual is slightly bounded to act and the impersonal orientation in which the individual sees themselves as a victim of their environment (Deci & Ryan, 2012).



Also, the individual aspirations are important. People who will act to improve their image or their social status, are less likely to succeed than people who want to be involved because they can grow personally or see the activity as an opportunity to build personal relationships (Deci & Ryan, 2012)

#### 2.1.4 The CLHEAR-Model, the CLEAR-model complemented with the SDT-model

As said earlier, the SDT can complement the CLEAR-model by giving more detailed information over the factors that need to be in place for a participation model. The 'can do' factor is quite complete in itself. The 'like to' section can generate much more detailed information about the willingness of the individual to contribute to such a project and give insight into the intrinsic motivations that people can have. In the SDT it is shown that not only intrinsic motivations play a part in the motivations of people. Therefore, a 'have to' section is added to the clear model. This 'have to' section gives insight into the social pressure or the responsibility that people might take for the concept. A citizen initiative tends to be a bigger success when people are enabled to participate, but when people really experience a problem, there are changes people try to find a solution on their own. When it comes to sustainable citizen initiatives, the action doesn't really come from a problem but rather a change in the environment which is desirable. In this case, the 'enabled to' section seems to be relevant. As Lowndes et al. and ... argued, people are not likely to take action when they are not asked to. The people that ask you to participate might differ. When the mayor ask you to do something, people tend to feel honoured which influences their willingness to participate. It can also help if trustful neighbours or respected neighbours ask a possible participant because the relation is proximal and people feel the need to contribute because the respected other does so as well. Therefore the 'asked to' section is elaborated upon with the SDT as well. The 'responded to' factor is the responsibility of the government. It is relevant in a governmental process analysis if this condition is met, and for people it is very important their effort is appreciated. In the following Figure (3) the concepts are schematically positioned.

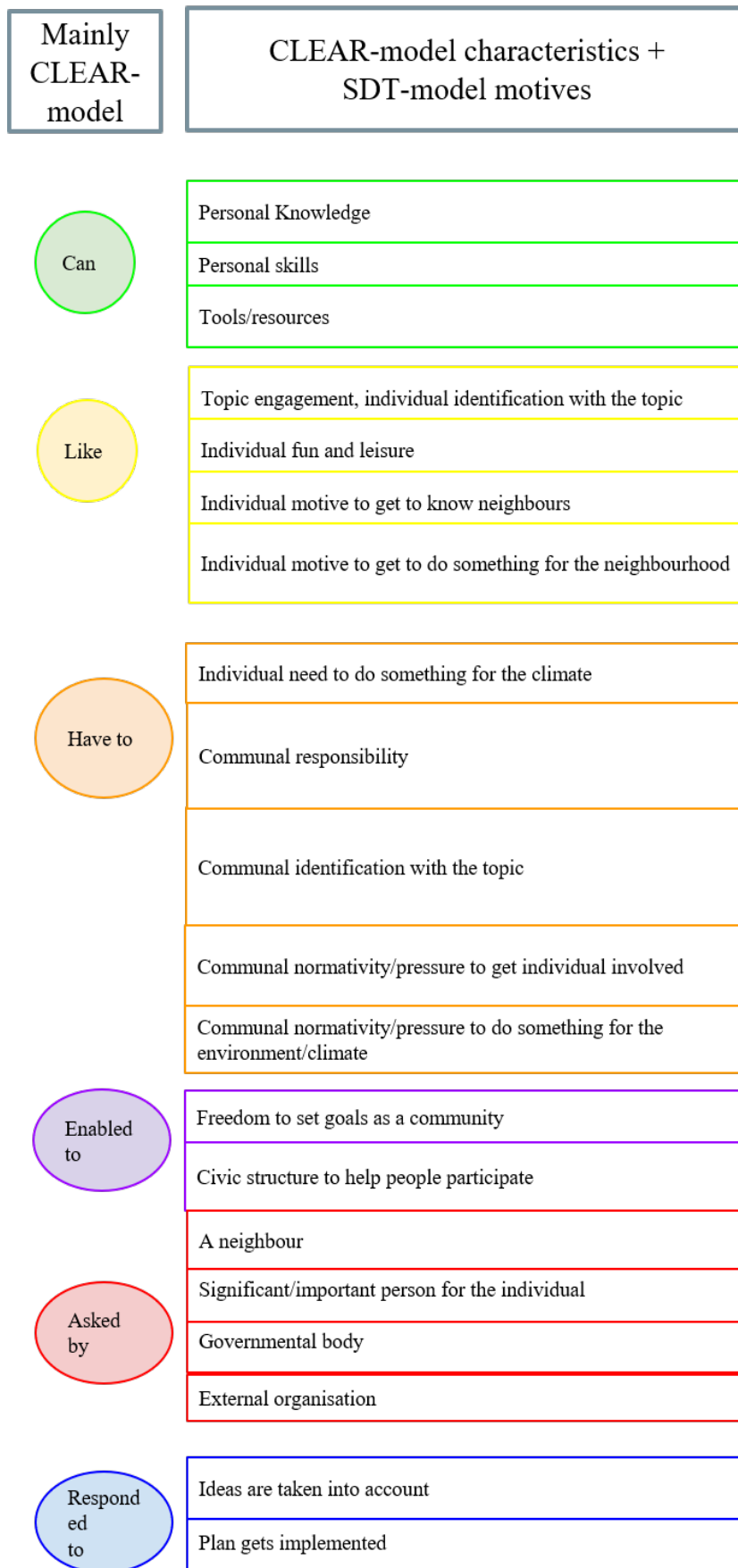


Figure 3: The CLHEAR-Model, de CLEAR-model complemented with the SDT-Model (Personal combination of the CLEAR model from Lowndes, et al. and the SDT-model from Deci & Ryan, 2012)

### 2.2.1 State of the debate

Before the 1960's participation was institutionalized. In 1969, Arnstein constructed the Participation Ladder to give inhabitants a greater share in decision-making processes. Since then, participation gets much attention among researchers (Duțu & Diaconu, 2017). The perspectives of research cover a wide range, even as the definitions that participation got (Involve, 2005). Nowadays citizen participation is researched in the fields of public administration, geography, environmental psychology and sociology (Hafer & Ran, 2016). The first fundamental question raised is do the opportunities and threats of participation outweigh each other to proceed with this approach to public decision-making?

The quick answer is yes. The democratic value of public decision-making and the positive outcomes participation can generate is of greater importance than the critiques. Even in China there are experiments with citizen participation because of the positive impact it can have (Li, 2020). The involvement of more active citizens who can contribute to wicked problems in public space and the evolving networks among them, can lead to better in public decision-making (Duțu & Diaconu, 2017; Involve, 2005), this is also referred to as the identity-establishing and community developing strengths of participation (Saad-Sulonen & Horelli, 2010). Individuals in this line of thought, have the skills and ambitions to contribute to this process in a meaningful way and possess crucial local knowledge (Hafer & Ran, 2016). This fundamental assumption of having the skill, was contested widely, but eventually seemed of less important to researchers and policy makers than the opportunity of giving inhabitants the chance to be involved in matters about their own living space (Załączna, 2018).

Classical approaches to citizen participation have a governmental perspective or administrator's perspective and are focused on power distribution. Next to Arnsteins Participation Ladder another classical work that is often referred to is the theory developed by D.H. Smith (1983) who described the governmental procedures to either consult, involve and inform the citizens (Mueller, et al., 2018). In the Dutch policy, this perspective is copied and added upon into the five stages ranging from: informing the citizen, consulting the citizen, asking the citizen for advice, co-produce with the citizen or the citizen may co-decide and thus jointly govern. In that field researchers continued to explore possible tools and methods for governments to organise their participation practice in a better way. The knowledge from these studies is used to advise governments on how to fit the government into a more governance approach (Hafer & Ran, 2016).

The exploration of governmental tools is crucial for designing a fitting participation process. A tailored design per participation process is recommended, because by screwing up, the participants will lose their willingness to get involved again and the impact of bad practice is likely to be worse than none (Involve, 2005). In the literature there are four major remarks or critiques on participation practices. The first is the budget. The financial side of participation is often critiqued, from participation being a budget cut of neo-liberal governments to being too expensive and time-consuming (Mueller, et al., 2018). Secondly, the involved people in the participation processes are not always a correct representation of society. A decision impacting a underrepresented group can affect them deeply (Tonkens, 2014; Involve, 2005; Mueller, 2018) and increase social inequalities (Mees, et al., 2019). Third, participation need to strive for information equality between the organising party and the participant. This prevent shouldn't be used as an activity to avoid difficult and painful decisions or a show trial for already made decisions (Haklay, et al., 2018). Fourth, explicit problems should be discussed instead of muddling-through on the background (Mueller, et al.,

2018). Lastly, governments should work on uncertainties about the development of citizen initiatives over time (Mees, et al., 2019). In order to create a suitable participation process, the roles of local government should be flexible and should shift into a more facilitating, networking and stimulating role (Mees, et al., 2019).

These research outcomes couldn't cover all important aspects of the participation process, because these processes can become messy and need all kinds of different governmental support. Environmental psychologists, geographers and sociologists tried to understand the citizen perspective of participation. These fields of knowledge focussed on three main themes (Hafer & Ran, 2016). The first are the abilities and competence of citizens to be involved and stay involved to the participation project (Edelenbos, et al., 2018; Lowndes, et al., 2006). The assumption here is that citizens need to have a certain trust in the government, a certain competence in social and technical skills and access to tools, money and time that should involve them in the participation process (Involve, 2005; Lowndes, et al., 2006), often described in papers about 'social capital' in the tradition of Putnam (2000) and by self-organisation as defined by Cilliers (1998). In this research tradition the abilities and skills of actors to be involved is researched from a network or group tradition (Edelenbos, et al., 2018). The second social research tradition are social networks (Wellman, 1999; Wissink & Hazelzat, 2012), partly touched upon by self-organisation (Edelenbos, et al., 2018), but in this thesis will be researched in the neighbourhood section. The third and final field of social research about participation processes is the motivation of the individual to join the project. This field comes forth from the environmental psychology and focusses purely on the individual instead of the common motivations of the group. This factor explains why people choose to participate while others with the same networks and capabilities do not (Hafer & Ran, 2016; Li, et al., 2020).

Combining the governmental and citizen perspective can help policy makers and renderers to support participants in a way that fits the aim of the participation project to create more success stories and to keep engaging the public (Hafer & Ran, 2016).

## 2.3 Sustainability

### 2.3.1 State of knowledge

The word sustainable has spread in the last fifty years and is used for all kinds of different aspects of sustainability. Whereby the word got slightly different meanings and has developed as a discursive philosophy (Thiele, 2013; Caradonna, 2014). Since the 1990's sustainability has become a buzzword for anything that had to do with the environment and climate. The word is used by all different kinds of organisations, governments and individuals. These people all have the "desire to create a society that is safe, stable, prosperous and ecologically minded" (Caradonna, 2014, p.2) and use the word sustainability to point that out.

Since sustainability includes so many things, two general overarching understandings of sustainability have been introduced. The first is based on the idea that sustainability exists where taking care of the environment, economy and society comes together. The other believes that sustainability is the acknowledging that economy and society wouldn't exist if the environment wasn't there

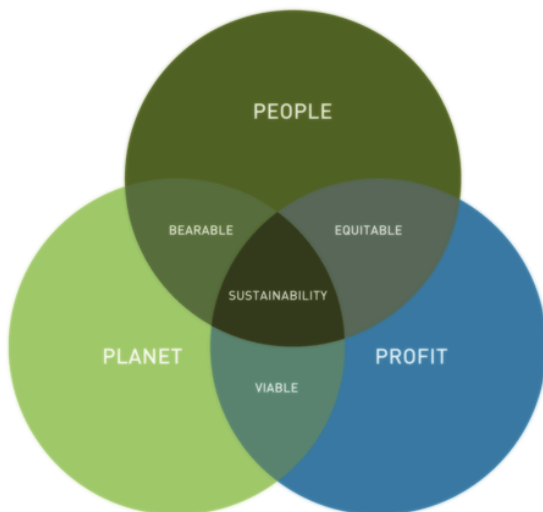


Figure 4: Environment equally important

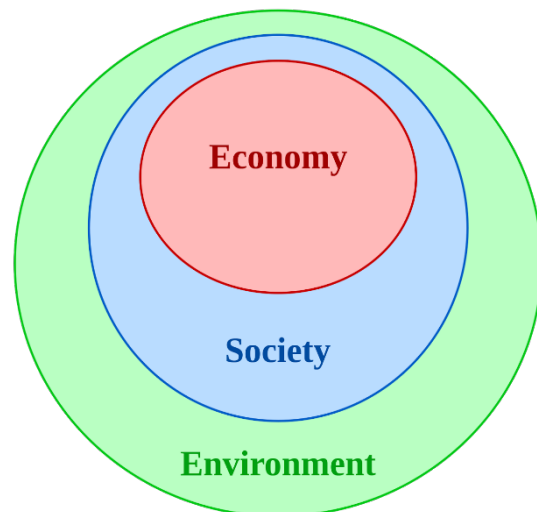


Figure 5: Environment more important

What the two models have in common is that the three pillars of economy, society and environment are deeply interwoven and that the existence of one, implies the presence of the other. The two differ from the assumption that the environment is the prerequisite for economy and society or that environment is perceived equally important to society and economy (Caradonna, 2014). These understandings of sustainability are complemented by protecting the earth for future generations. Especially this future aspect is important because it acknowledges that we took the earth from our ancestors and are aware we pass the responsibilities on to future generations. Apart from this paradigmatic approach, the word sustainability is in itself a multi-interpretable world.

Exploring this multi-interpretability, the etymological meaning of sustainability is shortly described here. Sustainability emerged from the word *sustinere* in Latin, which combines the words *sub* and *tenere*, together meaning something in the direction of 'to support', 'endure' or 'maintain'. The term was introduced

in British English in the early modern times as *soutenir* (in the meantime this word changed into *durabilité* in French) by the book *Sylva*, dating 1664. The verb 'to sustain' and the noun 'sustainability' entered the common English language during the 1970's and the meaning is something like 'the long-term maintenance of human society' (Caradonna, 2014).

This paradigmatic approach to sustainability partly explained by the etymology of it, is translated in different fields of study, politics and lifestyles of individuals.

On the urban political level, the sustainable paradigms shifted from not thinking about sustainability to four main policy focus points. First lower the demand for energy, reducing waste and pollution in the city, adjust infrastructure for more sustainable modes of mobility and create fewer social inequalities. These fragmented ideas about sustainability translate into reducing the environmental impact of building materials by certifying buildings, creating more compact cities, enhance the quality of greenery in- and around the cities in terms of biodiversity and water resilience, concentrate on circularity of materials and industries and constructing visions for renewable energy production (Caradonna, 2014).

By economists and consumer studies the paradigm is translated into discussion about consumerism, the life cycle costs of producing goods, the use of resources and the impact of industries, outsourcing and dumping second hand goods in developing countries and more abstract discussions about consumerism and decreasing it. This also raises the question if economic growth can persist when resources will be renewable or that we as a society have to strive for economic degrowth (Thiele 2013; Caradonna, 2014).

In the social domain 'equality, democracy, social justice, well-being, and poverty' (Caradonna, 2014, p.220), are the main themes of action. Sustainability in this domain is defined as "progress toward enabling all human beings to satisfy their essential needs, to achieve a reasonable level of comfort, to live lives of meaning and interest, and to share fairly in opportunities for health and education." (Caradonna, 2014, p.221). Especially in developing countries, equality, justice and welfare are themes that need attention. In theory a society is socially sustainable when people can live modest lives, placing happiness, health and satisfaction above consumerism and the possession of money (Caradonna, 2014).

For individuals living a sustainable life, translates into reducing the use of plastics, use second hand markets to get rid of stuff and acquire new items, buy biological foods, consume less meat and make adjustments to the house to lower the energy consumption (Caradonna, 2014). All these fragmented translations of sustainability imply that people take over the fragmentation and associate certain parts of their lives to sustainability, losing the connection to the wider paradigm in place.

### 2.3.2 Conceptual framework

In their overview books of the sustainability movement and the definitions and meanings of sustainability, Caradonna fragments the sustainability paradigm into economic, energy, design and building, urbanism, transportation, higher education and research, the green economy, business and finance, social sustainability, governmental planning and policymaking as angles in which sustainability is often conceptualised and used by people. Thiele stays at a more abstract level in which he distinguishes technology, and the 3 P's, people, planet and profit as the main areas of thought.

A common understanding is that what can be done locally, should be done locally or as the famous saying 'think global, act local' is probably the most important in sustainable citizen initiatives. Although sustainability is everywhere and everyone knows the word. It is interesting with what eyes people tend to look at their environment when they want it to something more sustainable (Thiele, 2013). With the following framework I will see how the participants think about the citizen initiative and from what kind of perspective they look at the citizen initiative.

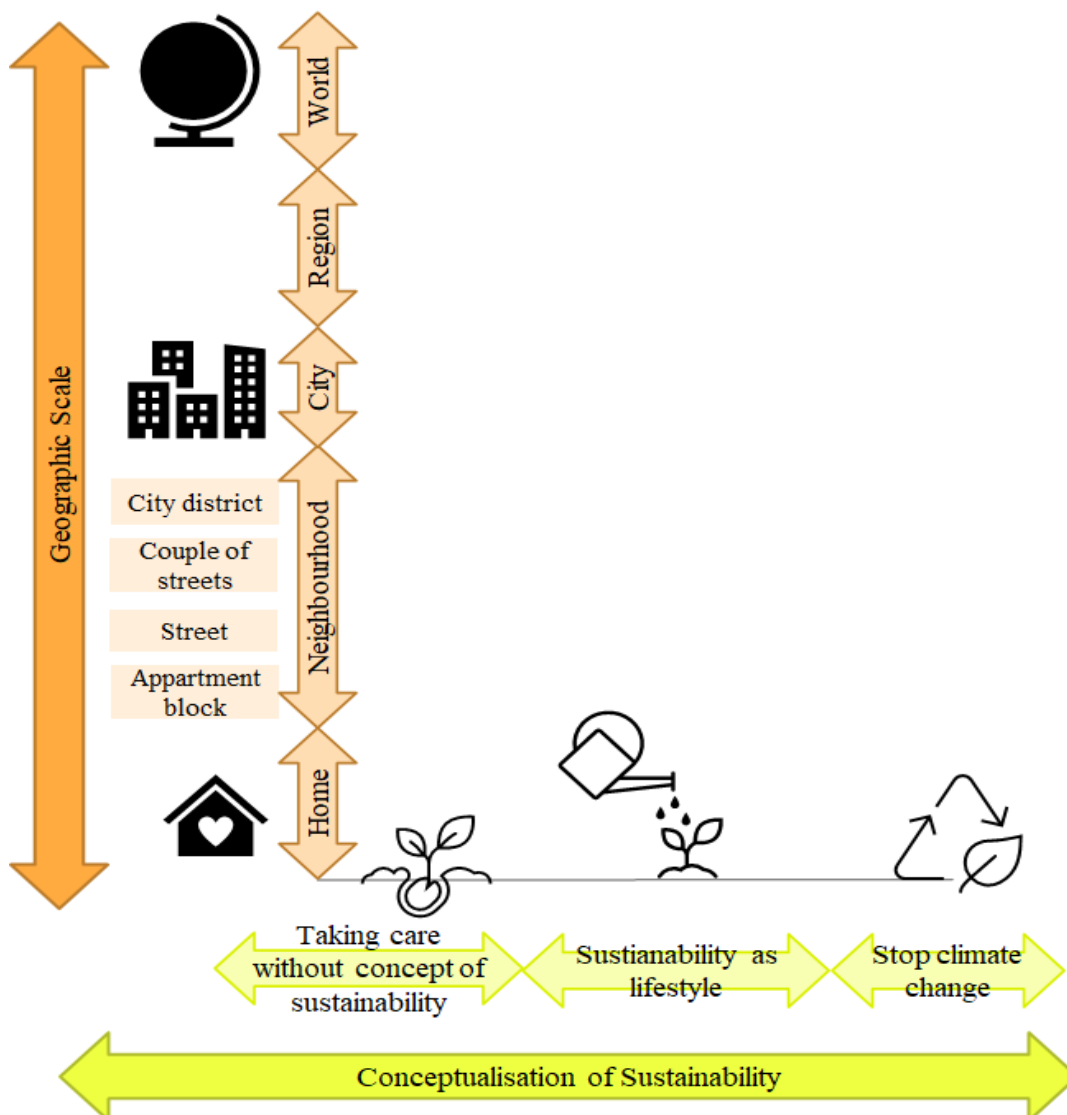


Figure 6: Sustainability conceptualisation for participants of the citizen initiative (Personal conceptualisation)

### 3. Methodology

This chapter is based on the guide for qualitative research, written by the famous geographer Cresswell. Here I will elaborate why I chose a qualitative research design using a case study strategy. Further on in the chapter methods for data inquiry will be explained.

#### *Research strategy; qualitative method & Case study*

The central research question is: *'What lessons can be learned from participation projects such as the citizen initiative Biezen-Maasstraat in Nijmegen within the broader context of sustainable citizen participation programmes?'* The aim of this study is to acquire an understanding of the citizen initiative in the Maas-Biezenstraat and see how the context and paradigm of sustainability and the process of the initiative relate to each other. This case is relatively small, therefore a qualitative approach is needed.

*"qualitative research is an inquiry process of understanding based on a distinct methodological tradition of inquiry that explores a social or human problem. The researcher builds a complex, holistic picture, analyses words, reports detailed views of informants, and conducts the study in a natural setting."* (Cresswell, 2007, p.265).

The qualitative method aims to get a deeper understanding of the case's context and has the ability to bridge fragmented knowledge and understanding of participation forms from the field of psychology, policy development and geography. The multidisciplinary and the complexity of the concepts used to define and understand participation can only be fully understood when data gathering methods, interviews, field observations and policy documents are brought together (Cresswell, 2007). The context in turn is crucial to place the data gathered from interviews in a broader perspective, which enables me to interpret the data in a decent way.

This research aim justifies the use of a **case study** research design. By aiming to research what participant motivations in sustainable citizen initiatives are and how they influence the realisation of a city-wide sustainable citizen initiative network in Nijmegen all the theories from the theoretical framework come together in a longlist of different variables that may have to do with the research question. All these variables are interlinked in a complex system which can be understood deeper using a qualitative case study design (Dredge & Hales, 2012). This aim can be reached by combining neighbourhood analysis, data from the municipality and interview outcomes.

With this design I will be able to understand the connectedness of the variables instead of using quantitative methods and define the exact relationship between a small number of factors (Kumar, 2014). Information about this case gives insight in why people want to engage in improving their quality of life in their neighbourhood and shows the feasibility of these programmes in urban areas to boost climate adaptation programmes in the city.



## *From concepts to variables*

Part of the concepts described in the theoretical framework are quite simple to operationalize in measurable variables. This conversion of concept into variables is needed to analyse the data gathered in the case study (Kumar, 2014). In the first attachment, the tables with the operationalisation of the theoretical concepts can be found. Some concepts were difficult to transform into variables because the options for what a person might say are almost indefinite. To take these difficult concepts into close consideration as well, I transformed those into sensitizing concepts. These transfer tables can be found in second attachment. The use of the sensitizing concepts is usual in Grounded Theory research, but is a systematic way to search for motivations and attachment and at the same time bounds the data gathered in interviews within the theoretical framework (Bowen, 2006).

## *Sampling method: Selection of the initiative*

The case is chosen strategically. In the first place is the case in this research thematically bounded. I chose to narrow citizen participation down to the citizen initiative, which implies theoretically the diversifying of the research population. The citizen initiative is seen as a more open and inclusive form of citizen participation because it contains not only formal feedback to the local government, but has a social context as well which enables a wider age group to engage (Denters, et al., 2013). The citizen initiative implies a special case: those participants themselves worked together because their shared goal was to improve the quality of life in the neighbourhood. I am interested in the variables that shape the willingness for people to contribute and engage in their neighbourhood in the light of sustainability.

The case that fits my research questions is geographically and thematically bounded. Therefore, I used a sampling method based on theory and an overarching programme. In this case study I will research one of the citizen initiatives that was implemented within the My Green Neighbourhood framework. Within that programme cases have the following characteristics:

1. "The initiative is sustainable
2. One or several inhabitants take the lead in the initiative
3. The initiative is supported by a broad group of inhabitants in the neighbourhood
4. The initiative can be realised within one year
5. The initiative wouldn't survive without support of My Green Neighbourhood the coordinating programme" (Lentekracht, 2019 - I).

At first the longlist of My Green Neighbourhood citizen initiatives was made, this covered 9 past initiatives. Due to the initiative descriptions, it became possible to select suitable cases. The next sources were consulted before the decisions were made.

1. Available documents of Lentekracht about the participation process (reports, maps and knowledge of the employees of Lentekracht).
2. Descriptions at the Green Capital website.
3. Ambition documents of the Municipality, Bureau Wijland and Lentekracht.

In the period of my internship, new citizen initiatives were in the starting phase, but due to the Coronavirus, it was uncertain if these initiatives could move on. I chose to play it safe and explore an already implemented citizen initiative. The benefit from an already implemented initiative, is that the contact addresses of the participants are already known. For me as a researcher it was easy to reach out to the participants and ask if they are willing to engage in this research.

The case is characteristic and interesting because the My Green Neighbourhood programme is quite affordable for the municipality and it has believed to be effective. In one year, 9 different initiatives are supported, enhancing social links between neighbours resulting in small sustainability adaptations in the urban area. All these outcomes have been accomplished due to a close cooperation between inhabitants and professionals supporting them.

## *Data sources*

### *Policy document and archival material*

Although documents are always written for a particular meaning, showcasing a certain worldview (Clifford, 2016). I will use current policy documents and archival documents of the construction of the street. First, I will research the neighbourhood's history. The history can be derived from [topotijdreis.nl](http://topotijdreis.nl), a website showcasing military and topographic maps from 1800 to 2019. Although the maps are made for military purposes, they were made on a regular basis and drawn full of details (Kadaster, 2020). Over time they show the development of the neighbourhood. Then I will look at old newspaper articles about the neighbourhood, because these databases are digitally available and are written to keep the public informed about developments in the neighbourhood. With these news articles, I wanted to dive further into the archives about the neighbourhood, but unfortunately due to the Coronavirus, the archives were closed when I was in the position to ask for materials. My archival adventure was limited to the digitally available photographs of the neighbourhood, which were taken by city photographers and newspapers. It is important to explore the history of the neighbourhood, because it tells something about the heritage the inhabitants inherit.

The policy documents I will look at are composed by the municipality and by Lentekracht and diverge from the municipal participation protocol to spatial visions for the area. Furthermore, I used yearly surveys from a manager or professional perspective that give insight in striking developments. All these sources together will give an almost complete overview of the neighbourhood characteristics, which is the basis for the social and spatial context in which this case study is executed.

I will download the documents I will use for as far as possible and keep track of them in folders on my personal computer and cloud to make sure I can consult the documents over and over again. Sources that I will use are the document database of Lentekracht, the municipal website, the yearly neighbourhood survey, Delpher newspaper archives, the archival image database and historical maps from the cadastral information service. With these documents my aim is to explore the processes for citizen initiatives, the historic narrative of the neighbourhood, the current image of the neighbourhood and the future of it.

## Interviews & Street conversations

The main source of information are interviews among participants and the facilitating organisation in the sustainable citizen initiative in the Dutch city of Nijmegen. The interviews were held with the participants of the citizen initiative (N=7) and the professionals involved (N=2). The data for this research has been gathered between the September 2020 and January 2021, during my internship at Lentekracht. Results from my research could be used as input to improve the follow-up programme of My Green Neighbourhood.

*Table 1: Overview of Interviews*

Interview	Name	Role in participation project	Life stage & household situation	Residential history	Location of work
1 (16-10-2020) Online	Marlous	Inhabitant, initiator	Young family; Partner and child (younger than 10)	Influx (2 years)	Region around Nijmegen
2 (21-10-2020) Online	Fleur*	Inhabitant, technical operator	Middle-aged couple; Partner	Influx (9 years)	Nijmegen
3 (22-10-2020) Online	Emma*	Inhabitant, all-round participant	Middle-aged couple with adolescent children (18+) living together	Influx (20 years)	Everywhere in the Netherlands
4 (25-10-2020) Online	Jetske*	Inhabitant, hands-on participant	Young couple; partner	Influx (4 years)	Nijmegen
5 (26-10-2020) Online	Anna*	Inhabitant, content secretary	Young family; partner and children (younger than 10)	Influx (11 years)	Nijmegen
6 (29-10-2020) Near his house	Jan*	Inhabitant, all-round participant	Middle aged men	Influx (22 years)	Not applicable
7 (30-10-2020) Online	Bram	Professional from Lentekracht	-	-	Nijmegen
8 (06-11-2020) Westerpark	Jeffrey	Professional from the municipality	-	-	Nijmegen
9 (11-11-2020) Near her house	Saskia*	Inhabitant, hands-on participant	Family; partner and children (10-18 years old)	Authentic	Nijmegen

\*These names are fake to protect the privacy wishes of the interviewees.

In the interviews I will ask people many questions about their neighbourhood, their personal life, the motivations for participating in the citizen initiative, the participation process and sustainability. All these questions together give insight in the neighbourhood context, the circumstances and liveability of the neighbourhood, the attachment of people to their neighbourhood their personal motivations to join the citizen initiative, the external pressures that formed motivations to participate, the kind of people that participate in this citizen initiative and if this group is representative for the general population in the neighbourhood, their conceptualisation of sustainability and what practices can be improved in further citizen participation projects similar to this one.

Next to the interviews, which were based on an extended topic list and pointed at every variable I was interested in and which I recorded to be able to transcribe them, I conducted street conversations (N=33, 4 conversations are not usable). These street conversations had 3 main questions and depending on how the conversation was going I asked follow-up questions. I used this method to get a more thorough understanding of the neighbourhood context and how the initiative is perceived.

*Table 2: Overview of street conversations*

Conversation, Date, Location in the street	Gender	Age category	Involved in initiative	Resident history
1 (06-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Elderly	Not involved	Influx (2 years)
2 (06-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Elderly	Tree bed	Authentic
3 (06-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Elderly	Not involved	New inhabitant (10 years)
4 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M & F	Elderly	Tree bed	Authentic
5 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	F	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
6 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
7 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
8 (07-11-2020) Maasstraat	F	Student	Not involved	Influx (couple of months)

9 (07-11-2020) Maasstraat	M & F	Young Family	Plant bed and Tree Maasstraat	New inhabitant (10 years)
10 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Middle- aged/Elderly	Tree bed	Influx (35 years)
11 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	F	Middle aged	Not involved	Influx (6 years)
12 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Young family	No data	Influx (7 years)
13 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	F	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
14 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Elderly	Tree bed	Influx (40 years)
15 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Student	Not involved	Influx (2 years)
16 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M & F	Young couple	Not involved	Influx (couple of months)
17 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	F	Student	Not involved	Influx (No data in years)
18 (07-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Middle-aged	Not involved	Authentic
19 (07-11-2020) Maasstraat	M	Middle-aged	Plant bed & Tree Maasstraat	Influx (No data in years)
20 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Middle-aged	Not involved, but sponsored snacks	Left the neighbourhood (3 years ago)
21 (07-11-2020) Maasstraat	M	Middle-aged	Not involved	Influx (26 years)
22 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	F	Middle-aged	Not involved	Influx (20 years)
23 (07-11-2020)	F	Elderly	No data	No data

Biezenplein				
24 (07-11-2020) Biezenstraat	M	Middle-aged	Plant bed and tree bed	Influx (20 years)
25 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Middle-aged	Not involved	Influx (27 years)
26 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Elderly	No data	No data
27 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
28 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Elderly	No data	No data
29 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Middle-aged	Not involved	Influx (1 year)
30 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	F	Elderly	Not involved	Influx (14 years)
31 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic
32 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic (16 years in this street)
33 (11-11-2020) Biezenplein	M	Elderly	Not involved	Authentic

### Data storage

The interviews will be recorded if the interviewee gives permission. I will make notes too, in case the recording machine breaks down or the interviewee don't want to be recorded. I will transcribe all the interviews in Atlas.ti or I will code my notes if necessary. The street conversations won't be recorded, only summarized afterwards, using my memory to reconstruct what the people said to me. Although this method is less detailed and more sensitive for personal interpretations, it was the only method that allowed me to fully focus on conserve the dialogues.

## Ethical issues in interviews

Before the interview starts, I will inform the person about myself, the data collection method, and the data analysis I will execute. Some information of the interviews will be sensitive, I will tell my interviewees that they can always skip a question when the information is too personal and that I will process my data according to their wishes of being anonymous or called by one name according to their preference. This data will only be used to build characters of the involved. The interview transcripts won't be shared with Lentekracht, my internship organisation, and can't be lowered to the interviewee. Only the results of the interview will be shared with my internship organisation to give recommendations for further citizen initiative support. For the interviewees the advantages of the research are to get an opportunity to talk about their experiences in the citizen initiative process and their living environment with an independent researcher. They can help new participants of citizen initiatives with reflecting on their experiences with Lentekracht. Participants also have the possibility to learn some historical details about their neighbourhood if they are interested, because I will send my research report when they are interested in it.

## *Validity and reliability*

To describe the validity of the research, I used the framework of Lincoln and Guba (1985) as described by Creswell 2007. Here they use four 4 validation types. Underneath is described for every validation type how this research tries to overcome validation problems following the strategies proposed by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation (2008).

### 1. Credibility

- Method triangulation: I use three different methods for data collection. By combining information from document analysis, observations and interviews, consistencies and inconsistencies in the method can be found.
- Theoretical triangulation: the information about the participation process will be analysed with two different models, one from the policy world, one from psychology. Also, for the neighbourhood analysis multiple views on neighbourhood attachment will be explored.
- Source triangulation: Within the methods, document analysis in which I will research current policy documents as well as archival documents, interviews in which I will interview several engaged citizens and the professional that helped them out and, in the observations, both observe what happens in the neighbourhood on a normal day and asking people to draw a mental map gives a good indication how inhabitants use the neighbourhood.
- Negative Case Analysis: inconsistencies that will be found during the analysis will be further explored to better understand the patterns that shape the consistencies in the data.

### 2. Transferability

- Thick description: the data and phenomenon will be described with a level of detail that enables the researcher to see if and how the context influences the research outcomes.

### 3. Dependability

### 4. Confirmability

- Audit trail: In the attachment the logbook from the coding programme is included and steps taken in the research are explained.

- Reflexivity: to make sure I am aware of my personal assumptions and values I kept a reflexive journal, where I took notes on research decisions and why I made those. This gives other researchers insight in the thinking process I did.

## *Limitations of the method*

The small scale of the research, the short period of time and the small geographic scale influence formulations of general conclusions in a negative way. Since the citizen initiative has already been implemented, the experiences of the participants cannot be tested and neither can the citizen initiative process be changed in order to overcome certain experiences. The research is only done in the city of Nijmegen in a middle-size neighbourhood, which makes generalisations for small towns or larger neighbourhoods impossible.

## *General ethical issues*

In research there are always several stakeholders. In this case study, the research participants and the subjects of the observation are stakeholders, even as me as a researcher and my internship organisation Lentekracht. These can all have different interests, purposes and motivations that can affect the research (Kumar, 2014).

Secondly issues with the researcher may involve bias based on the subjectivity inherent to the researcher (Cresswell, 2007). Because I defined my subjectivity beforehand, my philosophical background and the way I wanted to conduct this research, I was very aware of my own context. I tried to be as open as possible to the interviewees, in order to avoid bias. The data from the interviews was only stored and analysed in my computer and will not become public nor shared with my internship organisation or with third parties. When I used documents in my document analysis I always referred to the documents and did not pretend the textual information was mine.

Lastly, the influence of my internship organisation can induce a bias (Kumar, 2014). Lentekracht supported the citizens in their citizen initiative. The participants and Lentekracht might have a certain power relation, which can get in the way during my research. Although the company asked for a research of the participation process and how they can engage people better, I investigate only the individuals that participated in the project. By analysing their approach in the light of a participant, they can get useful insight in their supportive role. Because I focus on the perspective of the individual, placing them in several different contexts, I can avoid possible sensitive relationships between Lentekracht and the participant, because it is not my focus to bring the individual nor Lentekracht in a position to take further actions.



## 4. *Historic, socio-spatial neighbourhood context*

In order to answer the first sub-question *What makes the neighbourhood special?* Two different approaches are needed, one focussed on the relations of the inhabitants with the place, and one with a more contextual, professional point of view in which spatial planning composition, physical characteristics and the historical narrative is on the foreground. This latter approach may help to contextualise the individual experiences and sense of attachment of the inhabitants. For that purpose, this chapter is mainly to describe the spatial and social characteristics known by professionals about the neighbourhood and placing that knowledge in a narrative. In the next chapter, the individual senses of attachments will be touched upon.

### 4.1. *Situating the neighbourhood within the city of Nijmegen*

In the city district Nijmegen Oud-West, meaning the Old-West, the Biezen is situated. Another name for the Biezen is the Waterkwartier. The Biezen is the more general name for the neighbourhood, whereas the Waterkwartier points at the streets named after Dutch waterbodies often referring to the image of the workers district, this name is also used for the Biezen as a whole. In municipal documents the neighbourhood is called Biezen, whereas inhabitants more often refer to the Waterkwartier. In the picture below, the upper part is the Biezen, with her northern boundary the Waal, eastern the railroad, southern the Marialaan and western the Westerpark.



Figure 7: *Situating the Biezen within the city borders of Nijmegen* (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2020).

The district is called Old-West because of the urban development in the last decades. The Biezen and Wolfskuil are structured and mostly build before the Second World War, whereas the other neighbourhood on the western side of the city are planned and constructed afterwards.

The Biezen is namely placed upon the Roman city of Ulphia Noviomagus, originating 2000 years ago (Arnhemsche Courant, 1954; De Tijd, 1954 July; NRC Handelsblad, 1985; Trouw, 1985 - II September; Het Parool, 1993; Huis van de Nijmeegsche Geschiedenis, 2013). Ulphia Noviomagus has been built between 70-100 A.D. and

with approximately 5500 inhabitants it was the biggest city in the Netherlands (Huis van de Nijmeegsche Geschiedenis, 2013). From the middle ages onward, the rulers build the city a little to the east (Louwe-Kooijmans & Knip, 1974). Presumably the old city has been used as stone quarry during the middle ages (Huis van de Nijmeegsche Geschiedenis, 2013).



Figure 8: *Birds-eye view of the Roman city Ulphia Noviomagus, reconstruction of 160-170 A.D.* (Huis van de Nijmeegsche Geschiedenis, 2013).



## 4.2 *The pre-war Twentieth century developments*

In the first decennium after the 1900's an industrial agglomeration was built near the harbour, with some surrounding workers houses. The realisation of the railway on the former city walls was the beginning of the building development in the neighbourhood. The construction preparations were made in 1879 (Provinciale en Nijmeegsche Courant, 1932).

From 1901 onwards, with the introduction of the first Housing Law, building activities in the neighbourhood started. This law enabled the government to end the bad housing conditions of workers by implementing public housing estates meeting the basic requirements of this law. In Nijmegen, workers lived in slums in the lower areas near the river. During the nineteen twenties plans were made to replace these workers into proper houses in the Biezen area which were executed in the thirties and early fourties. The precursor of this large-scale urbanisation, was the industrialisation with workers houses in the area. As shown by the Figure 10.



*Figure 10: The proper workers houses around the factories. These were build in the 1930's (Flip Franssen, 1980)*

These are shown on the 1930 map. In that period industries and factories small build workers houses (red dots) surrounding the plants (red blocks) as shown in the Figure 5 below. The managers build their own houses along the main routes to the city (Interview Emma). For example, on the Biezenstraat we see some houses rising on the Biezenstraat (3<sup>rd</sup> horizontal red line, street, below the blue, the river).







*Figure 12: The workers houses from the air, showing the gardens and the village like ideals behind it (KLM Aerocarto, 1949-1954)*

The social village-like character built for with the Garden City principle had a positive effect on the social relations. Already in 1929, the first social association of the neighbourhood evolved, 'The Neighbourhood Association the Water Quarter' was born. This social structure was strengthened by activities in the daily lifes of the inhabitants (Geldersche en Nijmeegsche Courant, 1930 - II). The men worked together in the factory, the women took care of the households and the streets and all the kids went to the same schools and played in the same streets. On Sunday all the families went to the same church together (Personal communication, 31 & 33, 11th of November, 2020).

The building activities were paused several times during the Second World War. Back then the neighbourhood was known as the Industry Quarter (Algemeen Handelsblad, 1940). Part of the neighbourhood was even destroyed during the war. After the war, the urbanisation continued in another style.



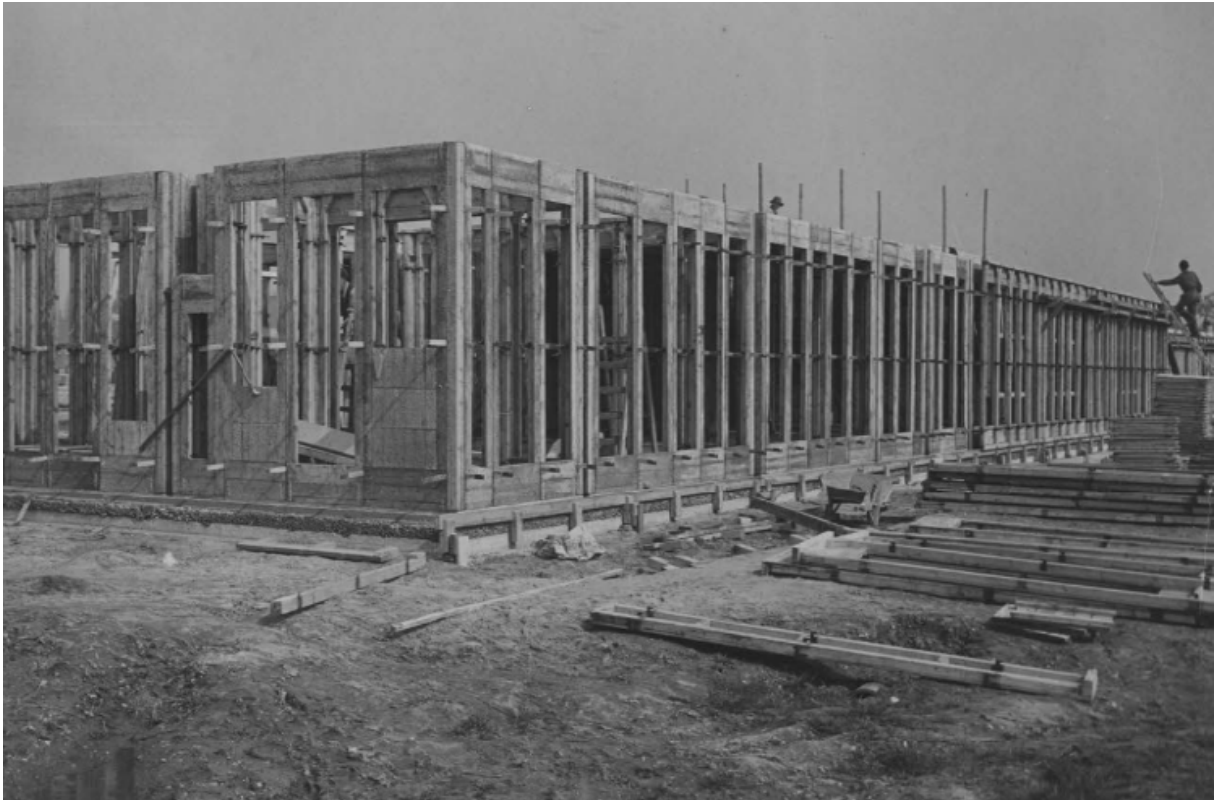
Figure 13: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood dating from 1944 (Topotijdreis, 2020)



## 4.3 *Post-war in the Twentieth century*

### 4.3.1 Emergency housing and the Reconstruction Period (1945-1960)

After the Second World War, the view on building changed and the building materials were scarce (De Gelderlander, 1945). The municipality of Nijmegen financed the construction of almost 400 workers houses and 51 other buildings (De Tijd, 1954). To build many houses with less resources modular building was invented this means that standard measurements of houses enabled the building companies to develop prefab panels which could be easily installed in the building process. For the glue granular concrete was invented, a form of concrete that was made from bigger stones and gravel in the mix (Afdeling Erfgoed, 2016).



*Figure 14: Building with granular concrete (Fotopersbureau Gelderland, 1953)*

These methods enabled to build in stamps, vast forms of houses in a standardized composition in order to shrink down the drawing and technical costs with grass fields as public spaces between the buildings. In addition to these new techniques the concept of duplex houses emerged, which means that normal family houses were temporarily cut in two, enabling living space for two families in one building (De Waarheid, 1980). In the post-war period planners planned for small enterprises and local shops on every corner of the street. In the public space happened much during the war. People built parks, playgrounds and greeneries on the roads to replace the dirty residues of the war and in remembrance of the fallen inhabitants (De Gelderlander, 1945).



Figure 15: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood dating from 1960 (Topotijdreis, 2020)

#### 4.3.2 The downward spiral of the neighbourhood 1970-1990

Already during the reconstruction period, the pre-war housing estates from the thirties didn't meet the requirements of the modern urban life anymore. This was a problem because a worker's neighbourhood is known for the high percentages of public housing estates with inhabitants without much financial reserves. The housing estates needed to take action in, for example, 150 houses in the Waal- and Maasstraat, where humidity problems, the lack of an inhouse toilet and shower, and the windowsills rotting away lead to demonstrations the inhabitants (Algemeen Dagblad, 1960; De Waarheid, 1960; De Waarheid, 1964).



Figure 16: The in poor condition workers houses (Flip Janssen, 1979)



In the seventies the housing got densified and programmes were launched to renovate the workers houses and also the duplex-houses, which were meant to be a temporal solution were still in place (Personal Communication, 31, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020). The problems with the workers houses remained until the late eighties (De Waarheid, 1980; het Parool 1989). During the eighties the atmosphere in the neighbourhood changed. Many local enterprises and street-corner shops, closed their doors. Industries left the neighbourhood and were turned into residential areas, which densified the housing inventory. These industries had caused substantially polluted soils, which made the transformation into residential areas costly and difficult. It was with these new building activities that the rich Roman heritage was found underneath the neighbourhood (Trouw, 1985 - II).



Figure 17: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood dating from 1990 (Topotijdreis, 2020)

### 4.3.3. The improvement programs start to turn the tide (1990)

In the nineteen eighties the neighbourhood suffered from high criminality rates and drug related problems. The answer was formulated in the mid-eighties in the Neighbourhood Approach, the decentralisation of police stations, increasing the available meeting grounds of inhabitants and police (Trouw, 1985 - I). Grand scale renovations of public housing blocks and bringing houses on the private market, caused an influx of young couples to the neighbourhood (Interview Emma; Interview Jan; Personal communication, 4 & 31 & 33, 7<sup>th</sup> and 11<sup>th</sup> of November) and replaced some authentic inhabitants to the city district of Dukenburg (Interview Saskia). The grand scale renewal hindered the integration of new people in the neighbourhood, and formed the first cracks into the strong social cohesion which was characterising for the neighbourhood (Interview Jeffrey; Interview Saskia; Algemeen Dagblad, 1994; NRC Handelsblad 1994).

*"The Biezen is a traditional workers district. On the southern side of the Biezenstraat do the 'factory boys' live, on the northern side 'the boys who think they are higher educated' (Penninx in: AD, 1994)*

These developments are characterizing for the case study area, which is the crossroad of the Biezenstraat with the Maasstraat (northern side of the Biezenstraat). In the Maasstraat former workers houses were replaced by newly build terraced houses, finalized by a slick street composed of different coloured bricks.

The part of the Biezenstraat in the direction of the Waterstraat was also renewed, a church and abbey complex were replaced by rental apartments for elderly (Personal communication, 4 & 31, 7<sup>th</sup> of November 2020). The Biezenstraat was used as one of the historic routes from the rural lands in the city. Factory managers and workers lived in next to each other in this street (Interview Jan). The Biezenstraat remained as one of the easiest routes from the neighbourhood into the city centre, historically there were some utility shops in the Biezenstraat and on the crossroad with the Waterstraat. During the nineties, most of the former shops in the Biezenstraat closed their doors, leaving the middle class with only two fast food restaurants and a computer speciality shop (Personal Communication, 31 & 33, 11<sup>th</sup> November 2020).



Figure 18: Cadastral map of the neighbourhood dating from 1990 (Topotijdreis; 2020)

## 4.4 The Twenty-first century and the planned future

These developments urban renewal activities continued in the zeroes. Also building developments start on the remaining industrial sides, because all industries left the neighbourhood (De Gelderlander, 2019). These former industrial sites make way for residential areas contributing to the Waalsprong, the embrace between the city and the river, urbanising both sides of the river and enhancing the attractiveness of the river fronts (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2020 - II). The city plans three new housing blocks with high rise buildings near the river in the Biezen (Koningsdaal, Park Fort Kraaijenhoff, Dijkkwartier) and two near the railway (Car Park Oude Stad and one at the crossroad of the Wolfkuilseweg and Koninginnelaan). These massive high-rise buildings will contain apartments and make the city far more compact than it was before (Waalfront 2021; Gemeente Nijmegen - II; Interview Jeffrey).

All these building developments spoken about in the last paragraphs show that the neighbourhood grew from approximately 1600 addresses before 1950 to 5044 in 2021 (Alle Cijfers, 2021). Together with the other developments earlier during the zeroes, the percentage of buildings younger than 200 is already 40% (Alle Cijfers, 2020). In the Figure below the distribution of buildings per period is shown.

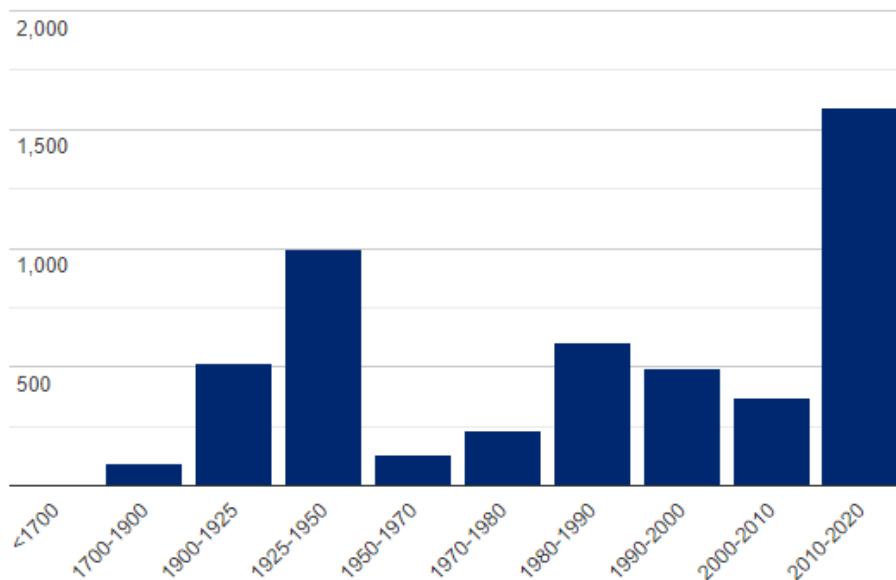
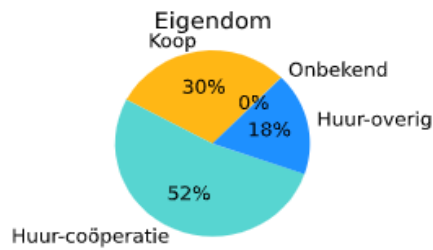


Figure 19: Building periods of the houses (Alle Cijfers, 2020).

With the massive increase of addresses, also facilities in the neighbourhood are on the rise. Two facility centres have been placed in the neighbourhood during the last ten years. Although the municipality wants to transform all the former industrial sites into residential areas, the inhabitants of the neighbourhood prevented some of the buildings to be torn down. In the former Honig factory, there are all kind of entrepreneurs housed completing a transformation of the abandoned industrial site into a cultural hub. In the industrial buildings on the river front on the side of Weurt, industrial buildings are used as gathering places and disco's for youth.



*Figure 20: Ownership of the houses in the Biezen (Alle Cijfers, 2020)*

The influx of new people led to the evening out of public housing and privately owned ones (Alle Cijfers, 2020). This resulted in quite a unique mix of properties (Interview Fleur). The policy is mainly based on creating a greater diversity among the inhabitants, supporting the influx of wealthy individuals and displace the not financially wealthy authentic neighbours.

Also, the municipality embraced the industrial area of Weurt, the division between the neighbourhood and this industrial site has been turned into a green belt city park, with water retention areas connecting green parks in a belt along the city borders to the highway on the western side of the city (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2009).

The neighbourhood still represent two of the main routes from the highway into the city centre. The Weurtseweg (northern thick yellow road) and Marialaan (southern orange road), are restructured into main car routes as can be seen on Figure 18.

## *5. Individual attachments in the neighbourhood*

In this paragraph I will take you to a journey of bonds that exists within the broader neighbourhood's social and spatial narrative history. In the coming paragraphs the focus will be on the use of space and their habits influencing their personal bonds and feelings of attachment in the neighbourhood. We just go through the different bonds that Lupi et al. (2007) distinguishes one by one.

### *5.1 Territorial bonds: Economic Bond*

According to the municipal numbers on the neighbourhood 2275 job positions lie in the neighbourhood. Historically most inhabitants work in the neighbourhood, most of the authentic inhabitants that are retired and live in the senior apartments in the street had worked in the neighbourhood and were very willing to share their story with me. From the interviewees, who all came into the neighbourhood later on in their lives, only one partner owned a shop in the neighbourhood. The other interviewees worked from home during the corona lock-downs, but were all employed outside the neighbourhood and most of them even out of the city. Some people work in Nijmegen, others chose their house from a mobility perspective, because the roads and railway connect the neighbourhood with the rest of the Netherlands.



## 5.2 Territorial bonds: Functional bond

*"Actually, the neighbourhood is near everything (Interview Jetske)."*

The functional bond is about the usage of facilities and services in the neighbourhood. Some of them mentioned the proximities of the neighbourhood. The neighbourhood itself has some facilities but because the near city centre, these services are important as well. Inhabitants value the proximity of the city centre and the connectedness of the neighbourhood to the railway station and the highways to other parts of the country (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske).

### Health and Care

There are two health centres in the neighbourhood, one on the southern border, one at Honig. "I have to transfer the general practitioner to the Honig, because I like to spend time there (Interview Jetske)" another interviewee who has a young family, said they transferred general practitioners, dentists and pharmacy to the neighbourhood (Interview Marlous). From the three family's that have kids younger than 16 years, they use all care facilities that the neighbourhood has to offer, the general practitioner, the dentist, the pharmacy and in some cases also the physiotherapist (Interview Marlous; Interview Anna; Interview Saskia).

For the interviewees, who's life in Nijmegen was spread in different neighbourhoods before settling here, care services in their old neighbourhoods remained (Interview Emma; Interview Jan). People choose for this option for three different reasons. Firstly, when they are not convinced, they will stay in the neighbourhood (Interview Emma), secondly when they expect to use these facilities not that often because then there is no need to have care facilities close by (Interview Emma; Interview Anna), or thirdly when other health and care services are on the route to other daily activities (Interview Emma).

Next to the dentist, pharmacy and general practitioner there are massage therapists (Interview Fleur), beauty salons and hairdressers. The question is where the neighbourhood boundary stops, because these facilities are located at the border so we use these either just outside or just inside the border (Interview Anna).

### Initiatives & Events

The neighbourhood has several events and initiatives of services. Examples from bottom-up initiatives are a mini library, a book pick-up for the states' library (Interview Anna) and an exchange plant cutting place (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur). There are some annual events, the building week, in the last week of the summer. This week is meant to give all kids a vacation in which they build their own huts (Interview Emma). For all ages, the four days marches passing through the street is the absolute highlight of the year because all inhabitants come together in their gardens and support the participants (Interview Emma).

### Schools

In my interviews I've spoken to young new parents and parents of whom the children are already grown up. The people who came into the neighbourhood later in their lives and raised their kids in the nineties chose a school outside the neighbourhood because the schools weren't audited well and the alternative schools are still close because they can be found in the city centre (Interview Emma). On the contrary he

authentic inhabitants I spoke to, who raised their kids in the same period used the school facilities in the neighbourhood (Street conversations).

Nowadays, most of the parents are willing to send their kids to the local school. The primary school in the neighbourhood, Aquamarijn received the second highest test results of Nijmegen whereas the primary school near the neighbourhood border in the Wolfskuil is ranked 27<sup>th</sup> out of 38 schools (RTLnieuws, 2020). One of the families arranged day care outside the neighbourhood because they heard negative experiences at the nearest one (Interview Marlous). One family already has kids old enough to go to school and to the school care facilities after school. They said "the teachers at school reckon the influx of people and their children from higher social classes in their classrooms, they say they notice a completely different classroom (Interview Anna)."

Middle and high schools don't have locations in the neighbourhood. For the neighbours these schools in the city centre or Lent (Nijmegen north) are the closest (Interview Saskia). Her kids didn't use the primary school facilities because her kids have disabilities that didn't fit the care facilities of the neighbourhood school (Interview Saskia). Still her kids have classmates that also live in the neighbourhood, because the kids meet at playgrounds (Interview Saskia). Maybe It is then not standard that the kids go to school in the same neighbourhood where they live, especially not with so many schools in the centre nearby.

### **Shops & Grocery Stores**

The choice for groceries comes down to one store within the neighbourhood, the Jumbo, and three in the city district. The Jumbo is easiest for most of the inhabitants (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske; Interview Saskia), however the neighbourhood boundaries are in general not decisive for the supermarket preference. In the end it all comes down to practicality, sometimes other supermarkets are on the route of the day for people, or people prefer another supermarket. People who use a cheaper segment supermarket (ALDI, LIDL) or a more luxe one (Albert Heijn), they go to the options the city district has to offer (Interview Emma). For others utilizing shops depend on their necessities and time of the day. Sometimes people do their groceries on the route from work to home, then the neighbouring shops aren't used necessarily (Interview Fleur). Some like to go to the city centre for groceries and to the city market there because of the city vibe (Interview Emma) or they are used to using some shops in the neighbourhood and some shops they often go to outside the neighbourhood (Interview Anna). One person also mentioned the handiwork store as one she uses (Interview Saskia).

### **Sport & Exercise**

The nearest sports facilities are at the old industrial sites of Nyma (just outside the neighbourhood) and Honig (Interview Marlous). One of the interviewees uses the facilities at Honig "I reckon that many people from the neighbourhood use the facilities there (Interview Marlous)." Except for gyms, there are several sport associations you can become a member of in the neighbourhood (Interview Anna), but not all sports do have an association in the neighbourhood for example hockey, judo and karate don't have associations in the neighbourhood. It is more important that kids can do the sport they want to, instead of being bounded to the options the neighbourhood offers (Interview Emma; Interview Saskia). Others use gyms and associations that are further away because they use the other place for a longer time or have social contacts there (Interview Emma).

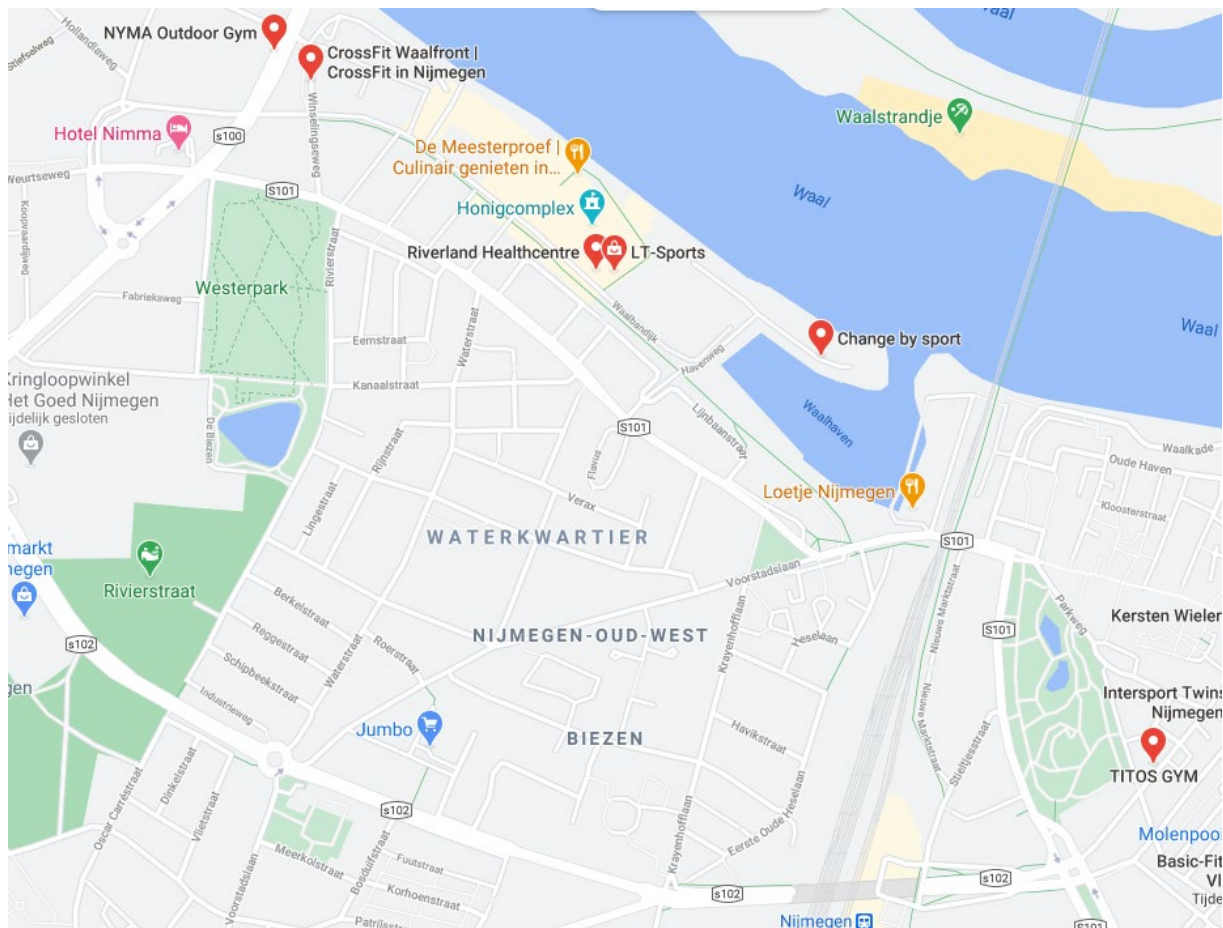


Figure 21: Sport Facilities in the Nieghbourhood (Google Maps, 2021)

Some interviewees that like running, have their own fixed routes partly through the neighbourhood partly out of the neighbourhood. For the people who walk long distances they start and end the route in the neighbourhood, but their routes are less fixed (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma). For short walks the Westerpark, harbour or dyke are often used (Interview Jan; Interview Saskia) it is beautiful to look at the ships passing by over the river (Interview Emma) and you can sit and relax there. Especially the Westerpark has become beautiful since it's renovations (Interview Saskia). For longer walks the inhabitants use the river island, for example the river beach, the natural environment, because the island is easily accessible from the neighbourhood using the Oversteek bridge and the Railway bridge. (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske). Also a walk to the city centre exist in the life of the neighbours. One of them teaches sport classes in the city centre (Interview Jetske). Others go to the forest in the weekends to walk (Interview Saskia).

One interviewee mentioned that he doesn't like to walk, but that he uses his bicycle for a visit to friends or to get groceries. With the bicycle it is easier to use facilities or go to destinations outside the neighbourhood (Interview Jan).

## Leisure

Many people use the Westerpark and the river island to relax when the weather is nice. Also the bars are popular. This corresponds to the municipal research because the whole neighbourhood uses the Westerpark according to the numbers (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2020-III). The families like to visit the playgrounds in the neighbourhood (Interview Marlous; Interview Saskia)



*"Going outside the neighbourhood is complex with young kids. With them you stay in the neighbourhood, go to playgrounds or play right outside the door. Before we had kids, we used facilities outside the neighbourhood more often (Interview Anna)."*

One interviewee likes to flock at Honig, she walks or cycles there to grab a beer in the bar or do sports in summertime (Interview Jetske). In a near street, a bar opened. With the meetings about the initiative, we used the facilities there to support our locals (Interview Marlous). Close to the streets there is a lunchroom which is used by the second interviewee and the neighbourhood centre is used as a place for leisure. With friends the neighbourhood isn't the most used option because friends of my interviews often don't live in Nijmegen, so they rather see each other in the city centre or somewhere in the middle (Interview Marlous). Some people have hobbies that are related to the home and the garden, then the outside facilities in the neighbourhood are less relevant (Interview Fleur).

The facilities and services in the neighbourhood are good, this corresponds to the municipal numbers as well. Most of the inhabitants use the facilities and like to spend time in the neighbourhood. According to the literature, the attachment to the neighbourhood and the social cohesion within the neighbourhood are highly related to the amount of activities or the share of time people spent in the neighbourhood (Lupi, et al. 2007).

### 5.3 Territorial bonds: Political bonds

The political bond is a tool to measure the engagement people feel in their neighbourhood. This tool consist in being up to date about developments and politics in the area and taking responsibility for the direct environment. Lupi (2007) used reading the papers and asking about actions in the public space as measures to get insight into this bond. I used the same measures.

#### Involvement/engagement with neighbourhood

Social media groups and real-life social connections are important to be up to date as well. Knowing the local news is relevant in supporting and protecting the public space. Some authentic inhabitants know all the news, keeping in touch with them is then relevant (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske). To know familiar faces and which people live on what address creates for several interviewees the feeling of involvement (Interview Jetske; Interview Jan). Being part of the informal network of news distribution takes time, because you need to know other people in order to get information. For people who came into the neighbourhood later on in their lives this feeling grew over the years (Interview Emma; Interview Jan).

For others being involved is seen as an investment either practically or socially.

*"When there is a personal investment, the connection with the place becomes something to cherish (Interview Fleur)."*

The practical investment or contribution to the neighbourhood can be caring for neighbours the same you want to be treated. You want to live in a tidy and clean environment, so you take responsibility to realise that (Interview Jetske), although taking care for the neighbourhood is something all inhabitants are involved in all together (Interview Anna), in the end you want to give everyone a cosy place to come home (Interview Saskia). A concrete example of this contribution is sweeping up the leaves in your own garden and help neighbours with theirs when you know it costs too much energy for them (Interview Emma) or make structural conversations with people from who you know they are lonely (Interview Saskia).

#### Local newspaper

In Nijmegen the city does have a weekly newspaper, de Brug and all neighbourhoods or city districts have an additional paper. In the Biezen the paper is called de Wester. Most of the interviewees use either the website, social media or the paper edition of the wester. Some elaborated on the aspects they like about the paper. For example, being up to date with all organised events, because there are several active associations that organize lots of activities for the inhabitants or they mentioned the connection the paper makes between authentic and new inhabitants by paying attention to the old stories from the neighbourhood, told by people who had lived at least a substantial part of their life in the neighbourhood, bringing back and sharing memories about the old days. People who read this newspaper or follow the news on social media feel strongly connected to the neighbourhood and their surroundings. They think being up to date is important (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma).

One person mentioned he didn't receive nor followed the local news. "I am not interested in local papers, I just read the national news. I know a little of the ins and outs in the neighbourhood, but not too much, same goes for the municipal politics (Interview Jan)."

Another interviewee mentioned “We don’t receive the local paper and you can pick it up in one of the local bars, but we don’t do that. I like the paper in some way, but I have enough to take care for in my own world (Interview Jetske).”

### Political Preference

Because the neighbourhood is a typical workers neighbourhood, the PvdA, SP and PVV (resp. social left wing parties and populist right wing party) are traditionally the biggest ones in the neighbourhood.



Figure 22: Political preference on PvdA during the elections of 2017, 20% on the votes were for PvdA. (RTLnieuws, 2017)

The SP launched a campaign fitting the opinions of the inhabitants in the parking policy. This party is always very active in workers districts and you see the support from the inhabitants. This case needs to be mentioned because the case is characterizing the political situation in the neighbourhood and many people asked me to describe this problem in my thesis.

Due to the new building developments and the plans for 500 houses per high rise building and only 200 parking spots per building. The municipality wants to discourage new inhabitants to own private cars and need ticket parking in the remaining neighbourhood to prevent the current inhabitants from experience nuisance. When there is a parking policy, the new inhabitants can’t have a car because they won’t be allowed to get a parking license. Because most of the inhabitants in this neighbourhood don’t have much money, the monthly cost will be 2,50, where the monthly costs normally are 12,50 (Interview Jeffrey). Inhabitants were asked if they would like a system like that two years ago and the inhabitants made clear they don’t want the parking system (Interview Marlous). Now, two years later, the municipality still want to do it and all inhabitants putted posters behind their windows as a protest. You feel that in one blink of an eye the inhabitants are completely against the municipality (Interview Jeffrey). This is reflected by the many street conversations I had, people said make sure the municipality knows we don’t want them. The reasons are divergent. Some said, we didn’t ask for new high-rise buildings and I don’t want to pay. Another lady said she bought the house because she can have a car in front of her door. When she needs a parking license, she will pave her front garden, so she doesn’t need the spot on the street anymore. And

actually, many see the parking policy as a way to close down the municipal budget gap and use the parking policy as an extra income. One of the people said:

*"Nowadays many inhabitants are against the parking policy. I am personally not completely against it, but because many of my neighbours don't want it, I feel loyal to them and ask myself if I should join and support them (Interview Marlous)."*

Politically, people are engaged, they like to read the papers and especially the authentic inhabitants distribute informal news through their networks. In the neighbourhood it is important to be up to date because the relationships between inhabitants but also between the inhabitants and the municipality can switch in an eyeblink. Keeping this in mind, the vibes are open and people take care of their direct public space.

## 5.4 Territorial bonds: Social bonds

The social bond distinguishes between saying hello to neighbours, knowing their names and being able to help each other with small tasks. These are the steps that Lupi (2007) distinguished in her work. She expected that people are more likely to come to a place when they know family or friends there. It is interesting that almost the opposite is true for my interviewees. The people who came to the neighbourhood later on in their lives didn't have family in the neighbourhood nor did they have many friends in the street. Only four out of seven had one friend or one couple they knew in the neighbourhood, (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske; Interview Jan) but these friends didn't live in the same street or housing block.

### Greeting the transient and direct neighbours

The vibe in the street is very open. Everyone says 'hi' when passing by (own observations). People know their direct neighbours; they greet each other by passing through their doors or they have a shared driveway or hedgerow to take care for (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma). When people work or relax in front of their house, everyone says hi or start a real conversation (Interview Jetske; Interview Saskia). To get to know more inhabitants is hard, especially when inhabitants have a job for which they need to leave the house (Interview Marlous; Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Jan). You need either a meeting event or a shared responsibility to take care for in order to get to know people (Interview Marlous; Interview Anna).

### Connections with other people than direct neighbours

The connections with neighbours grew over the years (Interview Emma; Interview Jan). In the late eighties, when one of the interviewees bought a house in the Waterkwartier "the inhabitants were solely focussed on each other. Everybody knew everyone. You know, I'm not originally from Nijmegen, let alone being an authentic inhabitant of the Waterkwartier, so it was awkward and uncomfortable in the beginning. Nowadays the vibe is really changing and more diverse, which opened up the social connections. Maybe another reason is that I learned to know more people over the years here. For me the place has become a place where I know people instead of being the outsider (Interview Jan)." This knowing people is extremely important in the feeling of safety and home. One of the old inhabitants mentioned "despite there happened so much here, I'm lucky I was never involved for some reason, and I've got that feeling always. Consequently, it has to do with the amount of people I know in the neighbourhood, I know just enough people to stay out of trouble (Interview Saskia)." The interviewee aims for the criminality, the drug trafficking, robberies of local shops and restaurants and nuisance of loitering, roughly these things happened between 1980 and 2010.

Nowadays the authentic inhabitants have formed small groups. They really know each other well, and they form a close group of direct neighbours which stay connected through the year. The people who live in between these authentic inhabitants cannot really connect with them (Interview Marlous). As a newcomer you only know the direct neighbours, but you don't know nothing about the social structures already in place (Interview Marlous; Personal Communication, 7<sup>th</sup> of November).

As newcomer trying to connect with the place, it is an investment of time before you know enough people to feel at home. Several interviewees mentioned that they know more faces and more people now, but they don't visit them occasionally. It's just the greeting, the moment of recognition in the street. As one person framed it:

*"I like to talk to everybody, I enjoy it. To know people is lovely. I got to know people slowly over the years. I would hesitate to move and start over at a new place because of the familiarity I feel with the neighbours here. Albeit, In the end it wouldn't matter where I live because my friends don't live in the neighbourhood and as long as I can visit them by using my bicycle I can try and start over everywhere in Nijmegen, but there is no need to, so why would I? (Interview Jan)."*

What most of my interviewees have in common is the open attitude towards the authentic inhabitants. They just want good relationships with them. To take that first step, feeling involved in the neighbourhood is important (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna).

*"because we have a connection with each other. You try to show interest in each other. It is a mixed neighbourhood, with newcomers like we, both partners earning money, people who live here all their lives, with elderly. So it is also that you pay attention for the elder neighbour or connect with the people that had lived in the streets for a long time. And the people here, also the people who live here authentically, people are just nice and super social. From that point of view we are involved and the new ones try to reach out in several activities (Interview Anna)."*

Most of the authentic inhabitants are elderly. One of the interviewees has the experience that once you know some of them, the others know you faster than you know them (Interview Saskia).

## Professionals dealing with the social practice in the neighbourhood

As we've seen in the political part, especially the authentic inhabitants have strong feelings and fight for their values. Because some of them need support from outside, although the general attitude is often a bit reserved or cagy, a professional network in place is important. Several institutions speak to each other once a month. The involved parties are the neighbourhood cop, a policeman who works on his visibility and accessibility to prevent criminal activities, the neighbourhood manager, who is in charge of the social support and social workers that help youth and people with problems to stay out of trouble, the neighbourhood director, who manages the public space together with inhabitants, public housing associations, the association for home owners and the neighbourhood associations, represented by the umbrella organisation Our Waterkwartier. These people talk about problems and changes prospected for the neighbourhood and what the future should look like in the neighbourhood to prevent the inhabitants from feeling left out (Interview Jeffrey; de Wester, 2020).

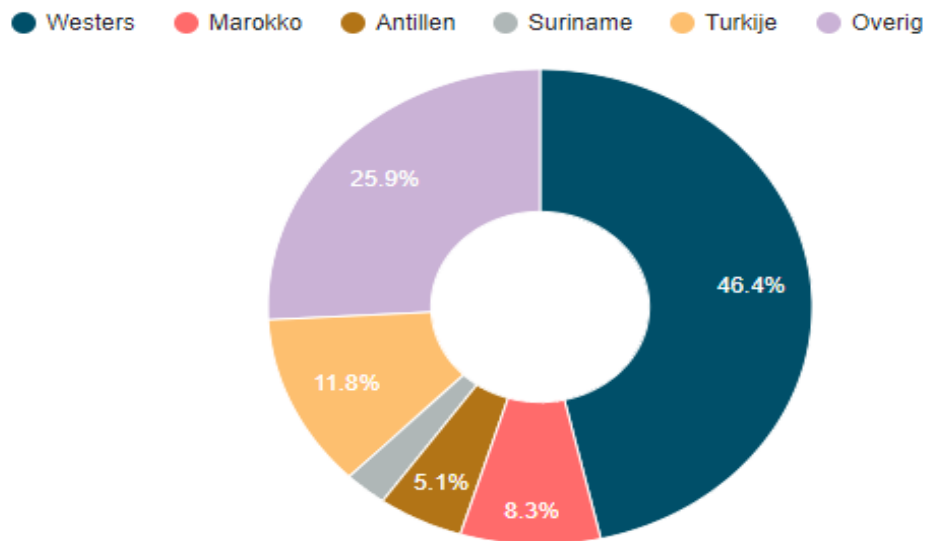
## *5.5 Territorial bonds: Cultural bonds*

This bond is about the identity of the neighbourhood. In the first part of the chapter, we've seen the rich history of the neighbourhood already. It is about the image inhabitants and politicians have on the neighbourhood.

Historically the Biezen is a worker's district. The following characteristics implicit to a worker's district according to the interviewees: most of the houses are publicly owned, many rental houses, inhabitants do not have much money to spend (Interview Jeffrey), people spend most of their lives around the house (Interview Emma). Over the years the image of the neighbourhood was known for the high criminality rates and the negative side effects of being a worker's district dealing with poverty. That image has definitely changed in the last 15 to 20 years. Nowadays, that's different (Interview Fleur). Some outsiders still have that association, but the people who live there now, see it differently (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske). It is a former social district where the influx of people with a higher education and the financial possibilities of buying a house is high (Interview Jetske). The people who live here nowadays see the positive side, the remnants of social cohesion as the workers district heritage (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma) or the hip and trendy character of the newly build residential areas, that characterize the active and nice place to live (Interview Emma).

Bram Lamberts from Lentekracht sees the neighbourhood from his professional background and describes it as "the neighbourhood where the real Nijmegen inhabitants live, with strong social structures dating back several generations and which faces fractions in the last years. The fraction is created because of gentrification, the process in which young high educated people want to live in their privately owned house near the city centre, but can't live in the neighbourhoods that already fit their wishes because the house prices rose there, rose faster than in the Biezen. These young high educated people have money to spend, which increases the housing prices in the Biezen, making living in the neighbourhood unaffordable for people that originally lived in the neighbourhood ... with these developments a fracture is caused in the social structures and the old identity of the neighbourhood. (Interview Bram)." "For the authentic inhabitants the new mothers-to-be are carry cyclist, they struggle with the changes and want everything to be like it always was. These people really say what they mean, and they say it directly, that's why this neighbourhood unique (Interview Jeffrey)."

The neighbours all talked about diversity, being a mixed neighbourhood, being a blended neighbourhood (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna). My expectations directly focussed on diversity in cultural background in different forms of migration, which according to the numbers could be the case. Through the years the workers district has faced quite some influx of firstly migrants, and later on higher educated people and young families. According to the current numbers on inhabitants by their heritage, 25 percent has the roots in another country (Alle Cijfers, 2020). The figure XX below shows the diversity of roots of the migrants living in the Biezen.



Bevolking in buurt Biezen: inwoners met een migratie-achtergrond worden onderverdeeld in westers en niet-westers op grond van hun geboorteland.

Figure 23: Cultural background of the inhabitants of the neighbourhood (Alle Cijfers, 2020)

However, during my time in the street I learned that cultural backgrounds were not bounded to migration background and multiculturalism as discussed in the scientific world. Diversity was only partly the theoretic diversity, it was more about the 'authentic Waterkwartier inhabitants' and the influxes of people who started to live in the street later on in their lives. Diversity also lies in the stages of life people experience, being grandparents, finalizing life on earth, but also about couples ready to start a family, young families, students and couples in their midlives are all living close to one another (Interview Fleur). And the last important diversity lies in social class. In the last years, the influx of couples with a double income has increased drastically because of the building activities on the former industrial sites (Interview Anna). This mix makes the spheres diverse and open for everyone when you yourself are open to feel it (Interview Marlous). Some of the interviewees are afraid that too many authentic inhabitants will leave at the expense of the social cohesion and spheres in the street (Interview Marlous; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske). One neighbourhood professional said that he expects the mix that exist nowadays, will last longer because the public housing corporations cannot sell all their houses, they sold the maximum already. He sees that diversity doesn't mean that people mingle, he wonders if the people with different backgrounds will ever blend in with each other, because developments are always planned in massive blocks on neighbourhood level, instead of on house or street level. "I wonder about the roads in between do they actually form the demarcation between expensive and other houses? ... the municipal intention is to avoid islands of different classes because that isn't good for the social structures, you want it to be mixed (Interview Jeffrey)."

Today the neighbourhood is thus diverse in social class and stages of life. In some streets different cultural backgrounds are present, but in the Maas- and Biezenstraat this is not the case.



## Differences in time, place and inhabitants: Personal characteristics

The family composition the length of stay and the wish to stay for more years into the house is expected to be determining for the territorial bonds. People who'd like to live in the neighbourhood are more likely to engage more and use more local services. People who rent a house are more likely to invest less in their surroundings because they might want to move sooner or later and having kids or a dog is determining how much time you spend in the neighbourhood or walk through it. The factor context of time is also important and determines the happiness of people in their houses.

## Resident's roots, housing ambitions for the future and family situation

Marlous bought the house 3,5 years ago. She and her partner are both raised in the VINEX part of Nijmegen, Dukenburg. She arrived in the Biezen via a student room in Bottendaal, apartment in the city centre and a rental house in Lent. Marlous and her partner do like the neighbourhood, they decided to come to the Biezen to raise a family there. She mentioned they had lived in a more anonymous neighbourhood, she didn't want to raise her child there because of the lack of social cohesion. She had the expectation that the Waterkwartier had a more diverse group of inhabitants and more social cohesion. She feels welcome and at home due to the other inhabitants and sphere in the street. She sees "the developments of authentic Waterkwartier inhabitants leaving as a threat because the lack of them will influence the sphere and social behaviour in the streets. The social situation should be mixed (Interview Marlous)." The only small point of critique is the size of their own garden, they doubt if the size will be sufficient on the long run.

Fleur came from the southern side of the Netherlands and started to live in Nijmegen in 1989 in Bottendaal. The last 13 years she lives in the Biezen. In January 2021, almost 2 years ago she moved in with her fiancée in her current house. Together, the two of them rent the place. They like their house very much. They love their garden and have the feeling they can come home in their house.

*"We wanted to buy a similar house as the house we live in now for a long time, but the prices were unrealistic. In our lives there is more left than just pay to inhabit a home (Interview Fleur)."*

Emma came to Nijmegen as a student in the 1980's. She had lived in Nijmegen-Oost for several years and liked it there. She came to the neighbourhood for a basement in a dyke house. After some years living there, she moved to the USA for a couple of years. When she came back, she took a partner and children with her, started their life in a rental house and bought their current house 18 years ago. In the beginning she and her partner still wanted to move to Nijmegen-Oost, because Emma was attached to that neighbourhood more, but now she found This house is the house I raised my children in. They were thinking about getting the students to a student room, but because of Corona they quitted searching.

- Family: partner and two children (Between 20 and 25 years old) sometimes also a partner of one of the children especially with the corona situation the partner is in the house often to avoid infections in the student complex.

Interview Jetske: They lived in Nijmegen for the last 10 years and started in Bottendaal. We wanted to have an affordable home near the city so we looked at Wolfskuil and Waterkwartier and that's where we ended up. We can really come home in our home and with the monthly cost, we still have a life besides paying for living and that's what matters for us. We don't need to leave the neighbourhood. There are options to enlarge the house, we like our garden.

- Partner

Interview Anna: I live for 11 years in the house we bought.

- Family: partner, 2 kids between 5 and 10 years old.

Interview Jan: I bought the house 25 years ago. I bought it cheap, but I had a lot of work to do before I could live here, so I moved here 22 years ago. I live in Nijmegen since 1976. I lived in Bottendaal, Altrade 10 years and in Willemsskwartier for approximately 10 years and then I bought this house. I came to the city to study and I never left. I live alone, but I had dogs from someone else of which I took care a couple of months.

Interview Saskia: Lived in the neighbourhood her whole life except for some short periods. She can really come home in her home. We love to live here; we have a big house. At some point in time, we have to move and live in a smaller house, but for now, I will stay here. We have a beautiful house and a big garden. Her dad lives next to her, so she can take care of him when it will be needed when he gets older. He lives in his old bakery, we changed that into a small living space. My partner lives here since his study. He liked to stay here, so that came out well. Since there are quite some blocks with authentic inhabitants and some with new young families, I always feel I'm in the middle because I left the neighbourhood to build a career, but I came back.

- Family: partner, three kids between 5 – 15 and a dog.

### **Home ownership and pride**

There is a structural difference between people who've chosen to live in the neighbourhood and the people who accidentally ended up in the neighbourhood about their pride of being a Waterkwartier inhabitant. These feelings have everything to do with owning or renting a house and the time in which they came to the neighbourhood.

#### **Renting all their life**

People who live in rental homes and live in the neighbourhood for all their life, are very proud of the place they live in. They feel indescribable proud of being an authentic Waterkwartier inhabitant. Their connectedness and feelings of pride related to the place is extraordinary strong (Street conversations).

#### **Renting later on in life**

In general, people who rent in the neighbourhood and came to the neighbourhood on a later age because the public housing institution incidentally had a house available in the Biezen where they could live, they are less proud to live here. These people aren't that outspoken in their expectations about the neighbourhood because they didn't consciously chose to come here. Although many really enjoy their houses and environment (Interview Fleur; Street conversations).

*"You asked if I feel a proud inhabitant of the neighbourhood. I ask myself what does a neighbourhood inhabitant feel when they feel a proud inhabitant. I think for me it doesn't matter that much where I would live, as long as you see social cohesion, the connection between the people. That's what matters for me (Interview Fleur)."*

#### Bought before 2010

Whereas the people who bought a house in the neighbourhood during the seventies and eighties more accidentally came into the neighbourhood. In her time, Nijmegen-Oost was the place to be for students and she'd had a wonderful time living there. When she wanted to buy a house, Nijmegen-Oost wasn't affordable anymore. She decided to stay in Nijmegen and came to the Biezen, because this was one of the only places she could afford (Interview Emma). Another person who moved to the neighbourhood in the same period mentioned that he accidentally found a cheap wrecked house he could renovate on his own because a friend saw the spot and tipped him (Interview Jan).

These two stories have in common that the Biezen was not a place consciously chosen. This might have to do with the negative image the neighbourhood had. Maybe the opportunities they saw in the house were leading instead of the feelings they had with its' surrounding (Interview Emma; Interview Jan). Nowadays they are both proud of their house. As one of the interviewees said:

*"I live in the Biezen and I'm proud of it. I talk with pride about the neighbourhood and when people ask me if they should buy a house in the city, I will recommend living here, but as the authentic people say, I am a Waterkwartier Inhabitant, that's not the kind of pride I feel living here. (Interview Emma)"*

#### Bought after 2010

In the last 30 years renovations and stimulating budgets have been invested to change the image of the neighbourhood. For the people who live in the Maas-Biezenstraat consciously chose to live there. They did not choose for a new housing block, but felt for the charm of their house in the middle of the workers street.

"We wanted to live in a diverse neighbourhood near the city centre and the train station. Wolfskuil (other neighbourhood in the city district) and Waterkwartier have a mixed group of inhabitants. You know beforehand that you are not an outstanding when you arrive here with both partners working. That wat makes the Waterkwartier different from the Willemskwartier, there the newly build houses are divided from the old parts, we wanted a neighbourhood where it is mixed. Look that division will also occur with the building projects in the old industrial area's, but we really wanted to live in the place where the authentic inhabitants once lived and where the inhabitants are diverse (Interview Marlous)."

For example the people who started to live in their privately owned house in the neighbourhood in the last five years, it was their choice to live in the neighbourhood. They feel lucky because the housing prices are increasing fast as shown below in the graph, figure xx. These people are proud they have found a house near the city centre. Most them consciously chose to live in a neighbourhood that they expected to be diverse with a strong social cohesion (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske; Straatinterviews).

## *5.6 Concluding summary of Neighbourhood*

The neighbourhood is an old neighbourhood, after some decades of being a workers district. Relationships, inhabitants and bonds are changing. The strong social cohesion and strong economic bond people had in the past with the neighbourhood are disappearing on the one hand, on the other the usage of facilities like sport, shops, health care and parks are on the rise. We see that people still are engaged with their environment, that they greet each other and have conversations in the streets. Their political engagement is more difficult to interpret because the number of voters may not be that high, but the people are politically active when there is a policy system implemented which they do not agree with. This makes social bonds interesting. Although many know their direct neighbours, the other authentic inhabitants of the street remain invisible for newcomers which makes it hard to connect and contribute to social cohesion.

The general observations about the gentrification in the neighbourhood, the diversity and also the fragmentation of social groups and network, creating new forms of anonymity and cordiality. Only time will tell if these groups will find each other again, or that they remain fragmented and become individualised.

## 6. *The initiative*

These paragraphs will discuss the process of the citizen initiative and the people who are engaged. The process started in the autumn of 2018 and was completed in the autumn of 2020 with the definite not placement of the 4<sup>th</sup> and 5<sup>th</sup> plant bed on the corner of the Maasstraat-Verax. The process is described with the help of the conceptual model as developed in the theoretical framework. I elaborate further on the roles, expectations and motivations of the participants. In this chapter we walk through all facets of the CLHEAR-model, but then in a different order, trying to analyse the process as chronologically as possible. I will start with a short summary of the process, and will then start with the 'Enabled to' section where I illustrate the participation structures in place. Then I will move on to the 'Asked by' part, where I exemplify the importance of inviting people. Then I will elaborate on motivations to join the project and what they liked about it. Followed by a paragraph on social pressure on others to join the initiative. I will then explore what the participants could contribute in the 'can do' section. In the last section, the 'responded to' part the interaction between the professional facilitators of the project and the participants will be explored.

### 6.1 *Overview of the process*

The process started with the launch of the My Green Neighbourhood programme, at the end of 2018, the year the city of Nijmegen was the European Green Capital. In early 2019, Marlous, the initiator of this greening initiative of "greening the Maas- and Biezenstraat" got in touch with the programme. She wanted to start a green initiative because she was missing green in her street and wanted to contribute to the expected strong social cohesion, which she didn't really experience in her first year in the street. This initiative was a way for her to reach out to others.

During the spring of 2019, Marlous and Bram Lamberts, the professional and facilitator for the My Green Neighbourhood programme from the projectbureau Lentekracht, gathered enthusiastic inhabitants. These inhabitants decided that greening the neighbourhood could consist out of three stages, with three different groups of involved participants. All the plans were made during the involvement of Lentekracht. The following ideas will be elaborated upon in paragraph 6.3.

- Decoration of tree beds with flowers and plants, in which a large group of Biezenstraat inhabitants were involved. This plan was executed in on the 26<sup>th</sup> of May 2019 and facilitated by Lentekracht with the budgets from the My Green Neighbourhood programme (Figure 24 & 25).
- Simultaneously the initiative tried to some trees in the public space of the Maasstraat. Here inhabitants from the Maasstraat were the main involved participants (Figure 26). Lentekracht isn't allowed to adjust the public space and thus the municipality needed to be involved. Lentekracht brought the municipality and the participants together. The trees were planted in the autumn of 2019, this plan was funded by the municipality.
- The third and last plan was made by both the most active inhabitants from the Maas- and Biezenstraat (Figure 27 – 30). They wanted to get some extra plant beds and a public bench as a meeting place in the street. The responsible and involved professional party was the municipality. Eventually the bench got emulated from the plan, the plant bed was implemented in spring 2020 with municipal funding.

On the following pages photos from the greenery can be found. Figure 24-30.





*Figure 25: Tree bed (Lentekracht, 2019)*



*Figure 24: Tree bed (Schaars, 2020)*



*Figure 26: Tree Maasstraat (Schaars, 2020)*





Figure 27: Plant beds Biezenstraat in the direction of Waterstraat (Schaars 2020)



Figure 28: Plant bed Maasstraat (Schaars, 2020)



Figure 29: Plant bed Biezenstraat - Biezendwarsstraat, in the background the Maasstraat plant bed (Leeuwenhaag, 2020)



Figure 30: Plant bed in front of the fast food restaurant with the sign 'Dit is een bewoners initiatief van Groener Biezen' (Schaars, 2020)

## 6.2 *Enabled to*

This paragraph entails the organisations and groups involved in facilitating the participation programme. In the first part the normal system for citizen participation is illustrated, then I will elaborate on the My Green Neighbourhood programme and the differences between the regular system. I will end with how my case study initiative eventually found the programme and what the added value of the programme in this initiative. In time this paragraph can be placed between autumn 2018 and winter/early spring 2019.

### 6.2.1 General Participation Policy in the municipality of Nijmegen

The Municipality of Nijmegen has developed 10 points plan for citizen participation. They defined this inhabitant participation as "Inhabitant involvement in municipal plans meant for them and give room for initiatives that come from the inhabitants themselves (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2019)." Unfortunately, this ten point plan for participation is about the aims for improved citizen participation in the municipality, instead of giving an overview for inhabitants that want to start an initiative (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2019; Interview Marlous).

Derived from these ten steps the standard municipal practice is that budgets per neighbourhood are reserved for maintenance of the public space and for possible citizen initiatives. Citizens with ideas can post their plans on MijnWijkPlan. This is an online participation platform where "plans of the municipality and plans and ideas of inhabitants come together (MijnWijkPlan, 2020)." In practice this means that inhabitants can look at initiatives in their neighbourhood, post ideas or ask questions or leave comments to other initiators (MijnWijkPlan, 2020). It works similar to social media, namely the initiator needs to collect as many likes or hearts as possible (Interview Marlous; Interview Jeffrey). Also, the municipality posts maintenance plans or reconstruction activities. MijnWijkPlan is regarded as a good working platform for different forms of participation: informing, consulting, coproducing and co-deciding participation projects. Additionally, the platform is used next to old-fashioned inhabitant information meetings, because the website is used by people under 45 years old, where citizen evenings are mostly visited by inhabitants older than 45 (Bruijn, Cadat-Lampe, 2020). All these ideas and municipal plans are funded by neighbourhood-bound yearly budgets, which are managed by the Neighbourhood Director (MijnWijkPlan, 2020).



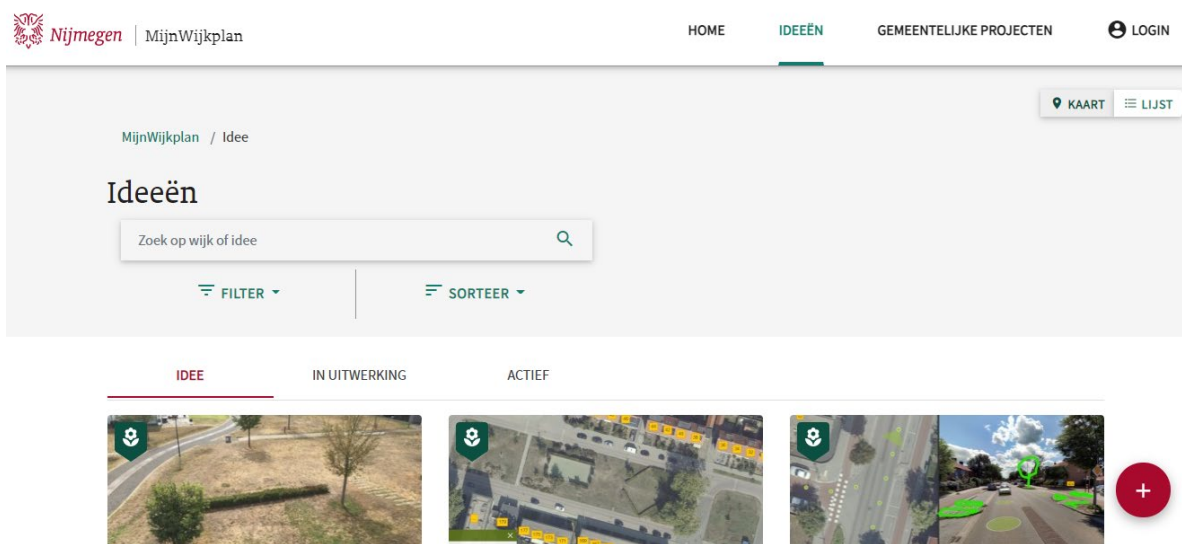


Figure 31: MijnWijkPlan website (MijnWijkPlan, 2021)

This Neighbourhood director needs to keep an eye on MijnWijkPlan. When there is sufficient carrying capacity for an idea, measurable by the number of initiators, the number of comments and the collected likes compared to the geographic scale of the initiative. When he thinks this all is sufficient, he has to talk to the initiators and find out what kind of help they need from the municipality. This differs from the help of the municipal participation professional to a thorough research to advise or only some funding to execute the idea (Interview Jeffrey). Inhabitants thus have to find MijnWijkPlan and collect likes on their own. According to Marlous, MijnWijkPlan didn't work so well.

*"this (resp. MijnWijkPlan) doesn't work so well, I just want to talk about my idea with somebody, I need somebody that can help develop my ideas. I think MijnWijkPlan can work when you already have contacts in the neighbourhood, when there are more initiators that developed their idea together. Especially when you know the municipal participation policy, the system might work well. I think that people who don't know the system, won't even start an initiative in the first place. The municipality should make it more accessible. They should ask people, come to us with your ideas, we offer support in the development of ideas (Interview Marlous)."*

## 6.2.2 Participation Policy within the My Green Neighbourhood programme

My Green Neighbourhood caused alteration in this process. It was during the evaluation and aftermath of the Green Capital year, that My Green Neighbourhood was born. In September 2018 press and media accused the Green Capital Foundation of spending too much money creating 'bobo-party', meaning that the organisation focussed too much on the directors (de Gelderlander, 2018; Omroep Gelderland, 2018). According to Bram Lamberts, professionally involved in the execution of some parts of the Green Capital Challenges, co-founder and executioner of the My Green Neighbourhood programme and it's follow-up programme:

*"this was somewhere justified, somewhat unjustified critique. The question rose, how can we maintain the energy we built in 2018 and let it grow in 2019, meanwhile losing the stigma of 'bobo-party'... In a meeting with other Green Capital executioners, we designed the concept of My Green*

*Neighbourhood. Where the former challenges came from green ideas of green people and trying to execute these in the neighbourhoods, the My Green Neighbourhood programme was meant to search for common people that had an idea for their neighbourhood (Interview Bram)."*

Lentekracht was asked to invent and execute this programme due to their expertise in co-creation sustainable participation projects on a neighbourhood level. The aim of the programme became to finish 9 social projects, in 9 different city districts or neighbourhoods within 9 months after the programme's launch (Lentekracht, 2018). This could be on the level of the street, the micro-neighbourhood and macro neighbourhood or even bigger. The idea of My Green Neighbourhood was finding those people and see how we could support them to make their ideas come true (Interview Bram).

These common people should be found in the neighbourhoods themselves, by talking to people in gathering places like schools and shops, but also used professional networks of parties that keep track of the neighbourhood. These conversations gave insight into the existing local networks. Additionally, flyers were distributed and advertisements were placed in local newspapers and use their social media platforms (Interview Bram).

The My Green Neighbourhood programme, provides support only to the initiatives that meet the following requirements:

- the initiative should be related to sustainability (greenery, energy, rain water, litter, etc.),
- it should come from inhabitants, there should be sufficient carrying capacity in the neighbourhood,
- it should be possible to finish within 1 year, costs not higher than €5000, -,
- the initiative wouldn't take place without our support (Lentekracht, 2019 - I).

These criteria were meant to find projects that could achieve the aims of the programme: "Realisation of one sustainability project and sustaining it in one neighbourhood or city district of Nijmegen, enhance social cohesion between inhabitants, raising awareness among inhabitants of Nijmegen, create a solid foundation for future sustainable initiatives within the neighbourhood (Lentekracht, 2018)."

### 6.2.3 The citizen initiative Maas-Biezenstraat and the My Green Neighbourhood programme

Following the instructions of the My Green Neighbourhood professionals, the local newspaper of the city district Oud-West, de Wester, posted the call for participants on their website, in the paper and on their social media account. With this tweet, the initiator in the Biezen was found and contacted.



Figure 32: Tweet of the Wester, the start of the citizen initiative (Twitter, 2019)

*"I follow de Wester on Twitter. When I saw the message, I thought 'Oh that is actually nice, this is closely related to what I want to achieve (Interview Marlous)."*

After 'direct messaging' the Wester, the initiator received an email from Bram Lamberts and they decided to meet each other. "It was in the world of pre-corona, so I could just visit her to discuss her idea and see what she was able and wanting to do. I had to examine if her idea fitted the My Green Neighbourhood programme (Interview Bram)." In this meeting the two of them decided to work together within the programme. For the initiator Bram embodied the support she needed, the person to develop her ideas further with and the one who knew which steps she had to take to accomplish her ideas.

## 6.3 Asked by

In the previous paragraph I elaborated on the starting point of the programme with the initiator reaching out to the programme. This paragraph is about reaching out to neighbours to engage in the initiative. The time frame this happened was between February – April 2019, August-December 2019, April 2020.

### 6.3.1 First invitation

Bram and the initiator designed an action plan on their first meeting. They reached out to others, in an attempt to find other people who were interested and wanted to get involved. The initiator made the text, Bram printed the message and the initiator spread the letter in every mailbox along the red markings in the picture. In total around 150 addresses had received the flyer (Interview Marlous; Interview Bram).

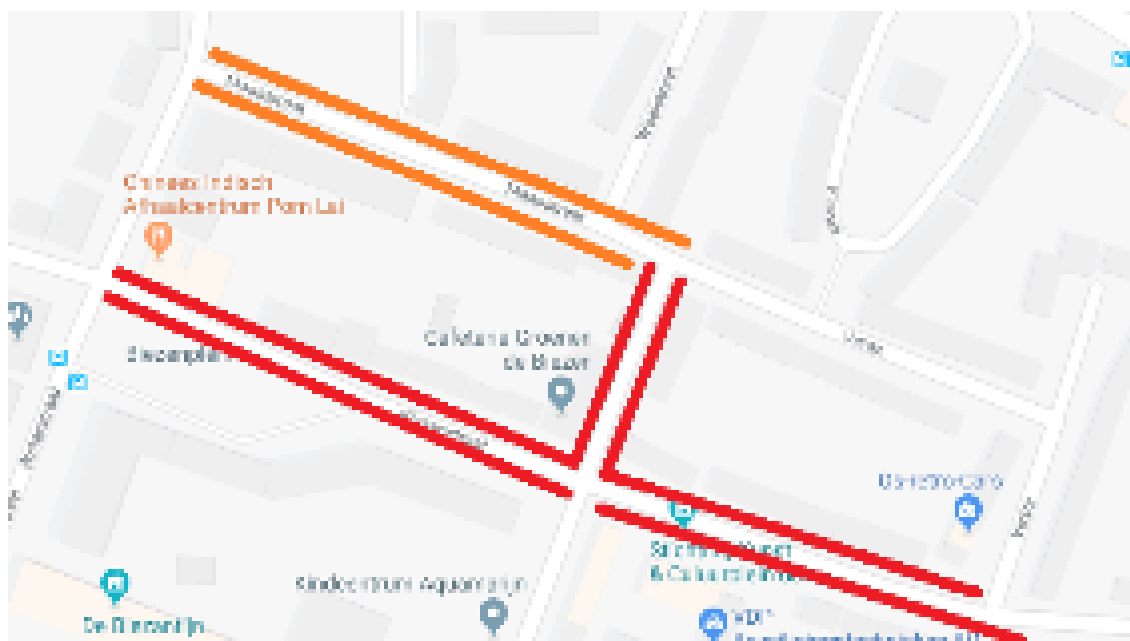


Figure 33: Map for the distribution of invitations to join the citizen initiative (Lentekracht, 2019)

Hallo buurtgenoten,

Bijna 2 jaar wonen mijn man en ik (en sinds juli met onze baby erbij) met veel plezier op de Maasstraat. We vinden het een mooie levendige buurt met aardige attente mensen, maar we zouden graag wat meer groen zien in onze straat. In onze straat, in het rijtje van de Groenen staan bijvoorbeeld geen bomen, struiken of iets anders buiten het groen in de (gevel)tuintjes. Nu leek het mij heel leuk om door de buurt een bloemenlint aan te leggen. Mooie wilde bloemen in de boomspiegels of op andere plekken. Ook wat extra groen in onze straat zou ik fijn vinden.

Vind je het een leuk initiatief en wil je daar graag aan mee helpen? Mail mij dan op [personal emailaddress](#). Andere ideeën over openbaar groen zijn ook welkom, laten we dan samen kijken of we er één initiatief van kunnen maken. Dan heeft het grotere kans dat we het voor elkaar krijgen. Ook kunnen we dan wellicht aanspraak maken op ondersteuning van Mijn Groene Wijk ([www.mijn-groenewijk.nl](http://www.mijn-groenewijk.nl)).

Groeten, Marlous



Figure 34: Invitation letter to join the citizen initiative (Lentekracht, 2019)

The initiator didn't know many people in the neighbourhood, thus most participants received a letter from a stranger. Still the letter mobilised approximately 15 people (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Bram). The initiator organised a meeting with all interested people.

### 6.3.2 Asking people personally

The tree bed idea was to decorate the tree beds over a hundred meters in the Biezenstraat. To realise this idea, the group needed extra participants in the Biezenstraat. One participant that already knew most of the people in the Biezenstraat chose some afternoons to ring every doorbell within 70 meters from the crossroad to both directions. He asked the people if they'd like to adopt a tree bed<sup>1</sup> and helped them to request the right to do so on the municipal website for tree adoption and he managed to get more neighbours involved for the tree bed part of the initiative (Interview Marlous; Interview Jan; Interview Saskia).

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<sup>1</sup> The tree bed policy of Nijmegen entails the possibility for every inhabitant of Nijmegen to fill in an online application for a tree bed in front of their houses. The municipality keeps a list of adopters. When the tree bed isn't already adopted, the municipality places a special tile in front of the tree. This tile shows municipal employees that they don't have to care for the tree bed and thereby addressing the 'adopter' as responsible for taking care of the tree bed. When the care for a tree bed doesn't meet the requirements of the adoption, the tile gets removed and the municipal employees take over the work again. The adopter can also email or ring the municipality to stop with taking care for the tree (Gemeente Nijmegen, 2020-I).

## 6.4 Like to

In this paragraph I will dive deeper into the expectations of the participants when they started to participate, the things they did like during the process and how they look at their efforts. This is important to follow the road to social cohesion, the feeling of togetherness and responsibility, but also about joy in the efforts for the initiative and feeling happy about the time investment in the initiative.

### 6.4.1 The main motivations to join the initiative

The main reasons for Marlous to start the initiative were she missed green in her street and she wanted to get in touch with other residents (Interview Marlous). All the involved participants have in common that they like greenery and sympathized to the idea of enhancing it, although they all had different ideas why they liked more greenery.

- like greenery (Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske; Interview Jan; Interview Saskia)
- and/or identify with the importance of greenery. The interviewees mentioned one of the following reasons for this importance: the positive effect on biodiversity, contributing to a better microclimate and water resilience in the streets. (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna). This motivation is not only linked to liking greener, but also putting themselves under pressure to contribute to this initiative because they feel the need to contribute to more green in the streets. This motivation is therefore more linked to the have to section.
- and/or combined one of the first to the attractiveness of the street (Interview Emma; Interview Jan)
- and/or the wish for more greenery in the street (Interview Jetske).

And most of the participants already wanted more connections or get to know people in general in their neighbourhood or wanted a project to work together. This initiative was the perfect opportunity for them (Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Jan; Interview Saskia).

And then there were two personal reasons why people liked the project.

- Once person already knew the initiator from being direct neighbours. "I had faith that she could get it done, with this feeling I am willing to do some tasks to help accomplish this (Interview Jetske)."
- This project just came when I retired from my job, so I had more time to spend in the neighbourhood (Interview Jan).

The people who responded to the letter we saw in the 'Asked by' section had in common that they could both empathize the idea of greening and were looking for more social connections in the neighbourhood themselves (Interview Marlous; Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Jan). For two others, the social connections were more experienced as a positive side-effect, because they intrinsically wanted more green, but weren't necessarily looking for new contacts (Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske). One of them mentioned:

*"It became much more fun to work on, because you get the opportunity to inspire and be inspired by others because you take the time to talk about different ideas and then you get to know each other better and better (Interview Fleur)."*

### 6.4.2 Positive rewards of contributing to the initiative

During the development of ideas, the possibilities for greening the neighbourhood went beyond the expectations of the participants (Interview Marlous). There were also more people that were actively involved and stayed that way until all our plans were implemented. "This is mainly due to the kind of people that were involved, but maybe even more to the inspiring initiator we had (Interview Fleur)." And "everyone had some moments they really enjoyed working on this initiative together (Interview Marlous)."

"It helped that the group stayed in touch during the process and that you can accidentally run into each other (Interview Emma)." "It is not that we go in by our direct neighbours every day, it was just a nice way to learn the names from the people you share your street with. It was nice to just get to know new people (Interview Jan)." The nature of the idea helps as well, "it was really about accomplishing something together. It wasn't possible to join just once, the power is in the repetition of involvement that really makes that the initiative is part of people's life now (Interview Emma)." "It is the power of keeping in touch with each other, sharing a WhatsApp group that you keep up to date from each other and from the common project. I think that is really valuable (Interview Saskia)." Others started after they got involved when they adopted a tree bed. Because they really liked their tree beds, they wanted to explore what more they could do (Interview Anna; Interview Saskia)

### 6.4.3 Versatility of this initiative

In the willingness of people to contribute, three main groups are thus recognizable. This is different for people who miss one or both interest in greenery or social connection. For example, there are people who do like green, but don't necessarily need more plants to take care for. There are also people who hesitate or don't want to be involved in a project with shared responsibilities. When these latter groups are asked by someone they know, they are likely to eventually participate because they want to contribute to and support their acquaintances' ideas. There is also a final group who either cannot take care for greenery or that don't want to be involved in anything. Even when these people are asked by someone they already know, they are not likely to participate.

Generally, there are three groups of people:

1. People who want greenery and social connections
2. People who can contribute to greenery but don't want shared responsibilities
3. People who don't want to be involved at all for many different reasons

The beauty of this initiative is that the plant beds fulfil the needs of the first group of people, because it offers a shared responsibility, a common ground to work for. But also, the second group can participate because they can all adopt their own tree bed as their own responsibility. To have both options is proven to be a success, because together they managed to adopt 14 tree beds, from which only 4 were adopted by people who participated in the first group as well. Together they managed to pick a day, the 26<sup>th</sup> of May in 2019, and decided which plants should be planted. The plants were funded by the My Green Neighbourhood programme, and thus everyone who was able to plant plants or to help that day gathered and helped each other planting the tree beds. For the people in the second group this was a bounded social activity and they didn't have to work as hard to get their tree bed planted, because that's the highest threshold starting of taking care for a tree bed.



## 6.5 *Have to*

In this section, the extrinsic motivations and negative side effects of the initiative are discussed.

### 6.5.1 Extrinsic Motivations of the participants

Although most participants intrinsically sympathized with the idea of having a greener street or getting to know more people in the neighbourhood, others needed some pressure to join as well. Where liking was more about personal identification with the topic, fun getting to know others because you like it or like the idea to contribute to the direct living environment, the have to adds the social pressure to contribute or they feel the need to do something from a moral point of view.

This last reason is true for 4/7 interviewed participants besides they like green, also feel the need to contribute to this idea, because it probably links to a more fundamental shared moral. I will come back to this issue in chapter 6. Two other examples of 'Have to' was first with interviewee 4. Yes, she also liked the green, but she wasn't really looking for more activities in her daily life. Because she knew the initiator, she felt the need to contribute to help the initiator out when necessary. In any case for this fourth interviewee this turned out well, because she could actually enjoy the new social contacts, which she didn't expect beforehand. The other example is interviewee 3, who felt the need to contribute to neighbourhood initiatives because ideas she sympathizes with, she needs to help forward.

Other examples of the 'have to' are the ones asked to contribute to the tree beds. Most of the people who agreed to help with the tree beds, liked to contribute to this project because they like to take care of green (2 people), or they sympathized the idea and wanted to help the person who asked them because they knew him and wanted to help him (1 person), or they liked green and they wanted to support the person they already knew (3 people). All these people didn't feel the *need* to contribute to greenery, but liked the green or had the feeling the *needed* to help their acquaintance out.

### 6.5.1 Negative reactions and resistance to the initiative

The difference between the ones with an intrinsically motivation to join and the ones who needed an external push from someone they know, has not only to do with different ideas on greenery or social cohesion. It's also about a different mindset in life, being proactive or being hesitant in reaching out, but active when personally asked to take action. This different mindset created a feeling of being left out by the people who where not involved in the plant bed process.

Early spring 2019	-	Marlous spreaded flyers
Half spring 2019	-	One of the participants makes a round along the doorbells
Autumn 2019	-	Municipal communication for the planting of trees in the Maasstraat, addressed to all people in the Maasstraat
Half spring 2020	-	Municipal communication for the execution of the plant beds on the crossroad Maas-Biezenstraat to all people living near the crossroad.

The last letter, about the plant beds, was for the people I talked to an unpleasant surprise. The reason for feeling left out comes from different motives. One person didn't agree that those young new people were

designated to lead the project because they didn't know the neighbourhood. For him it was unclear why he did participate in the tree beds, but wasn't involved in the plant beds. He didn't know why. He was angry that he received a letter from the municipality and that others apparently didn't take the effort to come and tell him what was going on. Others said the municipality should have asked us if we think this was a good investment. The money could've been spent differently, green is not the most necessary here because there are parks and greenery nearby. Others said that they didn't know there was an initiative going on until they got the letter of the municipality.

These reactions show that although initiators might think they do the right thing, others can have other ideas. The issues raised about the money will get further attention in the 'responded to' section. The last issue I heard a couple of times too. 'We didn't know until it was official'. This issue can be understood because there is quite some time between the campaign to include people in the tree beds and the execution of the plant beds in the pavement. Maybe it was unclear for the bystanders that the initiative consists of three parts causing the third part to be a surprise.

For example, why it started with someone who didn't know anything? Here we see a painful misunderstanding. The greening was no municipal mandatory assignment, the municipality didn't choose one person to execute their green idea. By this misunderstanding the position of the left-out and the participants get polarized.

## 6.6 *Can do*

What became apparent from the interviews was that only a small share of participants participated because they had the feeling that they could use their personal skills and resources. Everybody wanted to join because they liked one or another aspect of the idea or project. However, asking the participants further about their contributions to the project, they were somewhat proud of the addition they could make during the entire project. In the interviews I also asked the participants to describe their roles and the roles of others. These questions enabled me to reconstruct the roles of the participants in a comprehensive way. The roles of the professionals will be discussed in the 'responded-to' section.

### 6.6.1 The initiator

The initiator is always present in a citizen initiative because this is the one who starts the process. In this case there is one initiator, but sometimes one idea is started by more people. As the initiator mentioned "I think that me starting the project and persisting with it, is the reason the neighbourhood eventually got the extra greenery (Interview Marlous)." "On a certain moment I wanted to quit, because the initiative costed too much energy, but when I didn't do anything, no one did something, so I was needed to continue the project. That's where I started to delegate tasks and asked others to do a bit (Interview Marlous)." Besides the ability of the initiator to persist and start the project, brought her professional career an advantage in managing expectations "I knew that working on an initiative could take quite some time (Interview Marlous)" and "I knew before that people want bounded tasks, I've seen it in my work quite often (Interview Marlous)" As an initiator you are the first point of contact of the other participants. Every time the project stood still, or the waiting took a while, people stopped doing anything and asked me how it was going. In the meantime, the initiator kept being in touch with Bram and later on also with the municipality. That these professionals were less visible for the participants and the initiator the face behind the initiative is a benefit according to Bram Lamberts. "You want to create the illusion that everything is handled by and for the participants, because that creates extra value in the neighbourhood and the long-term chances that the project will survive on the long term (Interview Bram)." In this project the initiator couldn't add anything content wise because she knew nothing about green. "That's for the better, the initiators' task can be challenging enough in itself. (Interview Marlous)."

Other participants mentioned that they valued the ideas the initiator had at the beginning and were inspired by her as a person (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma). One added that because the initiator kept being in touch with the professionals, she organised all meetings and tasks that had to be performed before the process could continue (Interview Fleur). Other people mentioned that this initiator was valuable because she was able to hold all the energy from the people and she motivated people to stay involved (Interview Emma; Interview Jan).

## 6.6.2 Range of participants

Participants are actively involved persons. The initiator experienced that people who are involved want to contribute, but they are only willing to do bounded tasks and need to get updates every now and then. To improve reciprocal contacts, all participants that were present on the first meeting and were willing to commit to the trees on the Maasstraat and plant beds were added to a What's App group called 'Groenen 2.0'. "This was a small joke because we have a fast-food store on the corner of the street that is called Groenen (Interview Fleur)." In this chat tasks are delegated and people stay updated. It is precisely that "you stay connected over a longer time and stay involved in executing tasks together, that sustains the social side of the initiative (Interview Fleur)." Even within this 'doing bounded tasks' participants vary in the number of tasks they are willing to do. "From the beginning onwards, we had an excited group of people from which more people performed tasks with ease ... you need more of those people than only one, otherwise nothing would have happened (Interview Fleur)." In the coming indentions, the differences in commitment and involvement will be explored.

### 6.6.2.1 Technical Operator

This role is based on the technical producer for radio shows. In this initiative there was one participant that had much knowledge about plants and was willing to support the initiator by fulfilling tasks (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Saskia). From the beginning onwards, this participant was present at every meeting and supported the facilitator. Further on in the project she took the lead in the plant and plant species needed for the implementation of the project (Interview Marlous). "I easily put effort in this kind of projects and my focus on the condition of plants is valuable. I monitor the state of the green spots. (Interview Fleur)." "I also gave input on the construction of ideas about the plant species we could use and how we could fill the empty spots in the plant beds. It is mostly the project parts that strongly relate to the project that I take care for. Now we had the opportunity to pitch our initiative, but I'm not a hero in presenting our work to others. However, I do like to organise and facilitate the related issues (Interview Fleur)."

### 6.6.2.2 Content Secretary

This description is meant to point at those who have or have access to expert knowledge on the topic. These persons are able to share this insight information with the technical operator and initiator. These persons see less obvious aspects of the project that need to be cared for due to their professional eye or knowledge they extract from their personal network. In this initiative there was one woman who got involved after the 'planting tree bed day'. She could bring in knowledge on the 'authentic inhabitants' who influenced the plan indirectly because they weren't involved but might have a different opinion. After the bench incident (which will be explained further in the responded-to section) she was able to connect with some of the critiquing neighbours (Interview Anna). Also, this woman could add on technical issues with the placement of the plant beds since one of the people in her network has a related profession. This is the only person who said in the interviews that her personal network was of useful input in the initiative (Interview Anna). According to the initiator, this person was at all meetings ever since the 'tree bed planting day' and filled in a very supportive role for her (Interview Marlous).

#### 6.6.2.3 The all-round participant

The most participants belong to this group. With all-round I mean that they go to meetings, give input, do tasks behind the scenes and take care of the plants (Interview Emma; Interview Jan). The combination of showing interest, share ideas and being committed to the other group is what all-round stands for. Partners of committed participants are also often in this group. Although the partners are not necessarily present at the meetings, they supported their partners, help to develop ideas or give technical advises and often fulfilled background tasks (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna). A different example of an all-round participant is Jan, who was involved in the initiative from the beginning onwards, he attended all the meetings. For me as a researcher I couldn't really figure out what he could contribute content wise in these meetings, but he offered to go door by door, asking others to get involved as well. This is a very clear task, where he really contributed to the success of the initiative. When others are not in the position to take care for the plants, he is able to do it.

#### 6.6.2.4 The 'hands-on' participants

One of the participants summarized the role as practical supporter in a down to earth way. "I think I'm a free rider that is available to help and support when there is a need to (Interview Jetske)." This meant she didn't want to be involved fully, sharing ideas, giving her opinion, she likes the idea and trust the others to make decisions. She wants to be involved only when she can do practical tasks. This group is maybe bounded to initiatives with a spatial outcome which asks for a structural maintenance, like plant beds. Jetske just liked to contribute in maintaining and taking care of the plant beds. "There are also participants that later on joined, bounding their commitment to the actual watering and caring for the plants, they never attended meetings and discussions, but they do the hands-on tasks of taking care for the plants (Interview Marlous)."

## 6.7 Responded to

In this paragraph I am going to talk about the roles the professional parties involved took and what they did during the three stages of the project. I begin with how the professional parties described their own role and the role of the other and then I zoom into the responses of these parties within the different stages of the project. This paragraph is about the period between February 2019 and January 2021

### 6.7.1 Lentekracht

For Lentekracht, the facilitating party, the project had 4 aims;

- financing and supporting the adaptation and planting of the tree beds,
- placing new trees in the Maasstraat together with the Neighbourhood Director,
- involve more participants by helping the initiators to get signatures and likes on MijnWijkPlan to realise the plant beds on the crossroad
- involve more participants by helping the initiators to get signatures and likes on MijnWijkPlan to realise the placement of a bench on the crossroad.

In order to achieve these goals Lentekracht offered support and answers to questions of participants, general support in the steps of the process from defining the goals and organising how to achieve those keeping in mind the budgetary limits. Concrete tasks in this role were for example to search together for more participants in the initiative area, helping with the organisation of meetings, and trying to bring Neighbourhood Director and initiators in touch with each other (Internal Document Lentekracht, June 2019).

The involvement of more participants happened in two rounds. The first happened right after initiator had her idea. Bram helped with printing all the flyers to invite neighbours (Paragraph 6.3) with which he prevented Marlous to invest private resources (Interview Marlous; Interview Bram). This support shows that Lentekracht delivered support for insiders in their process, but also made an effort to support the communication of the project to the outside world. The second round was after the first meeting with the interested neighbours. In order to be eligible for subsidies, the carrying capacity of the plan needed to be shown on MijnWijkPlan. Because of the aloof attitude of the authentic inhabitants, likes on the online platform were hard to collect. Bram advised to go door by door and collect signatures in real life, which is information that cannot be found on the municipal page for participation (Interview Marlous).

During the plan, Bram always knew what the new step was going to be and helped us to prepare for that (Interview Marlous). It was nice to have someone looking over your shoulder instead of figuring everything out on my own. He was easily approachable because he also joined the WhatsApp group in order to give answers immediately and to be up to date all the time. That was of great help because the other parties were laid back in their communication and took long times before we got a response. Bram actively contacted his network when responses took too long (Interview Fleur). The communication between Lentekracht and the Neighbourhood Director were good and strengthened the support for the participants (Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey).

These last participant experiences are strongly related to the role Bram referred to as process-manager. In his eyes the process-manager is indeed responsible for bringing people together on the one hand. On the other, the process manager secures the process steps and makes sure these steps can be made. The

best example here was during the first meeting. The ideas split the initiative in three parts. It was possible for Lentekracht to execute the first part of the tree beds completely. Lentekracht delivered budget and worked together with the participants up to the tree bed planting day (Interview Marlous; Interview Bram). The other projects were more complicated because Lentekracht isn't legally allowed to adjust public space. For that purpose, the Neighbourhood Director need to step in.

Bram made sure that the Neighbourhood Director jumped in and secured the communication lines between the participants and this Director (Interview Bram).

*"Especially when process steps take longer than expected and the initiative therefore slows down or just pause, my role is to keep everyone up to date and try to get the project moving as soon as I can. Because I know, when I stop at a dead end, the project cannot be implemented (Interview Bram)."*

When the contacts are put in place between the Neighbourhood Director and the participants, and the support of the My Green Neighbourhood programme reached her end, it was Lentekracht it's turn to take a step back. From there the Neighbourhood Director could take over the funding and execution of the final process steps, then the role of process-manager is up to the Neighbourhood Director (Interview Marlous; Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey).

Others were surprised by the willingness of Lentekracht to go with the flow of the participants and bounding themselves only to practical tasks. They expected Lentekracht to push the initiative in a certain direction or to provide the participants with reasons why green in public space is important (Interview Emma). This is exactly what Bram wanted to accomplish. He wanted to empower the citizens and completely design their own initiative because from the past, this method is the most effective in sustaining itself, even when professional support eventually stops. The most important is that the initiator can bare the process and she needs every help I can give her, although she needs to take all the steps with her participants (Interview Bram).



## 6.7.2 Municipality

The municipality is active in enabling citizens to hand in a citizen initiative. They build the policy structure and are responsible to keep the infrastructures like MijnWijkPlan accessible to every inhabitant (Verordening Burgerinitiatieven, 2019). The municipality also accomplished to be the Green Capital of Europe in 2018 and managed to reserve budgets every year to keep encouraging citizens to green their neighbourhoods (Green Capital Challenges, 2020). In the standard procedure the municipality is represented by the Neighbourhood Director. In the case of the My Green Neighbourhood, Lentekracht delivers the professionals involved and include the Neighbourhood Director when the initiative involves adjustments in the public space. In this initiative also the municipal Green Expert was involved, to research and advise the opportunities for trees and plant beds in the Maas- and Biezenstraat (Interview Jeffrey).

### 6.7.2.1 Neighbourhood director

*"My function is to go around, meet people and solve problems of the inhabitants that get stuck somewhere in the bureaucratic municipal system in order to get the public space as liveable, green and safe as possible (Interview Jeffrey)."*

The Neighbourhood Director is an employee of the municipality and responsible for everything that has to do with (necessary) adjustments in public space, from traffic situations, playgrounds and waterbodies to garbage and nuisance solutions.

*"Preferably the adjustments involve more greenery in the street, that's at least were we try to head to as a municipality (Interview Jeffrey)."*

He is the first contact point of the municipality when residents want to adjust or have questions about the public space. Being the first contact point is the most prominent task, but this also entails the splitting of tasks, staying in touch with the participants and if needed bringing experts at the table. Within this process it is important to explore possibilities and ideas together (Interview Jeffrey). This exploration of possibilities can require additional expert research and the expert helping the participants move forward, or can be proposing greener as being done in this process (Interview Marlous). In short, the Neighbourhood Director needs to stay in touch with the inhabitants, be their listener, take them seriously and see how the system can help them to solve their problems (Interview Jeffrey).

### 6.7.2.2 Green advisor

The Neighbourhood Director needs to understand the wishes of the participant and connect those to municipal experts that can help implement the ideas. In this case the green advisor attended the meetings from the neighbourhood director and the participants (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey). Normally the green advisor goes to the meeting on his own, talk about the ideas of the participants and gives advice from his expertise namely green: plant species, trees, and all related issues that should be kept in mind while planting trees (Interview Fleur; Interview Bram). After this meeting the green advisor constructs a plan and proposes it to the Neighbourhood Director to get budget for the implementation in return. The budget influences the final shape of the plan. Together with the participants the plan will be approved (Interview Jeffrey).

### 6.7.3 Examples where the professionals responded to

On the previous page, the role of Neighbourhood Director and Green Advisor are explored. In this paragraph, I will elaborate the response of the professionals in crucial stages of the process and I will elaborate on why the process took such a long time (almost 2 years).

#### *Funding and the difference from the My Green Neighbourhood programme*

From the eyes of the Neighbourhood Director, the planting of tree beds is by definition not a citizen initiative because it doesn't require people to work together nor asks it adjustments in the public space (Interview Jeffrey). The adoption of tree beds is free and inhabitants are free to plant whatever they want when they buy the plants themselves (Municipality website; Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey). Bram sees the planting of tree beds as participation when a whole street adopts them all at once. When this is the case the power of the tree beds is that involvement of residents doesn't come with responsibility to each other, which is an accessible form for enhancing social cohesion and the goal can be reached in a short period of time (Interview Bram). In this initiative the tree beds were adopted by the whole street at once and this was the reason why the My Green Neighbourhood programme funded the plants, because they didn't want to force inhabitants to invest their own resources, which made this part accessible for more people. For more substantial adjustments in the public space major budgets are needed. These budget extents are managed by the Neighbourhood Director (Interview Jeffrey). The funding for the trees and the installation of plant beds thus came from the Neighbourhood Bound Budget (Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey).

#### *Transfer of Neighbourhood Directors*

Lentekracht appreciated the process with the tree beds and trusted this group of people to implement their bigger ideas as well. This was the reason to invite the Neighbourhood Director to come and meet with the participants. The Neighbourhood Director only wanted to see the participants when they were able to show the carrying capacity of this initiative. To fulfil this requirement Lentekracht helped to involve people (second round) (Interview Marlous). Eventually, after some hesitation of the Neighbourhood Director a meeting took place between the participants, Lentekracht, the Neighbourhood Director and the Green Advisor. Together they developed a plan, but before it could be implemented, the Neighbourhood Director quit her job (Interview Bram). In august 2019, Jeffrey became the new Neighbourhood Director. When Bram ran into him at another occasion, Bram pushed Jeffrey to get involved immediately. They organised a similar meeting on a short note, which resulted in this initiative being the first citizen participation project for Jeffrey (Interview Jeffrey).

In the months after this first meeting, the trees were planted. The municipality always tries to plant trees in the autumn season, somewhere between October and December (Interview Marlous; Interview Bram; Interview Jeffrey). The plans for the plant beds were developed after this meeting as well, but before their implementation, the Green Advisor quitted his job. The new Green Advisor had some questions about the initial design and needed another meeting for the design of the plant beds. All together this transfer period of professionals, took quite a while (Interview Jeffrey). For the participants, although they understood the reasons for the delay, it was frustrating that they couldn't move forward with their project (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna; Interview Jan).

### *Bench*

From the beginning onwards, most of the participants were involved not only to add greenery in their street but also for the social aspect (Interview Marlous). From the beginning onwards the ideas of the plant beds were hand in hand with installing a meeting place, a simple bench on the crossroad (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna; Interview Bram). It was the task of the Neighbourhood Director to find out if the bench could be placed. He didn't see objections and sent an information letter to the not-involved neighbours about the implementation of the bench and plant beds. In response to this letter, Jeffrey faced quite some resistance from the not-involved inhabitants (Interview Jeffrey; Personal Communication, 4 & 5, 7<sup>th</sup> of November).

*"The best thing to do is immediately calling the people who are worried or who have objections. In this case I spoke to them within two days. You reckon that people are often a little nervous when they speak to 'the municipality'. Normally, it is a system you need to reach out to and where you really have to take a strong position before you get the chance to speak to someone who can help you out. Because I'm approachable people thaw a little, which gives me the opportunity to talk to them and have real conversations. Most of the time a conversation like that is enough to solve the issue (Interview Jeffrey)."*

In this case these people lived here for quite a while and were afraid of nuisance with the placement of the benches, because in the past there were problems with loiters on the crossroad (Interview Marlous; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Jan; Interview Jeffrey; Personal Communication, 1 & 4 & 5, 7<sup>th</sup> of November). Due to these concerns, the Neighbourhood Director asked the policemen to keep an extra eye on the area. According to their reports, the Neighbourhood Director didn't see objections and proposed to place the bench and monitor the situation carefully. The costs of placing a bench and removing it weren't that high (Interview Jeffrey). During the meeting with the participants, the participants decided to not implement the bench. The participants were surprised negatively by their neighbour's critiques and didn't want to push their relations with them on edge (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske; Interview Jan).

### *Theft*

Six months after the implementation of the plant beds, the initiative structurally faced theft. This was a hot topic when I did the interviews. Two plant beds missed a plant every morning until one was empty for more than half and another one missed one third of the plants (Interview Emma). New meetings together with the Neighbourhood Director resulted in the replanting of the empty spots (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jan; Interview Jeffrey). The Neighbourhood Director had room in his budgets due to the postponement of participation process during the (partial) lock-downs of the Corona-virus. In the Netherlands yearly governmental budgets need to be spend before the end of the year, because the money can't be used in the next year. With this in mind, the Neighbourhood Director paid the replantation of plants happened in the last week of October 2020 (Interview Jeffrey). In the week after, I had the last interviews and again, the plants were stolen.



*Figure 35: Plant bed Maasstraat, half of the plants are stolen. The bed was full with the same plants as the back*

The neighbourhood director expects that people saw employees of the municipality planting the plants, which made the non-participants assume that these municipal goods are in some way appropriate to steal (Interview Jeffrey). The neighbourhood director strongly recommended the participants to place signs, telling people passing by that the plant beds 'this is a neighbourhood initiative' hoping that people are polite enough to not steal from their neighbours (Interview Jeffrey; Interview Saskia; Personal Observations). Three months after the interview, the participants had asked to put poles and willow branches on the edge of the plant beds, to show other's that the pavement there was replaced by garden. This idea will also be funded by the municipality (Personal communication, Jeffrey, 13<sup>th</sup> of Januari 2021).



## 6.8 Sub-conclusion

In this chapter we've seen that the citizens are enabled to start a green citizen initiative. The municipality built a structure around the E-tool MijnWijkplan. There are two major problems with this system. First initiators need to find the tool and figure out how to use it. Second, initiators need to know already what and how they want to their initiative because there is no employee that can help either identify or define their ideas nor explain the procedure of participation. The My Green Neighbourhood programme fills this gap because the programme is meant to find inhabitants with green ideas and it provides initiators with support and guidance through the whole process. However, in this case, the initiator still needed to reach out to the programme in order to get the guidance.

To get people involved when an idea is taking shape, different forms of contact are possible. In this initiative the initiator didn't have many contacts in the street. With flyers she only reached the inhabitants who sympathized with her idea or who also wanted to get more social contacts in the street. For receivers of the flyers who are less proactive in life the step to send an email to a stranger might be to big. These less engaged people can be involved by asking them personally by one of their acquaintances.

This division in kinds of residents is clearly reflected by the reasons from the participants who got involved after the flyer. They all like the idea for several different reasons but most of them shared the combined reasons with the initiator: getting to know people and make their neighbourhood greener. The nature of this initiative contributed positively to the feeling of accomplishing something together and sharing the responsibilities of the maintenance of the greenery. Most of the participants of the plant beds also shared the moral of taking care for the direct environment or trying to contribute something to the environmental situation on the planet.

The difference with the group who joined the initiative by being asked by an acquaintance lies in four aspects. First, the lack of the willingness to get to know people or to have a shared responsibility. Second, being asked provides those people with a feeling of having to participate to help their acquaintance. Third, by providing a communal as well as individual opportunity to contribute to the greenery in the public space, people are extra supported to get engaged in their own pace. Fourth, this might be the most important, is that people who hesitate to reach out to others, or people who are used to being asked to get involved, feel left out when they are not approached personally. Because they tend to have a more passive attitude to things, they are not yet familiar with, receiving official letters from the municipality weakens their sympathy to the initiative. Some people who were asked for the tree beds, felt left out for the plant beds, because they weren't actively asked to participate in that part of the process as well. This is a painful misunderstanding because the participants of the plant beds, thought they involved everyone who wanted to be involved because they expected the flyer to be sufficient. The feeling of being left out, touches upon the Achilles' heel of this initiative: the long time in between the process steps and the communication from the participants of the plant beds to all other residents, which creates unclearness about the initiative and the process of it.

The participants all contributed in different ways because they all have different skills, resources and networks. Within the participant group 5 different roles were visible: The initiator, technical operator, content secretary, all-round participant, hands-on participant. Their skills and abilities are summarized in the following model (Figure XX).

During the process the facilitating role of Lentekracht was eventually shared and handed over to the Neighbourhood Director. The art is to support the initiator and create the illusion for the others that they did all of the work on their own. The additional value of Lentekracht pertaining to the standard participation policy is to help with the formulation of an idea and support the initiators to get the process going by helping to reach out to neighbours and experts who are needed to proceed. The Neighbourhood Director was involved from the moment the public space needed to be adjusted. The Neighbourhood Director is also engaged with the faith of the participants and tries to contribute to the negative effects that non-involved have on the initiative (theft, preventing the benches).

Thus, the CLHEAR-model showed us that all enabling factors in policy for participants are in place. The participants really experience support from Lentekracht and the Neighbourhood Director to make the implementation of their ideas successful. It also shows the range of willingness of participants to be involved and the extent to which participants want to be involved and execute tasks. This approach also reveals that residents who do not participate can have quite some impact on the plans. The Neighbourhood Director is an effective measure to prevent major conflicts from happening, but in the future it might be better to prevent the painful misunderstandings between the participants and non-participants in the neighbourhood.

## 7. *Sustainability*

This chapter tries to understand how participants think about sustainability and how that affects their lifestyles and their willingness to contribute to extra greenery in the street. In the second part the spatial context of the city and neighbourhood in terms of sustainability are explored. This is done to get an understanding of the importance of the concept sustainability and how this affects the involvement of participants in the My Green Neighbourhood Programme.

### 7.1 *Thinking about sustainability*

Sustainability has become somewhat of an umbrella definition for everything that has to do with bridging economic, social and natural profit (Dryzek, 2013; Thiele, 2016; Caradonna, 2014). Professionally the aim of the My Green Neighbourhood programme is to bridge a social perspective “inhabitants working together on a green topic as climate change, biodiversity, energy, waste, living and mobility (Lentekracht, 2019 - I).” Whereas Bram is interested in the pragmatic approach of sustainable lifestyles and the personal gains sustainable lifestyles can render (Interview Bram), Jeffrey is more emotionally involved in the environmental crisis, he sees himself as the example of how lifestyles can be adjusted and he appreciates the municipality plays this role as well (Interview Jeffrey).

Most of the participants were involved because they both wanted more greenery in the neighbourhood and wanted to get to know people. This chapter explores if inhabitants, participants and non-participants think about sustainability and how this affects their daily lives.

#### *Defining sustainability*

One quarter of the participants also deal with sustainability problems in their professional lives. In this context the interviewees mentioned a different topic they work on: energy transition (Interview Marlous) and social enterprises (Interview Emma). From a personal point of view, there are many differences in the definition of sustainability. One of the interviewees, Jan, was very concerned about sustainability on a national level and mentioned all kinds of example how policy could become more sustainable. He mentioned the conservation of green, protect bicycle infrastructure, stop the bio-industry agriculture and stop subsidizing oil and gas companies (Interview Jan). Others are indeed concerns with the whole earth, but only mentioned one or two of the following aspects: protect nature, biodiversity, make society circular and resilient to climate change and to adjust lifestyles (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna; Interview Jan; Interview Saskia). From a personal point of view, only three persons speak about the umbrella sustainability derives from: treating the earth better to sustain the quality of life on earth for future generations (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske). These examples show that the participants have a personal pursuit or involvement in (one of the aspects of) sustainability, because they can relate all kinds of solutions, problems and transitions to taking care for the environment and can relate to those aspects on a planet-wide spatial scale.



## Sustainable adjustments in lifestyle

The pursuit of sustainability was already in place before they were involved in the initiative. Many mentioned adjustments in their lifestyle as examples of their engagement with sustainability. Some of them make small adjustments because doing that gives a satisfying feeling, and want to share that feeling with others by advising them or raise their kids more consciously about saving the earth (Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Saskia). Most of them take these adjustments one step further next to waste separation, most of them eat vegetarian, sometimes also biological or even produce own vegetables in a common biodynamic garden (Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske). They pay attention to the products they consume or even consume less, buying less clothes, do clothes swaps and buy only sustainably produced garments but also use second hand trading pages to get rid of their unnecessary items (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Jetske), reduce their plastic and microplastic use (Interview Jetske; Interview Jan) They also think about mobilities, they use public transport or bicycle for their transport, although most of them still have a private car (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Jan), collecting rain water to reuse it or disconnect rain water drainage from the sewer system (Interview Marlous; Interview Emma; Interview Anna; Interview Saskia) and remove tiles from the garden (Interview Marlous; Interview Anna; Interview Saskia). One mentioned she donates to sustainable organisations (Interview Fleur). Invested in making their house more sustainable by applying a green roof or consider to make that investment soon (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske) or isolate their houses (Interview Emma; Interview Anna). These lifestyle adjustments show that the participants contribute to their own local environment, the region and in some cases even bigger scale environmental movements. The call from L.P. Thiele (2016): 'think global, act local', seems to be very applicable to the participants.

## Importance of sustainability

The municipality launched the My Green Neighbourhood programme to spread the importance and consciousness about climate change. The participants involved in the citizen initiative are all very aware of sustainability and translate the importance of sustainability without any problems into their personal lifestyles (Interview Marlous; Interview Fleur; Interview Emma; Interview Jetske; Interview Anna; Interview Jan; Interview Saskia). One person doesn't even see their initiative as sustainable, because it contributes more to social cohesion and fun than helping the environment stop climate adaptation (Interview Jetske).

The neighbours who weren't involved think about sustainability differently, for this reason I talked to neighbours who weren't involved, in addition to the image and experiences participants and the involved professionals have with sustainability on neighbourhood and city-wide scale.

## 7.2 Considering sustainability within the spatial context

### 7.2.1 The city

*"The municipality fulfils an example role in acting sustainable, although the impact might stay small and they need to make sustainability concessions in negotiations every once in a while, (Interview Jeffrey)".*

The image of the city is characterized by sustainability. The city is known for the Room for the River island and for being the Green Capital of the Netherlands (Interview Emma). The municipal board is filled with green and left-wing parties (Interview Fleur; Interview Jeffrey) resulting in funding and support for many initiatives that nudge people into greening their gardens or to recycle rain water (Interview Marlous; Interview Jetske; Interview Emma). Although the city image is left-wing, polite and sustainable, some sustainability approaches are solid narratives, but in practice the implementation of these narratives can be way better (Interview Anna) and the stakes between economic activity on the one hand and sustainability on the other, can be better weighed, in these dilemma's it would help if the central government put more pressure on companies to make more sustainable choices to relieve the municipal negotiation position (Interview Jeffrey).

In general inhabitants of Nijmegen are open for sustainability, this is not only reflected by the municipal council but also in the assortment of green and biological goods in common supermarkets like Albert Heijn, Coop and Jumbo compared to the same supermarket assortments in other Dutch cities (Interview Marlous). Just as the mixed cultures in the neighbourhood, the understandings about sustainability are mixed as well (Interview Jetske; Interview Anna).

### 7.2.2 The Neighbourhood

The neighbourhood itself is not characterized by its sustainability due to the old houses, the substantial share of rental houses and the generally low income of inhabitants (Interview Marlous; Interview Anna; Interview Bram). In greening policies here, there should be a balance who can bear investments in their house to become green and what can be done in the neighbourhood (Interview Anna).

*"Sometimes you see solar panels getting installed, then I think yes! ... Climate doesn't interest the people much here. I think that when the municipality wants to do sustainable things here, they should pose it from a social point of view instead of a climate adaptation narrative ... when people can win a neighbourhood award by adjusting their houses, it might work (Interview Marlous)."*

Most people hear about climate change and think they won't feel the implication that much (Interview Bram). Even in a crisis like the covid-19 pandemic, a disease that is clearly hitting the people here, don't make people obey these measures (Interview Jeffrey). The economic stimulation to choose the greener option is one of the only approaches that will work in a neighbourhood like this (Interview Bram).

*"The authentic inhabitants here, they don't care about the drought in the summer. They just say, nice weather, I'm going to buy an air-conditioning. Or they take the plane to Barcelona to go*

*shopping for one day. That attitude hurts me sometimes, because it makes me sad when I read news articles about alarming situations due to climate change (Interview Jeffrey)."*

But it shouldn't be forgotten that people in public housing estates are often vulnerable. They have a hard time living their day. It is simply impossible for them to care about anything else when your income goes hand to mouth (Interview Jeffrey). Another area of tension implementing the sustainable transitions is that the municipality really want to green the city and pay attention to climate adaptation and chose to do that by reserving budgets for citizen initiatives. This can be a problem in districts like the Waterkwartier, because inhabitants can start an initiative to remove the trees, because for them their car getting dirty from birds and leaves in the tree is a major life problem. When the municipality wouldn't support such an initiative, the inhabitants have a reason to say that the municipality never listens or that the municipality only acts when they like the ideas of inhabitants (Interview Jeffrey).

While asking the other inhabitants in the street about sustainability, some of them stopped talking to me and closed their doors. Two authentic elderly people explained me that sustainability embodies the hypocrisy of society for them. They told me that the state first wanted everyone to attach to plastic as daily life article and that the state invented before-use date in the supermarket. On one hand, these policies result in throwing away good products and on the other hand, the state wants sustainability and they do that by the ban of fireworks on New Year's Eve and supporting people to bring down their meat consumption (2x). Still, some of these critical people participated in planting the tree beds because they love to take care of plants or they like to look at greenery (3x).

Some of the authentic inhabitants do talk about sustainability with their partners sometimes (3x). Some people who are concerned about sustainability and watch documentaries and so on, didn't join the tree bed initiative because they don't like or don't have time to take care of the plants (2x). Some others are very critical about the initiative because they say it is a waste of money and state that the participants do use too much water for the plants (5x), others think about solar panels and cooking on electricity but they are not in a position to invest (4x). From a sustainability perspective this housing complex is much more sustainable than the houses they'd lived in before because this house is isolated (3x). Others mention they separate waste and that's all they (want to) do. Especially student houses limit themselves to waste separation (3x).

## 8. Conclusion

The neighbourhood, the participation process and sustainability were of great importance to answer the research question: *'How is the citizen initiative Biezen-Maasstraat in Nijmegen implemented and how does that fit the broader context of sustainable citizen participation programmes?'*

The programme was meant to inspire inhabitants to come up with ideas to make their own neighbourhoods greener together with their neighbours. The initiative in the Biezen-Maasstraat in Nijmegen took place in an old worker's district, known for its problems with low social classes. Nowadays, the neighbourhood is gentrifying. New inhabitants of the Biezen- and Maasstraat wanted to make tree beds in the Biezenstraat more attractive, add additional plant beds on the crossroad and plant trees in the Maasstraat. With the help of project bureau Lentekracht, participants for the initiative were found and funding for the tree beds was arranged. The Neighbourhood Director from the Municipality of Nijmegen, who is in charge of participation budgets in public space, funded the planting of the tree and additional plant beds. This initiative was organised by a group of 12 people who take care of the new plant beds. All participants identify themselves with sustainability and think about sustainability regularly and even adjust their lifestyles to become more sustainable. Almost all participants are not authentic inhabitants of the neighbourhood and wanted to contribute to the social cohesion with this initiative. These inhabitants share their attachment to the neighbourhood and the willingness to build or spend many years in the neighbourhood. This is reflected in their choices to use facilities within the neighbourhood, the reasons why they came to the neighbourhood and their image of the neighbourhood. Within this group of participants, the social cohesion is definitely improved. These inhabitants now know each other's name and dare to ask each other favours whereas they were strangers to each other before the initiative.

However, there can be noticed two major points of critique on the My Green Neighbourhood Programme:

- the programme is designed to involve inhabitants in greening their neighbourhood to spread the importance of climate adaptation and sustainability. In this initiative people who weren't engaged with sustainability or greenery before, didn't engage in this initiative.
- New inhabitants in a former workers' neighbourhood started the initiative. The authentic inhabitants already feel threatened by the new influx of middle-class families due to the municipal policy to diversify the inhabitants of the neighbourhood. These 'new' inhabitants starting an initiative created the painful misunderstanding that the authentic inhabitants advise wasn't needed and they were purposely excluded.

In may 2019 the tree beds are planted, this was an accessible way for people who less identified with sustainability but who do like green to contribute to the initiative, although, unfortunately, one and a half year later, most of the tree bed adopters quitted due to dog poop on the beds and people who steal their plants. This theft is a major problem in the plant beds as well; the plants which were stolen were replaced by the municipality and the participants, but are already stolen again.

This case shows that although municipalities enable their citizens to participate and start initiatives, the participants are active and engaged, the socio-historical context of the neighbourhood and the way inhabitants think about sustainability determine the success of the initiative.

## 9. *Discussion*

In this research, I used two methods, in-depth interviews with participants and street interviews with inhabitants of the Maasstraat and Biezenstraat to research the neighbourhood context in the way proposed by Galster (2001) and neighbourhood attachment of the participants according to the framework of Lupi et al. (2007), the process of the citizen initiative as proposed by Lowndes et al. (2006) and the motivations from participants to get involved according to the framework Deci and Ryan (2012) and their views on sustainability. This research being done after the implementation of the citizen initiative and focussing on a very small geographic scale influence the generalisation of the outcomes negatively. However, this research is of much importance to explore which (spatial, thematic, policy) related contexts do influence the outcomes of the participation process.

The hypothesis that neighbourhood attachment, individual motivations, interest in sustainability and the shape of the participation process are important factors to understand and interpret a citizen initiative is met. The participants of the citizen initiative are people who try to enhance their neighbourhood attachment in daily activities, want to contribute to the social structures in their direct environment and want to engage in improving the attractiveness of their neighbourhood. The participants not only see the enhanced greenery as way to make their neighbourhood more attractive, but also see it as a local act of climate adaptation and enhanced biodiversity contributing to the global environmental challenges we face today.

The citizen initiative is a useful tool for municipalities to encourage inhabitants to think of adjustments in their public space. It fits the trend that inhabitants want to have an influence on their living environment (Zalaczena, 2018). In this case, similar to the positive side of the citizen initiative is that it contributed to the social cohesion or community development within the collective (Mueller, 2018). However, there are also negative effects of the citizen initiative, it is not inclusive for people who don't identify with the topic of greenery or sustainability; the participants weren't a current representation of the neighbourhood population in the sense of thinking about sustainability, age distribution, social class and place of origin. This fits within the critiques on citizen initiative as solution to engage people in local democracy (Mueller, 2018; Duţu & Diaconu, 2017).

The idea was not to identify the hierarchy of determinants of the participation process, but rather to explore the wider context of citizen participation. The combination of the CLEAR-framework and the SDT-model allowed me to look from top-down as bottom-up, from collective to the individual perspective to this specific participation process. The SDT is used only once in citizen participation research in the qualitative study of Lia, et al. (2020). The outcome that people engage because of the topic and social setting appeal to them rather than the participation structure, fits the outcome of motivations for the participants in the Maas-Biezenstraat, however, the participation structure was the most important for the initiator to start the initiative. The weakness of using the SDT as a geographer is that the lines between internal and external motivations are thin and specific questions in an interview are needed to explore these lines. In further research, geographers and psychologists can explore these motivations together to reveal these motivations extra sharp.

The neighbourhood-context is shown to be of great importance in the attitudes towards the citizen initiative from different groups of inhabitants. The context by Galster (2001) allowed to explore the environmental

and historical narratives of the neighbourhood, revealing the old workers' district and the relations between low- and high social class inhabitants in the last thirty years. Also, the political perspective is important to understand reactions from the inhabitants. The people who vote, what they vote and the history of parking spots can tell much about the trust in the municipality. In this case, there isn't much trust and thus communication between the in- and outgroup should have been given more attention.

The framework by Lupi, et al. (2007) showed us that participants do feel several different connections and are proud of the neighbourhood before they get engaged in the neighbourhood. It also showed that (young) families try to build their future in the neighbourhood and are much more neighbourhood oriented than people who do not have children or who have older children and it showed that people who consciously chose a neighbourhood are more willing to use local facilities and use the space as much as possible. The engagement of active people in the neighbourhoods fits the SDT-model which predicted that when people identify with the place or topic, they are more likely to engage in the participation project (Deci & Ryan, 2012). These conclusions do not mean that people who did not participate are not attached to their environment, on the contrary, but they cannot identify with the social group that started the initiative or they cannot identify with the sustainable/green topic chosen. According to Deci and Ryan, the more factors inhabitants can identify with in the participation process, the more likely they will participate.

The last contextual concept I distinguished was sustainability in the daily life in the neighbourhood. I tried to distinguish 3 different perspectives; the expert view, the participant perspective, the non-participant/inhabitant perspective. From these perspectives the geographical scales of the neighbourhood and the city were assessed on their perceived sustainability. The questions I asked during my interviews and conversations did provide me with findings of much importance for practice and further research. Inhabitants who are engaged with sustainability know why sustainability is important, in which fields transitions should take place and they adjust their lifestyles which impact several geographical scales. Although these inhabitants appreciate the green attitude of the municipality, they criticize the green action of the municipality. They recommend to not use the word sustainability or to push on the environmental importance of sustainability in a workers' district and to push on the individual and social gains of sustainable initiatives. This also fits the attitude of authentic worker district inhabitants in Nijmegen, who are more or less engaged with their direct environment, but who perceive sustainability as a restriction of the joy in life or who don't have the resources to adjust their lifestyle or to invest in their homes. Focussing on activating the social structures within a neighbourhood is probably more effective, which is an outcome of great importance if the ambition of green citizen initiative programmes really want to be inclusive for all inhabitants in the city.

The outcome to focus on the social and approach sustainability more pragmatic, didn't really fit my conceptual framework because I expected the participants would be willing to spread their knowledge and skills through the whole city. Yes, they were willing to share experiences, but only by infrastructures that already exist (Sustainability Café or MijnGroeneWijk) and they don't want to be involved other green initiatives in the city because taking care of plants in their own street is already time consuming. Further research on the conceptualisation of inhabitants could extent the conceptual framework by including the difference between thinking about sustainability, which can take shape on the larger geographic scale and meanwhile show the scale of environmental action, which in itself can take place on several levels simultaneously.

The strength of this research is that several angles to look at the neighbourhood and citizen participation are combined on a small geographical scale. The outcomes and effectiveness of a participation programme are strongly determined by the socio-historical-political context of a neighbourhood. I therefore have the following recommendations for participation practice and further research:

- Before launching a green participation process: construct a risk analysis in which neighbourhood relations, paradigms and attitudes towards the municipality, social relations among inhabitants and the topic of sustainability are explored. This risk analysis should give insight in the attention that should be paid to participant and inhabitant communication and how to use the word 'sustainable' in the launch of the programme.
- The focus on citizen participation and especially citizen initiatives isn't perceived well by the lower social class. It is therefore important to experiment with asking people in a one-to-one conversation if they would know a useful investment for greenery in their street or if they know people who may have an opinion on that.
- Construct an accessible, short and easy to follow instruction document or guideline for a participation process which informs inhabitants what they can expect from the citizen initiative programme and which steps should be taken before the idea can get implemented. A ten-step plan for inhabitants could be a good starting point.
- The My Green Neighbourhood Programme fills the gap between MijnWijkPlan and the need for support and human contact for the initiator. There is demand to exchange experiences or to learn from experienced inhabitants. Working together with the Sustainable Café should enable initiators to talk to future initiators which can stimulate peer-to-peer learning, making the My Green Neighbourhood Programme more efficient.
- During the initiative, experts should take into account that the longer the process takes, or a week of not answering emails from participants, can slow down or pause the enthusiasm of the involved, communicating that things might take longer, or that you expect an answer in a few weeks, is necessary to keep the participants involved.
- Further research should improve the conceptualisation of sustainability as pull- or push-factor in sustainability initiatives. This coincides with internal and external motivations that participants may have. Sustainability can maybe be a separate point of attention when using the SDT in for citizen participation.
- In further research about neighbourhoods the scale and involvement of people within the neighbourhood is important to get a further and even deeper understanding of how and which people contribute to their direct living environment, not only in participation processes, but also in organising social events, volunteering, etc.



*As a kid I wanted to get to know the world,  
When you get older, the feeling of belonging grows  
Replant my roots, the home I choose*

*My neighbourhood, there I like to wander  
I know it well, the place knows me  
The people always challenge me*

*They made me who I became  
There is just no place quite the same*

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## *Source List of figures*

Cover picture:

Lentekracht (2019, May 26<sup>th</sup>). Retrieved from the Lentekracht picture archives.

Figure 1:

Personal visualisation of the author. Constructed to show the conceptual framework of neighbourhood attachment based on Lupi, et al. (2007).

Figure 2:

Personal visualisation of the author. Based on the conceptual scheme of the CLEAR-model as retrieved by Lowndes, et al. (2006).

Figure 3:

Personal visualisation of the author. Constructed to complement the CLEAR-Model with the SDT-Model into the CLHEAR-model.

Figure 4:

Flickr (2021). Sustainability. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via:  
<https://flickr.com/photos/63107673@n08/5740820456>

Figure 5:

Bodhi Surf School (2021). Neither society nor economy can exist without environment. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: <https://www.bodhisurfyoga.com/what-is-the-ocean-guardian-journey>

Figure 6:

Personal visualisation of the author. Constructed to show the conceptualisation of sustainability by participants of the citizen initiative

Figure 7:

Gemeente Nijmegen. (2020). Locatie van de wijk. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via:  
<https://swm.nijmegen.nl/p40949/wijkanalyse>

Figure 8:

Peter Nuyten. (2013). Vogelvluchttekening van Ulpius Noviomagus in 160-170 n Chr. met het badhuis in de cirkel. Huis van de Nijmeegse geschiedenis. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via:  
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Figure 9:

Topotijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 1870. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 10:

Flip Franssen (1980). Bewoners, actiegroep tegen sloop van arbeidershuisjes in het wijkje in de Biezen. Op de achtergrond Honig fabriek. Waterkwartier, dijkkwartier, sociale huurwoningen. Regionaal Archief

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Figure 11:

Topotrijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 1930. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 12:

KLM Aerocarto. (1949-1954). Luchtfoto van de wijk de Biezen. Geheel beneden (boven de 3 huizen) met veel bomen de Voorstadslaan. Bovenin nog zichtbaar het voetbalveld van amateurvoetbalclub SV Noviomagum (bestond vanaf 1909 en opgeheven in 2006). Regionaal Archief Nijmegen. Retrieved 30-01-2021 from: [https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav\\_id=0-1&index=11&imgid=13744862&id=68418](https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav_id=0-1&index=11&imgid=13744862&id=68418)

Figure 13:

Topotrijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 1944. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 14:

Fotopersbureau Gelderland (1953). De in aanbouw zijnde "korrelbeton woningen". Regionaal Archief Nijmegen. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav\\_id=0-1&index=4&imgid=13930337&id=210952](https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav_id=0-1&index=4&imgid=13930337&id=210952)

Figure 15:

Topotrijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 1960. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 16:

Flip Janssen. (1979). Achterkant Pater de Hooffstraat in de Biezen. Regionaal Archief Nijmegen. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav\\_id=0-1&index=16&imgid=2104195670&id=2104195663](https://studiezaal.nijmegen.nl/detail.php?nav_id=0-1&index=16&imgid=2104195670&id=2104195663)

Figure 17:

Topotrijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 1990. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 18:

Topotrijdreis. (2020). Topotijdreis 2020. Retrieved 30-01-2021 via: [www.topotijdreis.nl](http://www.topotijdreis.nl)

Figure 19:

Alle Cijfers. (2020). Adressen: bouwperiode van panden. Kenmerken van de 4666 woningen in de Biezen. Retrieved on 19-01-2021 via: <https://allecijfers.nl/buurt/biezen-nijmegen/#adresgegevens>

Figure 20:

Alle Cijfers. (2020). Eigendom van de huizen. Kenmerken van de 4666 woningen in de Biezen. Retrieved on 19-01-2021 via: <https://allecijfers.nl/buurt/biezen-nijmegen/#adresgegevens>

Figure 21:

Google Maps. (2021). Sport facilities in the Biezen. Retrieved on 19-01-2021 via: <https://www.google.nl/maps/place/Biezen,+Nijmegen/@51.8498758,5.8378691,15z/data=!3m1!4m1!3m4!1s0x47c7086e78fadb0b:0x72546ea3863655f7!8m2!3d51.8458538!4d5.8470212>

Figure 22:

RTLNieuws. (2017). Hoe stemde jouw buurt bij de vorige verkiezingen?. Retrieved 19-01-2021 from: <https://www.rtlnieuws.nl/buurtfacts/opmerkelijk/artikel/169146/hoe-stemde-jouw-buurt-bij-de-vorige-verkiezingen-bekijk-het>

Figure 23:

Alle Cijfers. (2020). Migratieachtergrond de Biezen. Retrieved on 19-01-2021 via: <https://allecijfers.nl/buurt/biezen-nijmegen/#migratieachtergrond>

Figure 24:

Lentekracht. (2019, May 26<sup>th</sup>). Tree bed in Biezenstraat. Photo archive Lentekracht.

Figure 25:

Personal Picture. (2020, November 11<sup>th</sup>). Tree beds Biezenstraat.

Figure 26:

Personal Picture. (2020, November 7<sup>th</sup>). Tree Maasstraat.

Figure 27:

Personal Picture. (2020, November 7<sup>th</sup>). Plant beds Biezenstraat.

Figure 28:

Personal picture. (2020, November 11<sup>th</sup>). Plant bed Maasstraat.

Figure 29:

Leeuwenhaag, J. (2020, December 12<sup>th</sup>). Personal communication.

Figure 30:

Personal picture. (2020, November 11<sup>th</sup>). Plant beds in front of fast food restaurant Groenen.

Figure 31:

MijnWijkPlan. (2021). Mijn Wijk Plan ideeën. Retrieved on 30-01-2020 via: <https://nijmegen.mijnwijkplan.nl/ideeen>

Figuur 32:

Twitter. (2019). De Wester status. Retrieved 06-01-2021 via: [https://twitter.com/De\\_Wester/status/1093743663241404416](https://twitter.com/De_Wester/status/1093743663241404416)

Figure 33:

Lentekracht. (2019). Distributie flyers burgerinitiatief Biezen.

Figure 34:

Lentekracht. (2019). Uitnodiging burgerinitiatief Biezen.

Figure 35:

Personal picture. (2020, November 11th). Plants were stolen from the plant bed.

## *Attachment 1 - Operationalising the concepts into variables*

### CLHEAR-Model

Concept	Indicator	Variable
Can do	Personal work-level, skills, interests and feelings	Level of education, profession, hobbies and voluntary activities, Owning transport modes, membership in a local network
Enabled to	Economic support, professional support	subsidies, promotion/recruitment, support and involvement of professionals participation enabling systems/procedures in place
Asked to	Who of what asked the participant to get involved	Family Friends Neighbours Strangers Institutions Professionals from the municipality
Responded to		Implementation of the idea yes/no

### Neighbourhood Attachment

Concept	Indicator	Variable
Economic bond	Where do people work/volunteer?	Work in the neighbourhood/ city/ elsewhere
Functional bond	Education in neighbourhood, care facilities, shops, greenery, cultural-, sport-, recreational facilities	Use of schools by person or kids of the person Use of family doctor, pharmacy, supported group living, elderly home, daycare, childcare?



		<p>Do you do groceries in the neighbourhood/ city/ elsewhere.</p> <p>Do you shop in the neighbourhood/ city/ elsewhere?</p> <p>Do you go to parks in the neighbourhood? In other parts of the city?</p> <p>Are you a member of any group or organisation in the neighbourhood? Are you a member of any group or organisation in the city? (religious, sport, residents, music, different) Do you go to the theater, film, out for dinner, pub, folk garden in the neighbourhood, city, or elsewhere?</p>
Individual circumstances	<p>Basic information</p> <p>Household composition</p> <p>Information on duration of stay</p>	<p>male/female, social class, stage of life</p> <p>(child/student/starter/family/middle-aged/retired)</p> <p>Alone, partner, kids, different.</p> <p>What age group are kids?</p> <p>Where do/did they go to school?</p> <p>Childcare? Playground?</p> <p>How long do you live in the city?</p> <p>How long do you live in the neighbourhood?</p> <p>Are you: home owner, renter, different.</p> <p>How long do you live in your house?</p> <p>Are you planning to stay in the neighbourhood? Why (not)?</p>

## *Attachment 2 - From concept to sensitizing concept*

### CLHEAR-Model

Concept	Indicator	Variable
Like to	Sensitizing concept	Words used to pay attention to: like to, want to, fun, contribution, value, 'gezellig'
Have to	Sensitizing concept	Words used to pay attention to: pressure, need to, have to, duty, responsibility, obliged, must, take care of

### Neighbourhood Attachment

Concept	Indicator	Variable
Functional bond	Sensitizing concept	What do you think of green in the neighbourhood? What do you think of the facilities in the neighbourhood?
Social bond	Sensitizing	Family, Friends, Acquaintances, Neighbours, Strangers
Political bond	Sensitizing	Feel engaged, responsible, politically engaged, cleaning, solving problems, member of political organisation
Cultural bond	Sensitizing	Home, proud, value of living environment, reasons to move in

## *Attachment 3 – Topic List for Interviews*

### Introductie

Hoi XX. Ik zal me even voorstellen en even zeggen hoe het interview eruit gaat zien. Ik ben Nienke, 23 jaar oud en ik studeer sociale geografie aan de Radboud Universiteit. Voor mijn masterscriptie doe ik onderzoek naar de motivaties van burgers om te participeren in duurzame participatie projecten als Mijn Groene Wijk. Ik onderzoek de samenhang tussen motivaties van participanten, het belang van duurzaamheid en de binding die mensen hebben met hun eigen directe omgeving. In dit geval dus de wijk. Met deze kennis hopen we, Lentekracht en ik, de Mijn Groene Wijkaanpak kunnen verbeteren en onderbouwen om zo meer mensen te betrekken bij duurzaamheid in hun wijk of stad. Het interview zal ongeveer drie kwartier duren en bestaat uit drie delen. Het eerste deel gaat over jouw deelname aan Mijn Groene Wijk, het tweede deel zal gaan over de wijk gaan en het derde deel over duurzaamheid.

Ik zou het fijn vinden om het interview te kunnen opnemen, zodat ik het na afloop uit kan typen en de informatie kan verwerken. Vind je het goed als ik het interview opneem? Alleen ik zal toegang hebben tot de opname. Met de afronding van mijn scriptie moet ik wel de uitgewerkte interviews inleveren bij mijn begeleider maar de data wordt niet openbaar. In principe zijn de uitkomsten van het onderzoek niet terug te herleiden naar jou als persoon, maar als je liever volledig anoniem blijft, kan ik de namen die je noemt en persoonsgebonden gegevens uit de uitwerkingen van het interview schrappen.

Heb je nog vragen aan mij?

### Algemeen

Zou je jezelf even willen voorstellen?

#### Deel 1 - Initiatief

1. Kun je een algemene beschrijving geven hoe het initiatief tot stand kwam en hoe het zich ontwikkeld heeft?
2. Wat is de aanleiding geweest om het project te starten? Hoe raakte je betrokken bij het initiatief?
  - Door iemand anders; vraag door: wat is de relatie van de geïnterviewde tot diegene die heeft uitgenodigd
  - Door een instantie; vraag door: welke instantie bijvoorbeeld brief van de gemeente/ of benaderd door Lentekracht
  - Doordat het thema je aansprak
3. Wat waren voor jou motivaties om deel te nemen aan het project?
  - **Intrinsiek**
    - Persoonlijke groei
    - Identificatie/waarde aan het onderwerp van het initiatief
    - Sociale contacten
    - Goed zorgen voor het klimaat
  - **Intrinsiek/Extrensiek**
    - Verantwoordelijkheidsgevoel om te zorgen voor de buurt
    - Gevoel dat je nodig was
    - In de wijk is duurzaamheid belangrijk dus ik moet bijdragen
    - Groepsdruk om bij te dragen
    - Iemand had je gevraagd om mee te doen

4. Wat was je rol binnen het project? Hoe zou je eigen rol in het project beschrijven? Waarom?
5. Wat heb je voor je gevoel kunnen toevoegen aan het project?
6. Kun je de rollen van andere betrokkenen beschrijven?
7. Wat vond je van de begeleiding van Lentekracht? Wat heeft Lentekracht kunnen toevoegen aan jullie initiatief?
8. Wat is er in de wijk veranderd sinds het initiatief?
9. Ben je tevreden met de uitwerking? Is het wat je van tevoren gedacht had? Zijn de doelen van het initiatief gehaald?

## Deel 2 - Wijk & buurt

1. Economische binding
  - a. Heb je een baan/vrijwilligerswerk/school/opleiding en waar moet je om daaraan te werken? Wijk/stad/elders?
2. Functionele binding
  - a. Waar doet u boodschappen?
  - b. Maak je gebruik van faciliteiten in de wijk? Dokter, kapper, pedicure, schoonheidsspecialist, masseur, therapeut, dagopvang, kinderopvang, park, sportplaats, speeltuin, etc.
  - c. Waar ga je heen als je vrije tijd hebt? Sporten, hobby's, verenigingen waar je tijd in steekt? Bioscoop, museum, dagje uit, terrasje, winkelen, naar de speeltuin te gaan?
3. Sociale binding
  - a. Hoe is de verstandhouding tussen jou en je burens of mede wijkgenoten?
    - Ken je wijkbewoners, van gezicht, weet je hun naam?
    - Ken je de burens, weet je hun naam/ Maak je weleens een praatje?
    - Waar ontmoet je elkaar?
    - Heb je kennissen in de wijk
    - Heb je vrienden of familie in de wijk
    - Weet je mensen waar je heen kunt om hun om een gunst te vragen; op het huis passen met vakantie, boodschappen doen in coronatijd etc?
    - Spreek je wel eens af voor een hobby, koffie of een borrel met mensen uit de buurt?
4. Politieke binding
  - a. Voel je je betrokken bij de wijk? Waarom?
    - i. Lees je de Brug (Nijmeegse krant)? Lees je het wijkblaadje?
    - ii. Ben je actief in een vereniging? Of in de wijkpolitiek?
    - iii. Voel je je onderdeel van de wijk?
  - b. Voel je je verantwoordelijk voor de wijk?
    - i. Ruim je weleens andermans rommel op?
    - ii. Geef je de planten water?
    - iii. Spreek je mensen aan op hun gedrag als dit overlast veroorzaakt?
    - iv. Als er een probleem is in de wijk, ben jij dan diegene die het oplost?
5. Culturele binding
  - a. Kun je aan mij uitleggen wat de Biezen voor een wijk is?
    - i. Mooi/lelijk
    - ii. Divers/eenzijdig
    - iii. Arm/rijk

- iv.      Veilig/onveilig
- b.      Wat is het imago van de Biezen op stadsniveau, weet je hoe anderen over de wijk denken?
  - c.      Hoe past de Biezen in de stad Nijmegen? Op wat voor punten heeft de wijk overeenkomsten met de stad? Op wat voor punten komt het niet overeen?
  - d.      Zou je anderen aanraden om in de wijk te komen wonen, waarom?
  - e.      Ben je er trots op dat je in deze wijk woont?
  - 6.      Persoonlijke binding. Deze vragen zijn persoonlijk, als je er liever geen antwoord op geeft, mag je dit aangeven.
    - a.      Hoelang woon je al in Nijmegen?
    - b.      Hoelang woon je al in de wijk?
    - c.      Hoelang woon je al in je huidige huis?
    - d.      Heb je het gevoel dat je thuis kunt komen in je huis?
    - e.      Ben je eigenaar van je huis?
    - f.      Hoe lang wil je nog op deze plek blijven wonen?
    - g.      Hoe ben je op deze plek terechtgekomen? Wat waren je overwegingen om in de Biezen of in Nijmegen te komen wonen?
    - h.      Wat is je gezinssituatie? Woon je met mensen samen? Vrienden/partner/kinderen? Heb je huisdieren?
    - i.      Waar werkt je partner? Waar gaan je kinderen naar school/oppas/dagopvang?
    - j.      Heb je een favoriete plek in de wijk?
  - 7.      De schaal van het initiatief
    - a.      Het burgerinitiatief is uitgevoerd in de Maas- en Biezenstraat, voel je je extra betrokken in deze buurt ten opzichte van de wijk?
    - b.      Wat is veranderd sinds het initiatief?

### Deel 3 - Duurzaamheid

- a.      Denk je wel eens na over duurzaamheid?
- b.      Wat betekent duurzaamheid voor jou?
- c.      Vind je duurzaamheid belangrijk?
- d.      Wat doe je aan duurzaamheid in je dagelijks leven?
- e.      Wat vind je van je wijk op het gebied van duurzaamheid?
- f.      Wat vind je van Nijmegen op het gebied van duurzaamheid?
- g.      Wat kan er beter?
- h.      Zou je ervoor open staan om je meer in te zetten om de stad duurzamer te maken?
- i.      Zou je anderen willen helpen om ook boomspiegels en openbaar groen te verbeteren?
- j.      Wat zou je nodig hebben om anderen te helpen? Hoe zou je met andere mensen in contact willen komen? Kan Lentekracht hieraan bijdragen?

## *Attachment 4 – Topic list for street conversations*

1. Do you like to live in the neighbourhood and why?
2. Have you heard of the citizen initiative of the plant beds in this street?
3. Do you think about sustainability?

## *Attachment 5 – Categorisation of overview table interviewees and street interview*

Names, numbers and fake names:

From the people I interviewed, I asked if they wanted to be called by their names or if they'd like to stay anonymous. Most of the interviewees answered they didn't want to be called by their first and second name, but were okay with calling them by their first name. Due to the small amount of interviewees, the people who mentioned to not want to be named, couldn't be totally anonymous. Therefore I chose to leave the names of the hoofdrolspelers in place, and use fake names for all other interviewees. These fake names are useful to make the story more personal and appealing and gives the reader something tangible to contextualise why people are involved in more or less measures within the neighbourhood.

In the street conversations, I didn't ask my conversation partners their name. I just rang the doorbell at every address. I think it is not good for the privacy of these people to call them by the address. Therefore I chose to show in the overview table in which street I spoke them (Biezenplein (public housing/elderly apartment block), Biezenstraat and Maasstraat). I leave their conversation numbers as source, because it isn't relevant to personify these people to the same extent as it is necessary for the interviewees.

Categorizing interviews & Street conversations

In the overview table, I categorized the interviewees by life stage and household composition. During the street conversations I also spoke to other life stages. Therefore I divided in students, most of them have an age somewhere between 18 and 25. A student home is characterized by inconsistency in the persons that live there because students usually move after a couple of years.

A young couple or young family are in age somewhere between 20 and 40. They buy or rent a house for a longer time. They often have jobs and sometimes have young children. The children have ages between 0 and 10. They try to build their lives around their house in their (new) neighbourhood.

Middle Aged Couple/Family or just Family or Middle Aged person, these people live in the neighbourhood for a longer period most often or came into the neighbourhood later in their life. They have an age approximately between 40 and 60. In case they have children these children are in the end-phase of primary school, go to high schools (10-16/18) or are already students (16/18 +).

Elderly, these people are approximately older than 60 and are often retired. Sometimes they are immobile. When they have children, the children do have families of their own.

Didn't want to answer question – they opened the door or greeted me back but didn't respond to the questions

#### Participants

In the 6<sup>th</sup> chapter I elaborate on reasons for people to participate and the success of the initiative because participants could choose if they'd like green in the street for their own responsibility, but want to take care for it together and people who do not want to be involved. This first group are the tree bed participants, the second are the plant bed participants and the people who do not have any interest are the not involved.

#### Attachment

##### Resident history

I divided the inhabitants in influx and authentic inhabitants. Influx means that none of the adults of the household lived in the neighbourhood their whole life. Influx means that the adults came to the neighbourhood after they were raised.

- Vragen topic list voor street conversation