

Rotterdam Dream Streets: Close or Closed?

A phenomenological study about the lived experiences in a socially and physically transforming street



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Preface

Rotterdam is the most beautiful city, is what many Rotterdammers will tell you. As someone from 'the East', I knew Rotterdam from my touristy visits, which had not been that much either.

In March 2018, the nature of my relationship with this metropole changed drastically. From then on, my visits adjusted Rotterdam's image as a 'working city'. I came here to shape my research, to conduct my fieldwork, to process my findings, to meet great people but above all to live up my passion of diving into urban processes.

Equipped with the relevant knowledge on urban geography, acquired during my Bachelor's and Master's, now it was up to me to embrace this opportunity to work on my final assignment. Completion will provide me an academic degree as Master of Science. During my study about how people like the living in a Dream street, I was encouraged by my interest in urban geography and people's lives. I admire how people in Rotterdam endure the long road to implementation of a Dream street event or structural street intervention. Looking back, I see the commonalities between their struggles and my journey, which was more like a life-phase than the accomplishment of the project.

To keep going and bringing this thesis to an end, I would like to thank several people. In the first place, I want to thank my parents for showing their interest in my findings and progress, even under the most hard and sad circumstances. I really enjoyed the discussions I had with my dad about urban developments in Rotterdam.

Also my thanks go to Prof. Huib Ernste during this process. I highly value how our meetings boosted my energy and enthusiasm to continue my works.

To my colleagues from the municipality of Rotterdam, team 'Sterke Schouders', I say thank you for the assistance in shaping my research approach and field work. Moreover, their local knowledge turned out to be crucial before I actually got into the field.

Thank you Maaïke, for your continuing support and believing in me. Your patience is what I am very grateful for.

All people from Rotterdam willing to speak with me, who took their time and who received me like one of their friends; many thanks for sharing your insights about this beautiful city.

Jurjen van Weerdenburg

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Note: images are made by the author himself, images taken from external sources are provided with their original source.

Summary

In this study, the lived experiences of people living a Rotterdam Dream street have been examined. In doing so, there was extra attention to aspects of social togetherness and the physical outlooks. This has to do with the implications of a Dream street. These are events which allows residents to experiment with the physical outlooks of the street. Often, this implies the car is removed from the streets and the space is transformed into a 'human-made' meeting space. Many Dream streets make structural street transformations in a later stadium. The context about these places is in particular relevant. The Dream streets are situated in neighbourhoods where gentrification takes place. The objective of the research was to find out how people value and belief about their role in a physically and socially changing environment, and what attitudes people have in this.

Whereas some neighbourhood studies focus on social cohesion, liveability (measurements) or gentrification, we aim to get beyond these traditional distinctions. People's lives are studied to get an understanding of the phenomenon, i.e. a Dream street. Hereby, four different themes have been selected: people's stance towards difference life styles, people's perceptions of liveability, residents' social manifestations and their reflections on that and the experienced atmosphere.

In the six selected Dream streets, several recorded interviews were held. Respondents were mobilised by entering the street and a trail-and-error strategy of approaching people. Many hours were made in the field, in which I spoke with residents, district managers, a police officer and passers-by.

The Dream streets are situated in diverse neighbourhoods, whereas some Dream streets themselves have a varied composition of people. The norms and values of other people (not from Dream street) is often seen as breaking the own rules. In other words, these people are causing nuisance. This can be seen as strengthening of the symbolic boundaries. According to the respondents, cultural differences can be a determining factor of this deviation in lives. Although we see how some value to be surrounded with a diverse population, others simply look for equals to live with.

In line with that, the liveability is maintained by keeping the street tidy and clean. Breaking this law is not acceptable. As this is a basic quality of a street, Dream streets are about bigger issues. Like changing unsafety because of passing traffic. However, the majority of Dream street interventions are about making a streetscape more attractive to see or to meet neighbours.

The people of Dream streets often have a history of placemaking. Because of that, they are well connected and managed to organise a Dream street. Although most of the people are satisfied with superficial contact, some people have friendships in the street. Most importantly, people live in peaceful coexistence. Given the amicable attitude of most respondents, the public familiarity is fostered by small moments or talks on the street. Although some perceive new people as anti-social, the new people I spoke are open to get to know their neighbours better. The best moment to let this happen is when there's a social activity in the street.

A Dream street can be located around the city centre, but the residents often feel it like 'rural life'. The greenery, good relationships and child friendliness contribute to that. On the other hand, the rough aspects of the neighbourhood and Dream street feel more urban. Moreover, the upcoming character of the neighbourhood is for many respondents reason to move to that place. When they end up in a Dream street, they are not conscious of the street's history.

By shifting my visits to the evenings instead of the days, I might have spoken with more different people. Now, most of my respondents are white, middle-class and long-term resident. A greater variety in views would have enhanced the understanding of the phenomenon. Moreover, this would have given me a better view of how life at the pavement takes place when people return from their work.

As a recommendation, I advise municipalities to focus on creating a higher public familiarity. Many reports as well as the interviewee's experiences demonstrate how new people don't live with the long-term resident. By setting up quizzes, photo-exhibitions or a book about the history of the street, people might become conscious of what structures they are immersing in.

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Chapter I Introduction

“Everyone who lives in the city, at certain moment thinks he actually should live on the countryside”. That’s the first sentence of Aaf Brandt Corstius’ column in Dutch newspaper *De Volkskrant* (2019, May 2) The column is titled *Within 5 minutes, all bullet points of ‘happy life at the countryside’ was ticked off*. The author writes about the temptations of a life in rural areas, her experiences of a mini-vacation with her children on the countryside in a southern Dutch region. Spending her days far from the city, Brandt Corstius puts her (and those of her fellow citizens) urban life into perspective;

“Who will have children, sees the city as something with only designated playgrounds and poor, urinated trees. He thinks that his child would grow up outside [at the countryside], he would be outdoors all day”.

1.1 Living urban

In this column, Brandt Corstius contemplates urban life and sharpens the contrasts between the rural and urban life. Jokingly romanticising the countryside, Brandt Corstius probably knows better why she lives in Amsterdam rather than, let’s say, in Terborg, Schimmert or Appelscha. And, with her many people prefer the urban life over the village life. De Beer, Ekekamper & Van der Gaag (2017) found that cities in the Netherlands are growing in population, where rural areas are facing a shrinking population. In particular, the cities are attracting young people ensuing a higher birth rate in urban areas than on the countryside. Rotterdam is one of the prime Dutch examples dealing with these developments, and therefore a very interesting object of research. As this study will try to give an understanding how people in Rotterdam perceive their Dream street and neighbourhood and experience community while reflecting on their very personal features, we cannot leave out the relevant context. Therefore, the coming sections devoted to present the most important drivers in neighbourhood change.

The growing population of middle-sized and bigger cities are challenging city governments of in their mission to provide safe, healthy and reasonable housing conditions to all. If that’s not all, Sibley (1999) reminds us the majority of people desires familiarity and predictability, living in a place that’s constant and organised. Craving to such living conditions are grounded in a fear of not being understood, a fear to unexpected meetings and anxious feelings to a transforming direct environment leading to lessened aesthetic satisfaction (Sibley, 1999, p. 114).

Obviously, these desires are not accessible to all. The costs for a living in the city increases, let alone the price for meeting the described desires. Not surprisingly that property developers and investors are active in realising these dreams in terms of housing. This brings us to one of the greatest challenges nowadays cities are confronted with: gentrification. The following section explains how Rotterdam is facing this process and thereby what role the municipality takes. This study is not intending to elaborate on the mechanism that underlie gentrification in Rotterdam, neither to demonstrate gentrification needs to be embraced or rejected in the Rotterdam case. Rather, we need to be aware how the social and physical aspects of neighbourhoods are constantly subject to change triggered by gentrification.

1.2 Gentrification

Gentrification could be explained as the process of the ‘working-class populations being displaced from inner city districts as housing areas are appropriated and redeveloped by the more affluent’ (Hubbard, 2006, p. 45). The so called ‘gentrifiers’, which we elaborate more later on, prefer to have a house close to the city centre, where cultural life, entertainment and eating and drinking venues are concentrated.

Although the academic debate stresses the displacement as one of the prime consequences of gentrification, the ‘networks and contacts’ argument states bridging and bonding social capital results in a higher level of social cohesion and economic potential (Schoon, 2001). However, policy language avoids using the word gentrification, as it is a vilified concept. Governments rather deploy terms like social mixing or urban revitalisation. As Lees notes, in the Netherlands social segregation and social mixing are major themes on the political agendas (2008). Who would ever oppose social mixing?

One of the measures governments undertake, is to change the housing supply, towards more private-owned housing instead of a publicly provided housing. The importance of attracting higher-income groups is motivated by the expectation the participation degree increases, what entails people being more active in neighbourhood transformations (Lees, 2008). Engbersen, Snel and ’t Hart (2015), found indeed how Rotterdam neighbourhoods with high concentrations of ethnic diversity and lower income-households show lower participation in informal care, neighbourhood participation and volunteering. But, when taking the individual characteristics into account, the research found out the people of deprived neighbourhoods are much more active in neighbourhood participation than expected. Thus, although there are many young people of diverse backgrounds, fewer college-educated people

etcetera of whom not expected to participate, it surely occurs at these places since there is a need to participate. The importance of studying participation lies in current trends in which the government hands over responsibilities to its citizens. To evenly distribute the accessibility to governmental facilities, individual characteristics are evident, as Engbersen et al. (2015) portray.

When returning to governmental measures tending to open up neighbourhoods for the prosperous, Lees claims one of the motives these newcomers are to a lesser extent consumers of social services (Lees, 2008). In the Dutch context, the state interventions are particularly concentrated around neighbourhood transformations intended to tackle increasing concentrations of poverty (Uitermark, 2003). Although multiple studies (see for example Weltevrede et al., 2018 for several neighbourhoods in Rotterdam; Uitermark et al., 2007 in Hoogvliet, Rotterdam; Jackson & Butler, 2015 for Brixton, London; Ernste, 2019 in Klarendal, Arnhem) demonstrate the contact between long-term residents and the newcomers is very limited or absent.

Many of studies performed in the same vein, have regenerated neighbourhoods as starting point. The physical interventions mostly aimed at housing, suggest to give free rein to middle-class residents to manifest themselves in the neighbourhood. Also, city governments undertake these actions for public space to amplify safety and trust, thereby providing conditions to augment contact between ethnic and socio-economic diverse people (Veldboer et al., 2008).

The physical interventions are not standing on their own. The actions are launched to pull the target group, constituted by young couples and single people, also named as the early adopters. Their settlement might smaller the threshold for families to live in these neighbourhoods. For them, pedagogical conditions are contemplated in moving to regenerated areas, as well as the presence of early adopters. To smoothen the social mixing, physical interventions are complemented by 'soft measures', like education, assistance for the unemployed and supporting maintenance and personal support (Veldboer et al., 2008).

1.3 Bottom-up initiatives

This extensive strategy in deconcentrating poverty in Dutch neighbourhoods could be criticised by its very limited efficacy in social mixing. Neighbourhoods and its long-term residents are confronted with physical transformations involving a different composition. However, I wonder how citizens themselves affect processes of social mixing, and what role they could play. The impact they make personally is much smaller, I expect. Simultaneously, when people are cooperating, they are in the position to make a difference. For instance, *Opzoomeren* became a real thing in Rotterdam. Named after the people of the Opzoomerstraat in Rotterdam, who took action in 1989 in cleaning and decorating their street instead of waiting for the municipality to embark. This Rotterdam initiative grew to a stable organisation assisting in neighbourhood initiatives. It was grounded after the *Day of Opzoomer* in 1994 when tens of thousands of people, assisted by police and municipality spent the day cleaning and renovating their neighbourhood or square (Fortuin & van der Graaf, 2006). The 60.000 yellow brooms handed over that day, symbolise how a movement of social innovation and doing it together with your neighbours arose. Another initiative of residents maintaining their neighbourhood with its roots in Ghent, Flanders, has recently emerged. Specifically, people work on the streetscape and its attributes. The living streets are events in which the dwellers together operate to close off the street for moving vehicles. By doing so, the people transform the street into a – temporary – public space for meeting and playing. Furnishment like an artificial turf, benches, tables, chairs and play equipment are markers of a 'living street'. Examples of these living streets can be found in Belgian and Dutch cities like Amsterdam, Groningen, Haarlem, Zwolle, Utrecht and in Rotterdam, where they are named Dream streets. Some of these initiatives have brought the people cooperating to structural alterations in the street design, with the help of the city government. This research will examine some of the Dream streets in Rotterdam.



Figure 1: Opening party Berkelselaan, Liskwartier. Retrieved from “Tijd voor de officiële opening”, No name, 2015, <http://noord010inbeeld.blogspot.com/2015/09/droomstraat-berkelselaan-geopend-met.html>. [copyright 2015, Johannes Odé].

From the above mentioned studies concerning social mix, several aspects drew my attention and made me to consider how this research could contribute to the debate around social mixing and government-led interventions in neighbourhoods. The following critique points is thought-provoking for the scientific and societal relevance.

1.4 Societal Relevance

It will be hard finding any Dutch city without sustainable goals in its policy and strategy. Several cities are experimenting, transforming legislation and even imposing sanctions on pollution and the polluters. One famous, recent example is the plan of the city government of Amsterdam to ban all cars driving on fossil fuels from the inner city in 2030. Similarly, Rotterdam’s most famous lane crossing the centre of the city, the Coolingsingel, is currently transformed into a traffic-calmed boulevard with more space for walking, cycling, public transport and meeting. Both drastic instances demonstrate how municipalities seize these developments to promote alternative modes of transportation. The handbook of the European Commission called ‘Reclaiming city streets for people: Chaos or quality of life?’, already published in 2004, uses several best practices to ‘illustrate the potential for more effective uses of urban road space, as ‘exchange space’ rather than just ‘movement space’, recognising the social importance of streets and squares’ (2004, p. 9). The same document portrays several cases of European cities successfully implementing measures to reduce car usage and to regenerate city centres or neighbourhoods. There are several benefits to prevent usage of cars, stimulating a more healthy city with less congestion, air pollution, noise and vibration and usage of energy sources, to mention a few. Other advantages of fewer vehicles in the city, as distinguished by the European Commission (2004), could make a significant difference in life quality in cities and its neighbourhoods. I am aiming specifically at the intrusion of cars, the view on infrastructure and cars is deteriorating the quality of direct environment. And, the parked vehicles and infrastructure occupy large parts of the valuable urban space. Space that lost its function of ‘living’.

As we have seen, the people of the Opzoomerstraat in Rotterdam acted decisive by not waiting for the municipality to take actions. Urban citizens, in this case Rotterdammers, are able to make the difference themselves. They are in the position to create a more liveable place, to trace, appoint, report or tackle problems regarding the physical environment of their street themselves. Making streets more liveable, in that sense, is a subjective matter. It transcends the traditional role of the citizen. The resident of today is more and more in place to decide what’s best for the neighbourhood instead of the urban government to intervene. This is compliant with the current trend in which the government acts to a lesser extent top-down. Now bottom-up initiatives – when adjusted to the way

governments think and act (Franna, Niemans & Soeterbroek, 2015) – are embraced when they improve the life quality in neighbourhoods. Moreover, as the government tends to dispose neighbourhood centres and schools, places with a public function. Those places, obviously very appropriate for residents to make plans and strategies – self-organised initiatives – are suspended. For organising residents, the loss of public space might be compensated when Dream streets, as liveable places in the neighbourhood, render its streetscape as inviting, facilitating and useful to ‘house’ neighbours gathering in their organisational processes.

1.5 Scientific Relevance

A vast empirical foundation on gentrification has been accumulated over the years of which the introduction gives a small glimpse. As the objective of this study is not to confirm or refuse the potency of gentrification by adding new evidence based results, the focus of this study is to shift towards experimental aspects of neighbourhoods changing in both physical and social sense. In the Dutch case of gentrification, it is state-led gentrification that is highlighted. Since this research is performed in the Dutch context, namely in the city of Rotterdam, these findings are considered as most relevant. However, terms like urban regeneration, urban renaissance or social mixing most of the times imply drastic interventions in the built environment. I’ve read about dilapidated houses being demolished, sometimes just overdue maintenance, as recognised by the architect of the Tweebosbuurt in Rotterdam (Westeneng, 2018). It intrigued me that, according to Veldboer et al. (2008), measures concerning the hardware of the city are central in the discourse of social mixing, whereas soft measures are minor. In addition, Gijsberts and Dagevos (2007) have demonstrated that there’s little knowledge about the effects of neighbourhood-based projects and initiatives trying to bridge residents and ethnicities. The problem lies in the lack of decent evaluation research and insufficiently presenting the aims of the interventions and the target group, according to the authors.

The dominance of research done about the consequences of ‘stacking bricks’, leaves out another perspective in this field of study. I suggest to find out more about bottom-up initiatives. The importance of studying these activities in neighbourhoods could be justified by referring to the words of a former councillor in Rotterdam Schneider. The zone around the city centre is appointed by the urban government to attract more families with middle and higher household incomes. He said: “We can achieve this at street level. More greenery, more playgrounds and wider pavements” (Markus, 2015). This quote emphasises the shift towards a more central-led approach, as seen in the regeneration strategy, towards a more hands-on strategy with residents. This study aims to move away from the existing knowledge, and will take neighbourhood initiatives Dream streets, as a starting point to examine local developments.

We already mentioned the strong focus on failure or success of social mixing among several cultures, income groups, long-term residents and newcomers etc. Another addition this research will make, is to move beyond these traditional approaches. It is more relevant to find out how practicalities, viewpoints and symbols contribute and demonstrate how people think and act upon that, regardless there’s mingling or not. The metaphor of social tectonics, illustrating how several groups move along each other, without any moments of the tectonic plates to touch each other (Jackson & Butler, 2015), is sadly not telling us how the earth plates move or in what direction the earth plates move. Providing this metaphor more depth, we build on Ernste’s (2019) and Jackson and Butler’s (2015) critiques regarding a ‘social tectonic approach’ when examining intergroup contact. Jackson and Butler clearly argue why studies should take notion of the limitations using social tectonics as a metaphor in alleging how contact between groups takes place:

(...) it does not completely capture the relationship between the constitution of classed/raced space and the identities in gentrifying areas and thus argues for a theorisation of the dynamics of neighbourhood than can account for nuances, contradictions and everyday processes (Jackson & Butler, 2015, p. 2363).

The challenge to profoundly examine contact between people is seized in this research. The next part, in which we deal with the objective and research questions, intend to explain this more.

1.6 The importance of studying ‘people’

A learning point we draw from the aforementioned studies is that many of them are performed while choosing the ‘social tectonics’ approach. A large base of empirical evidence portraying groups to mingle or live in the same place without any crossings is useful in making urban policies. In the study of Veldboer et al. (2008), the focus was on three groups of middle-class residents labelled as the target groups for stirring up the praised effects of bridging communities. The arrival of these people suggests curing social problems in neighbourhood. Obviously, it’s not that

black and white. The 'strong neighbours' are helping their indigent neighbours only indirectly. While some middle class people indeed mingle with their lower class neighbours, others choose to avoid these people. Found is that the pick of the economic middle class people, those with idealistic intentions, indeed can be helpful to lower class neighbour. An example is when these people start a studio or small business and reserve some of their activities to help the neighbourhood. Also, social professionals like nurses, teachers and police officers tend to be helping (Veldboer et al., 2008).

These findings are resonating in urban policy. In Amsterdam, the social professionals are taking precedence when it comes to the allocation of social houses (Veldboer et al., 2008). This exemplifies the importance of studying intergroup interaction.

However, findings of these kind frame an almost heroic, image of the middle-class people. Are they really going to save our neighbourhoods? And does the absence of these groups mean that neighbourhoods will dilapidate soon? Van der Graaf and Veldboer (2009) called this the 'a middle class-burden', meaning that policy makers expect the middle class to assist their needy neighbours.

I wonder how such outcomes are reflected by the people themselves. Do they identify with the duty to interact and exchange with their neighbours? Veldboer et al. (2008) acknowledge that little is known about the group of 'idealistic neighbours', except for their flexibility in schedule and their self-confident attitude. They advise for more research to get to know these people better.

To me, this calls into question the approach of earlier studies. We are dealing with urban processes affecting neighbourhoods as well. How do the people on the streets experience these developments? What are the personal stories without intending to identify someone as 'helpful', 'middle-class', 'lower-class' or 'in need' nor to portray a success story. How are the experiences without centralising how the neighbourhood is a place where people mix or adhere to Richard Florida's viewpoint a large, urban creative class fosters economic development of the city. Also, this research moves beyond cities stressing targets shares of higher educated people or competing with other cities in the race for the 'skilled people'.

Now, this research will dive into community life in Dream streets in Rotterdam. The chosen perspective of giving insights in personal stories is indispensable in studying phenomena as community, social mixing, gentrification, neighbourhood transformation. In that light, we consider this study contributing to filling the gap of personal insights in neighbourhood community studies.

1.7 Research questions and objective

This research aims to answer the following research question:

How do the people of Rotterdam Dream street understand and experience their socially and physically transforming neighbourhood?

The next sub questions help us to formulate an answer to the above central question:

I How do people look towards living with difference in their street?

II What are residents' perceptions of liveability?

III How do Dream street residents socially manifest themselves in the neighbourhood and how do they reflect on that?

IV How do the people become aware of the built environment they live in?

In Rotterdam, a large variety of cultures comes together. Public spaces are the meeting places of different ethnicities, religions, languages, ages etc. Whereas some neighbourhoods are more diverse than others (Hilligersberg is for example less diverse than Feijenoord), the chosen streets are situated in neighbourhoods habited by people with very different backgrounds. How they deal with that is the central theme of that question.

Researching the liveability is a step I consider as logically after the first question. People tend to share negative aspects of their street more than the positive aspects. Some of these aspects might have to do with the diverse environment they live in. Liveability is made more tangible by making use of pillars formulated in the Neighbourhood profile Rotterdam measuring the liveability in the neighbourhoods (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016c). Those are

(perceived) safety, (perceived) social values and (perceived) physical values. The aspects of safety and physical status will be examined here.

The third sub question is devoted to the remaining pillar of the Rotterdam Neighbourhood profile; (perceived) social values. This study takes togetherness as a theme to find out how residents' role is towards the street and their neighbours and how they reflect on that.

Lastly, the experience of the streetscape is subject of this sub question. This is specifically interesting in Dream streets, as the people have had a (temporal) change in the spatial design.

Mirroring these research questions, this study aspires to bring a rich base of personal opinions and feelings. I would like to present the personal insights as vivid as I gathered them during my fieldwork. A down to earth style is used in order to reproduce the sphere and sentiments I experienced during my work in the streets. The study outlines an understanding of the street and community. This makes us to state that:

the purpose of this phenomenological study was to explore the beliefs, attitudes and values the current people of Dream streets have regarding to their role in a socially and physically transforming street.

In the next section, the theoretical framework will be discussed. A selective pick of existing literature shows how this topic fits the academic debates.

Chapter 2 Theoretical Framework

Critically discussing the notion of community is what this chapter aims. Community, a very broad concept will be narrowed down to understand the different facets.

Robert Putnam, the author of several influential works, gained lots of attention with his book “Bowling Alone: The Collapse and Revival of American Community”, published in 2000. In his introduction, he describes how social life manifests in the 60’s in the United States. The image he conveys is the fifties and sixties were the glory days of civic engagement, with packed churches and voting becoming a habit to most Americans. The future looked very bright with a new, social active and tolerant generation to mature raising expectations to peak when they reach their “joining” years of the life cycle (Putnam, 2000, p. 15).

Communities are dynamic and civic engagement changes over time. The 80’s and 90’s were, in contrast to the period after World War Two, characterised by growing individualism, selfish, breakdown of community or less civil, as presented in surveys (Putnam, 2000).

This chapter will present how the concept community is defined and characterised by several scholars, in order to provide ourselves a theoretical approach to augment the understanding of how residents understand Dream streets. As stated, community is the central theme of this section. Because the respondents are the source of this study, we are dealing with their life worlds directly. How their ideas and experiences are constituted and evolve, is depending with whom he or she is surrounded. In that light, community is a well-suited notion to learn more about the soul of neighbourhoods.

Although this framework is constituted by relevant academic literature, the concept of community has always a political element in it. Thus community is often linked to power. For instance, community has been employed to designate who is an insider and who is an outsider. Also, community is used in nation building or provocative towards other groups (Anderson, 1991). Used in politics, community refers to cohesion and uniformity (Blokland, 2017). Utilising community as such entails some elements of value judgement. This section however, intends not to do so. First we are concerned with defining community theoretically.

2.1 Defining Community

Gusfeld (1975) made a distinction in community as a concept. The distinctive element is formed by geographical location. The one definition is bound to a specific place, a neighbourhood, village or city. The other interpretation has no spatial element in it, concentrating on the how human relationships unfold. McMillan and Chavis (1986) examine community by taking the spatial element into account. However, we can ask ourselves what this exactly entails. In physical sense, places bring people together, but what happens then (Boden & Molotch, 1994; Sennet, 1994)?

In studying neighbourhood issues, social cohesion is another applicable, broad notion. This concept could be defined as the internal knitting triggers in a social system, which could for example a street, university, city or society as a whole. Forrest and Kearns (2001) formulated three elements of social cohesion, namely:

- Social networks, to what extent people interact within communities and families
- Common values and civic culture, having similar ideas about what’s right and what’s not
- Neighbourhood attachment, the feeling of belonging to the people of your living area and the place in itself.

Although community and social cohesion are overlapping in several aspects (as will be clarified in the coming sections), the concept of social cohesion is often used in politics. For example, the increased unemployment could be an indicator of less social cohesion, as well as the increased number of criminal facts by youth in the city. There is no causal relation, but there could be a link, stated by Engbersen (2002). The use of social cohesion as value-laden and panacea is considered as undesirable in this research. Here, the neighbourhood and its social aspects are central without any objects in solving urban issues. In the end, understanding people and neighbourhoods better, could be seized to adjust policies, however this is not the main purpose. Moreover, by working with social cohesion as a main theory and taking the normative aspects in account, the focus is drawn away from what matters: the residents and their direct living environment.

According to the viewpoint of Simmel, we are selective in what stimuli we let in and what not. This in order to protect ourselves of an overload of stimuli, we act in the city on the blasé attitude (1903). In the end, the city becomes a place which makes people live anonymous. Though, this insight (also the statement of Tönnies (1887) of the urban being less supportive to tight networks than the rural) has lost their value among scholars (Blokland, 2017).

It is important to keep in mind theories proclaiming urbanism determining community life, are superseded. As urban life is nowadays the prime way of living for most people, communities in urban neighbourhoods are the field of interest.

The definition, stated by McMillan and Chavis (1986) is suitable to study communities with or without spatial notion. They distance themselves from the idea community is a geographical based phenomenon, by referring to Kasarda and Janowitz (in McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 14):

“Increased population size and density do not significantly weaken local community sentiments”.

McMillan and Chavis (1986) constituted ‘community’ of four elements: influence, integration and fulfilment of needs, shared emotional connection and lastly membership. These elements require some more explanation.

- Influence. The idea of influence works in two directions. First, a member of a community should be able to direct the group. Second, the cohesion of a community influences the individual members. When we take the spatial component into account, studies have shown participation in governmental programs or voluntary associations makes people feel owning the community as they share in power. Other results of participating in these bonds are higher satisfaction and increased cohesion (Dahl, Hunter in McMillan & Chavis, 1986; Wandersman, 1981). Another insight provided by McMillan and Chavis (1986) is that the more tight a network is, the more influential a community is to conform its members.
- Integration and fulfilment of needs. This element is also simplified as reinforcement of a community. The variety of communities makes it hard to distinguish all intensifying factors. In their extensive exploration of studies on community, McMillan and Chavis (1986) recognise group success as a factor making knits tighter. Another driver to get involved into community is the potential of using skills and competences of group members for own benefit. When people look to meet their needs, priorities and goals best, a set of shared values is helpful. After all, a gathering of people all working to meet their needs provides reinforcement. People possibly better satisfy the needs when surrounded with peers.
- Shared emotional connections are developed when people have undergone the same events in the past. I purposefully avoid the term ‘experience’, as experience is a very personal mode of consciousness. Moreover, undergoing those events is no precondition to feel connected based on emotions. Identifying suffices in this as well, as McMillan and Chavis propose (1986). As with the reinforcing of community, a shared emotional connection is not created easily. Several traits are influencing this, like the contact hypothesis of Allport (in McMillan & Chavis, 1986) which states prejudices diminish when the frequency of contact between groups increases. Other factors affecting the shared emotional connection can be the nature of a commonly undergone event or the investments made in an event. Home owners are often more engaged and touched by developments in the neighbourhood. In general, someone who ‘opens oneself to emotional pain from the community life will affect one’s general sense of community’ (McMillan & Chavis, 1986, p. 14). Furthermore, the spiritual bond is bringing people closer and not only attributed to religious groups, like black people had to form their national community of coloured people (McMillan & Chavis, 1986).
- Membership could be seen as the feeling to be part of a social group. This belonging is earned after one made efforts to become a member. Essential feature of being a member, is that it opposes non-members. The boundaries are demarcating who is part and who is not. In this respect, Blokland (2017) argues community to be examined as culture. Others studying community as personal network underexpose ‘belonging’ and ‘identity’, according to Blokland (2017). This contested notion of boundaries will be elucidated in the next section.

2.2 Boundary making

It is useful to first look into the backgrounds of boundaries. Lamont and Molnár (2002) make a distinction between symbolic and social boundaries. The symbolic boundaries are made by people to categorise things, people, acts, places and periods. By doing so, we make the world around us easier to grasp. To illustrate: labelling the adjacent neighbourhood as ‘bad neighbourhood’, a symbolic boundary has been drawn. Social boundaries are made on the base of resources and opportunities and how these are (unequally) distributed. We could think of unequal access to the labour market. Both types of boundary making can be in interplay, according to Van Eijk (2011a). Boundaries in this light are not clear-cut as one might think. When middle class people consciously choose to live in a mixed

neighbourhood, i.e. a neighbourhood mainly inhabited by lower class people, the symbolic boundaries are subject to change. This demonstrates how symbolic boundaries are dynamic.

In that respect, Wimmer (2013) provides us insights in the changeability of symbolic boundaries. They can by human effort, be shifted and modified. Shifting is when people replace the figurative position of the boundary. This can be done through enlargement or contracting. When people contract a boundary, it becomes more exclusive. More inclusiveness is created by enlarging the boundaries. An example is given by Loveman and Muniz (2007) who found that Puerto Ricans in the United States became part of “white people” as a consequence of expansion of the symbolic boundary.

Also, people can cross boundaries. At the individual level, someone moves from one group to another, without transforming the symbolic boundary (Wimmer, 2008). An example is when migrants start to learn a new language to better adjust to the majority group. Another way of boundary change is when people challenge their own position or stress other features to categorise (Albeda et al., 2018).

Lamont and Molnár (2002) argue a social boundary always implies the making of symbolic boundary, which is thinking in ‘them-us’ rhetoric. However, the existence of symbolic boundaries does not always lead to the formation of social boundaries.

Possibly, the neighbourhood gentrifies. For instance, studies of Van Eijk (2011a) and Elwood et al. (2015) portray how for example class is not a marker for homogenous groups. Van Eijk describes how some middle class people leave the VINEX districts (large scale, planned urban growth), attracted by the city and its diversity. They still feel similar with other middle class people, but at the same time distance themselves by choosing for an urban life. Here we see how a class also consist of lifestyle, consumption patterns and self-identification (Elwood et al., 2015). Another not clear-cut social boundary is that of ‘established’ and ‘outsiders’, with duration of habitation as central criterion (Elias and Scotson in Albeda et al., 2018). In her doctoral research, Tersteeg (Albeda et al., 2018) found that class is a small object of symbolic boundary making in mixed neighbourhoods. In those neighbourhoods where gentrification is traceable, the ‘old’ residents do categorise the ‘new’ people.

Markers of these symbolic boundaries are attitude, behaviour and lifestyle. Vertovec (2007) has already argued that the literature on super-diversity states individuals are no demarcated entities, rather they belong to multiple, overlapping symbolic categories.

These underlying structures help to explain how life in neighbourhoods ‘happens’. For that reason, the mechanism of boundary making will be explained more. Specifically, our focus is on symbolic boundary making. There is a need to better understand this process, as individuals are part of different symbolic categories more and more. This enables them to choose from a range of identities best fitting the situation. Because of this, it is more difficult to categorise people (Vertovec, 2007). This study will not group people. Why looking closer to this subject then? Albeda, Tersteeg, Oosterlynck and Verschraegen (2018) argue that social groups are never pre-determined (2018). Importantly, the members of groups are not typified on the base of ethnic or cultural features. As a consequence, the focus moves to the interacting dimensions of difference, like ethnicity, religious or class. Also, the dynamic symbolic boundaries can alter in strength and transparency. Blokland’s approach (2017), in which she sees community as culture, bears very close to this viewpoint. Because:

“Seeing community as a cultural concept, then means seeing it as a set of repertoires of public practices – or performances – that are above all symbolic. Their meanings, as they are lived, produce belonging as well as disengagement, or inclusion and sharing as well as exclusion” (Blokland, 2017, p. 45).

In accordance with the fuzzy boundaries as stated by Tersteeg (2018), Blokland sees communities as “relational and interconnected rather than isolated from each other” (2017, p. 46). This perspective acknowledges locality, generation, class or gender to demarcate identities meaningfully, but aims to go beyond this way of thinking.

Now, the performances one observes become central in categorising individuals. Given the public performances are symbols of community, meaningful observations of everyday practices deserve our attention. The continually ongoing process of boundary making is an important feature of communities. The functionality of boundaries is that it provides individuals protection for their personal space. Groups have specific cultural markers protecting the community against threat. Concretely, language, dress and habits are the signs of boundaries. Sometimes, these markers are that subtle they are only recognisable by group members, for instance graffiti on walls (McMillan & Chavis, 1986). In compliance with Blokland’s viewpoint (2017) to see community as culture, McMillan and Chavis (1986) note that comprehending the shared system of symbols is needed to understand community.

What is important is that a symbolic boundary has an individual dimension and a group dimension. The latter, as we have seen, identifies groups. Particularly in gentrifying neighbourhoods it is interesting to observe these. Cohen states the performed practices convey a shared positioning, a shared feeling of belonging and a shared set of experiences (1986).

An implication is that group members see similar categories and experience the same constraints. But, how we give meaning to that varies along different groups and within groups (Cohen, 1986). Here, the individual dimension comes in. Symbolism conveying community might not parallel at the individual level. Emotionally and cognitively, we might feel or feel not comfortable or at home how the process of belonging happens (Blokland, 2017).

To study these processes, the everyday practices in public life are crucial. Blokland explains this as:

community in the urban world is primarily a public doing: our backstage ideas of who we are may not coincide with the frontstage practices through which we do community. So who we are in our public lives is 'always complicated'... (2017, p. 60).

Similarly, Van Eijk sees individuals socially categorise and identify others by means of observations and 'sign-reading' (2011b). Goffman (2019 [1959]) is one of the main thinkers providing a perspective helpful to better understand these everyday practices and how they are received. The following section will point out how this can be used.

2.3 Performativity

How an individual behaves in this complex interplay of boundary making, observing, categorising, identifying and adjusting, we make use of Goffman's (2019 [1959]) work "The Presentation of Self in Everyday Life". This helps us to understand life in the neighbourhood. In his work, Goffman asserts people involved in social situations are like actors in a performance. Intention of the actor is to present an image of the self that is accepted by their audience. Ideally, the actor achieves to control the setting he enters. He therefore can devote two sorts of contact: expressions given and expressions given off. The first type of expressions are intended, whereas the second type of expressions give information non-verbal, bounded to its context and more or less relinquished. This implies that these expressions are not exclusively intended or non-intended.

Another distinction Goffman made is the front stage which offers social and public arena to perform and where the audience witnesses the expressions. This is where the pattern of daily practices complying the prescribed behavioural norms of a group or community takes place (Goffman, 2019 [1959]). The backstage can be understood as private space or informal sphere, where the individual or team retreat to prepare their performances. Also, the individual can figuratively 'take off his mask' and get away from their role. As in a theatre, backstage is not open to the audience. The reason the backstage is exclusive to the audience is to protect the performer. The acts occurring backstage could deviate from front stage performances, harming the trustworthiness of the individual.

According to Goffman's theory, the individuals as well as teams – which are a selection of people cooperating to control a setting – give their performances full passion. Sometimes, this even leads the performer himself to be convinced what he expresses, is the only truth. In that case, the performer's role doubles. He then is doing the performance and simultaneously is a spectator of that same performance. This exemplifies how devoted the people are in play their character. Continually fulfilling the role makes one to predict how what performance will take place at front stage. Therefore, it is very interesting for a researcher to see what happens backstage, in order to really knowing how people act or think. Moreover, this provides us insights in how human interaction takes place under influence of identities that are maintained.

The performativity theory doesn't tells us how the living (urban) environments or neighbourhoods play a role in the expressions one makes and how that is conveyed. Also, our interest is to see what interaction does to symbolic boundaries in a neighbourhood. The next section is about how the neighbourhood plays a role in symbolic boundaries.

2.4 Neighbourhood in boundary making

In the doctoral research of Tersteeg (2018), in which she studies mixed neighbourhoods and gentrification, the interviews emphasised the importance to see distinctions like 'outsider' and 'established' not solely, but to take into account the context. In this research, where the everyday practices are object to examination, they could result in reconstruction of symbolic boundaries rather than breaking them down (Van Eijk, 2011b).

Van Eijk (2011b) sees neighbourhoods as places where setting-specific relations take place. That is not surprising, as people share a block, apartment building, row and in the end, a street. Interaction between neighbours, how does that affect the 'affairs' of the street? Or put differently, how does that influence the symbolic boundaries? Blokland already found that "more frequent interactions are no guarantee of good relationships – or even of understanding" (2009, p. 125). More frequent interaction does enable us to make better and refined differentiations. This suggests a narrowing of categorisations and more subgroups. Moreover, van Eijk (2011a) states the choice of people living in a mixed neighbourhood for example, don't impact their daily life. We have already seen how talking about community includes themes like identity and performances of inclusion, exclusion and the making of the 'self'. Exclusionary practices is resulting from human agency, from the actions one undertakes. By taking one step back, we can acknowledge that the social environment determines us socially and how we approach human interaction in that environment (De Jong, 1986).

But, how do neighbourhoods affect human relationships? Stigma's can for example be conveyed to individuals, affecting their actions (van Eijk, 2011a). We need to be aware of what is already mentioned. Given is that symbolic boundaries can follow the social boundaries. However, what people proclaim about their neighbourhood and their neighbours, does that mirror their actions in the neighbourhood? Do we indeed for example see people distancing themselves from their lower class neighbourhood or street by isolating themselves? Van Eijk (2011a) found this is not the case in her Rotterdam-based research. People create symbolic boundaries between them and us but their relationships with 'the other' is not hateful. Rather, the contact is perceived plain and remote. Although the neighbourhood is not directly determining how human interaction takes place, we can see the neighbourhood as stage for human interaction.

Blokland (2017) distinguishes four types of contact occurring here: interdependency, transactions, attachments and bonds. Interdependency means that neighbours treat each other like people they know, but they don't know that much about them personally. This approximates the metaphor of social tectonics, which proposes neighbours of different socio-economic classes don't live with, but live next to each other. The contact between them is limited to something what Blokland calls 'rubbing shoulders'. When human interaction is seen as transactions, neighbours supply some small services to neighbours in order to assist them, for example taking care of the pets when the owners are on vacation. Attachment between neighbours means that neighbours value a good relationship. Therefore, people look for interaction with their neighbours being aware of the privacy someone desires. Bonds between neighbours can be recognised as friendships or acting friendly towards each other.

As these four types of 'neighbouring' can hardly be seen as static, Van Eijk (2011b) found three features influencing neighbouring. The first, interchangeability, entails that neighbours are seen as interchangeable. Especially when there are relations of interdependency, transactions or attachments, the added value of an individual matters might be too limited for relationships to be maintain when case a neighbour moves. This exemplifies how the neighbourhood can be seen as setting-specific. Neighbours are treated as the people they share an living environment with, duration of living together and sentimentality towards neighbours do not change that specific relationship (Van Eijk, 2011b).

This might not come as a surprise. There is something like a script of how to act with neighbours. This 'lies in maintaining the tension between cooperation and privacy, helpfulness and non-interference, between friendliness and distance' (Allan cited in Buonfino & Hilder 2006, p.13). So, the main values in neighbouring can be found in assistance, being friendly with special attention not acting too intrusive.

In line with the scripted behaviour neighbours adjust to, Van Eijk (2011b) mentioned that neighbours are expected to be latent-active instead of proactive. This is grounded in the nature of neighbouring, wherein relations are given and not chosen by the people themselves. With that in mind, it is more presumable neighbours evolve distant relationships than friendships.

Also the built environment, which in most cases is not influenced by the people of the streets themselves (living streets as main subject of this study is an exception to that), can augment more frequent contact between neighbours (Van Eijk, 2011b). From this, and the above features, we learn that neighbouring is a specific type of human interaction. Becoming friends is more exceptional than expected. How people interact, is mostly practical based and determined by coincidence.

In this chapter, we have seen how community moves away from political and normative aspects. The concept is strongly approached as exclusionary or inclusionary phenomenon in human relations.

I believe, this is one way how we could observe community in practice. Given the complexity of a front stage and backstage where people express their roles, communities and symbolical boundaries are considered as appropriate theoretical notions to provide knowledge on how togetherness and values are experienced. The intention is not to present a full image of what symbolic boundaries have been drawn by daily practices, which people feel member and which people are outsiders. Neither, the objective is to show the true self of people. In the end, these notions provide us useful tools for unravelling place making of Dream streets in Rotterdam.

Chapter 3 Methodology

After extensively reviewing the relevant notions selected to approach the subject of lived experiences of the people of Dream streets, this chapter's goal is to find out how data is acquired and analysed to give clear insights. Before we start, the central research question and the sub questions are discussed. After all, these elements of this study require a specific strategy. We continue explaining at most wide gaze how qualitative study is the principle point. By the following sections, the step-by-step approach of justifying why the chosen strategy is best fitting is pursued. In that order, the philosophical assumptions, study design and data collection are discussed. Also, how the data is analysed is elaborated. This chapter ends with a case description of Dream streets in Rotterdam.

3.1 Qualitative study

To make clear the how and why of data analysis in this study, first we shed a light on the methodological background this study is performed. The most basic and broad distinction we can make, is to choose for a qualitative approach instead of a quantitative approach. The interpretative approach, which enables qualitative researchers to present an experience, understanding or valuation of an event, social phenomenon or objects is an important feature of how the object of research is addressed. As Hennink, Hutter and Bailey prescribe; a qualitative study is particularly useful when examining people's beliefs and manners and identifying the social or cultural rules in a community (2011).

A qualitative study, considered most appropriate when trying to grasp people's perceptions and contexts, gives in-depth results. On the contrary, quantitative research data are non-textual. The shortcoming of quantitative research, is that it precludes to go in-depth. In this study, now further specifying the qualitative approach chosen, we make use of the viewpoints of Verstehen and understanding. Verstehen entails researching people's lived experiences taking place in a specific historical and social context. The difference between both perspectives is explained as follows:

'Understanding refers to understanding issues from the researcher's own interpretive framework or the outsiders perspective; 'Verstehen' refers to understanding the issues from the interpretive framework of the study population, or from the insider's perspective' (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2011, p. 18).

In other words, Verstehen departs from the respondent, the person which gives meaning to a phenomenon and shares experiences. The perspective of the insider is what is central when we talk about Verstehen. Verstehen gives us insights in the thinking and doing of respondents in a situation. It is like speaking the language of the respondents, who are subjected to social and physical transformations in a neighbourhood. On the other hand, to achieve understanding, a more distant position from the respondents is helpful. The researcher examining a specific issue, is working to create an understanding of that phenomenon.

From the above standpoints, we learn there is an interplay or interdependence between both. To develop an understanding, we have to dive into Verstehen, that is lived experience. The two standpoints brings us to the next topic, the positionality of the researcher.

3.2 Reflexivity

One of the issues the interpretive approach entails is subjectivity. We are dealing with respondents, presenting their own views on the world, researchers who carry their personal opinions on how the social world works. We are devoting this section to the aspect of reflexivity, meaning the researcher's background, position or emotions are influential in the process of data gathering. This adds an extra layer to the acquired data, which we could illustrate as the pair of glasses through which we observe the world around us. For everyone this lens is somewhat different, although several rough characteristics can be distinguished which might affect the data. To name an example, for me as a male student/researcher in his twenties, it is more likely I can freely enter the streets, pavements, even when it starts to get dusky. In comparison, elderly people would feel in general feel less comfortable doing that at those moments, as their physical abilities makes them more vulnerable.

In that sense, my possibilities to observe interesting activities on the street, get in touch with people hanging on the streets or else are greater. On the other hand, personal characteristics might hold back people to get in contact with me, to speak freely, to open up themselves. One day, I was in a street in het Oude Noorden, seeing how a Moroccan woman with a head scarf cleaned her front door. I approached her, in Dutch, but immediately noticed this woman is not willing to speak with me. I asked some questions, received short answered. She told she's busy to prepare her vacation, left and closed her front door. Several reasons might hamper this interaction. Maybe, her knowledge of Dutch is insufficiently to answer some of my questions. Or cultural norms might hold her back to interact with unknown men, like I tried on the streets.

As we see from above example, the process of collecting data requires the researcher to be in the social world itself. In other words, the ideologies, background, own values, personal characteristics and the actions performed in the field are the aspects we could reflect on when doing a qualitative research. Although I tried my best to perform as neutral as possible, by being open, act friendly and interested, but also by taking initiative to approach people and starting to talk, it struck me that many people regarded me as a potential newcomer. I inferred this by their quick responses they gave: 'are you planning to live here?' or 'do you look for a new home?'. My ideas about the neighbourhoods, in which gentrification plays a role in social life, made me to distance myself from that image. I am conscious about the negative image inherent to the middle-class people in the neighbourhood. I had to clearly present myself as a student, working on a research project about 'how people like the living in this neighbourhood'. My appearance corresponds with this, in my opinion. Most of the days, I wore a t-shirt or polo shirt, carried a backpack or shoulder bag and used the – among students very popular – lease bikes of *Swapfiets* as a mode of transportation.

Carefully taking into account the appearance, performance and mind-set of the researcher, suits in my opinion the qualitative approach of phenomenology, in which we are concerned with how respondents experience the phenomenon.

3.3 Phenomenology

This section will further explain the phenomenological way of doing research, why this approach has been chosen and how it helps acquiring data and analysis. Simply said: in phenomenology we try to get a deeper understanding of the nature of everyday life or how that is perceived meaningful (Van Manen, 1990). Also, this approach doesn't enable us to thoroughly grasp how the world works, though it gives us insights which help us to get deeper in that world (Van Manen, 1990). One can imagine, this approach is active in describing lived experiences. Van Manen reacts on that by stating that "Actually it has been argued that all description is ultimately interpretation" (1990, p. 25).

The phenomenological approach is appropriate in examining community in neighbourhoods, as we learn how we could better understand this phenomenon. A life in one street is very contextual, historical, economic and social developments are the pillars of the street culture. Phenomenology is just more than one single feature. Case studies and ethnographic studies, in that sense, strongly focus on that particularity, situation or cultural group and what is happening there. Van Manen's critique on these approaches is these describe the state of affairs of one moment, or the past. This state of affairs or culture, however, is due to change over time and place (1990). Also, phenomenology is not aiming to give solutions. Rather, it delivers insights in the given meaning and helps to 'open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act, between thoughtfulness and tact' (Van Manen, 2007, p. 13).

Respondents are evident to find out more about the meanings. Next section is about the respondents' involvement in this research.

3.4 Data collection

How are the respondents meaningful to this research? This section is about the data acquisition. We first tell how the people participated in this study. After that, we elaborate on how they are approached.

3.4.1 Data gathering

The main source of data collection in this study is by means of doing interviews. The phase of fieldwork yielded a total of 19 in-depth interviews, which were performed from the end of May till the beginning of September 2018. Interviewing can be a tool employed to look for anecdotes, experiences, stories, incidents, constituted as personal life stories (Van Manen, 1990). Also, Van Manen mentions not asking too many questions and to stay close to the phenomenon. Similarly, Giorgi (1997) pleads for asking interview questions that are broad and open, in order to create conditions in which the respondent feels free to share their ideas.

In this fieldwork, I complied with the above by making use of semi-structured interviews (interview guide to be found in appendix). By focussed listening and asking for clarification, I tried to discount my own ideas about neighbourhood change and gentrification. Moreover, I consciously choose to speak in the language of the respondent. All but one interview were held in Dutch (the other was done in English). But, by language I mean the avoidance of charged and discussed concepts like gentrification, displacement and opposition etcetera to better fit residents' language in describing their street and neighbours.

Most of the interviews lasted for an hour or more. The duration was sometimes prolonged because the interviewee's were simultaneously watching their children, in conversation with others or cooking. I considered that as useful, as the respondents would be in an active modus in which they felt comfortable to do their own thing as well. It could have helped for respondents to open up and give rich answers regarding the street. Moreover, these extra activities provided me a deeper insight of the respondent.

Most of the times, the interviews were done in private space, that is someone's back garden or in the living room. One taped interview was performed while walking the dog of the owner. Also, three of the interviews took place on the public space of the street. Although one respondent specifically noted that one statement he made should be 'off-the-record', which was technically not possible as he said it while the conversation was taped, I assumed that most respondents didn't feel any barriers to tell their personal life story. Sometimes, interviewees lowered their voice, which entailed some more trustworthy information. And, after the interview and the record stopped, it was important to open up my ears for what was told. In a few cases, I noted down what they said afterwards, as it contributes to meaning they give. In all cases, I wrote down in my field diary how I experienced the conversation myself, how it went, how the respondent reacted etcetera. This helps me to keep the interview data more vivid, as written notes keep the experience of that specific moment alive. This contributes shaping the context.

In all cases, I felt very welcome as a conversation partner (I rather see myself as an equal partner than in the dominant role as interviewer). My request to tape the interview was no problem for all partners. But, my data collection is not limited to these 19 taped interviews. During my visits to the streets, I faced many people. For instance, I spoke with a community police officer, dwellers in Dream streets telling they weren't willing to talk with me because of lack of time, interest or they told me they already were approached very often by other students. Also neighbours, people from adjacent streets were conversation partners. And, I joined the 'street hanging session' of neighbours in Beatrijsstraat twice. I felt there was a good rapport between us, as they even offered me to drink a beer with them. To appreciate the hospitality and to further give strength to our connection, I accepted the beer and continued hearing their stories. Given Van Manen's definition of close observation, we could understand these two sessions to be compliant with. A close observation is different in the sense that the researcher tries to step into the lifeworld of the individual who is subject to the phenomenon (1990). I joined these men and women on the street, while I tried to make sense of what happened at that very moment and of the words spoken. After the sessions, I wrote down in my field diary what I heard, what struck me and who was there.

Next to interviewing and non-recorded conversations and immersing, I want to dwell on my attempt to organise a focus group, called 'Dream street event'. In the appendix, the invitation, preliminary script and workshop are attached. In July, I spend lots of time in planning and organising this evening, scheduled at the 22th of August 2018. The objective of this evening was to let people think about what they think is possible to adjust their street. My interest was to find how the ideas vary from each other. It was for them a session of dreaming, how could the design of the street be changed to make it more liveable in the participants' eyes. Also they would mix in groups discussing per theme what 'solution' would fit best the stated problem in the street. The target group was the population of Dream streets in Rotterdam, specifically those I selected as cases. The total of invitations would be high, as this entails a total of six streets varying in population. However, the number of people showing up was expected around 20, 25. Unfortunately, the department of Spatial Development of the municipality of Rotterdam was very sceptical, as this event could raise expectations that couldn't be realised by this department. No support from this influencing department led me to cancel the preparations of this event to prevent any possible conflicts.

3.4.2 Approaching respondents

One major feature of the respondents in this research, is that they have experienced the phenomenon. The phenomenon could be noted as 'having a life in a Dream street in Rotterdam'. Logically, the people owning or habiting a house in a Dream street are the potential individuals. To recruit respondents, I started in June 2018 contacting one of the initiators of Dream street Berkelselaan. Maxim and I, my companion and colleague at the municipality of Rotterdam who did a research to successes in citizen initiatives regarding social mixing, both identified this woman as a relevant interview partner. Therefore, we arranged a meeting with her in May 2018 already, providing us the possibility to have a conversation at her house. Later, I contacted this woman again asking her for assistance. I considered this woman after the interview as a well-known person in this street thanks to her role in the realisation of Dream street. Her connections with the people in the street are more tight than I would ever experience, as a stranger to these people. A gatekeeper, as this helpful lady could be named, provides me several benefits. My specific request was her to introduce me in the street. Thus, I sent her a message in which I introduced myself, the background of the research and my wish to get into contact with people willing to talk about their life in the Dream street and specific date and time I was planning to go by. After that, she made sure this message was sent

through to her all neighbours via the mail account of the neighbourhood commission. One of the benefits was that I already got an introduction to the street and its people by means of the interview. Having real life contact was essential to further seeking assistance of this lady. The announcement she made to her neighbours also made my visit to the street less unexpected. Even some people began to respond on this mail, telling me they noted the date and time in their schedules or informed me they would not be present that moment or they wanted to be unsubscribed from the mailing list. Also, several neighbours used this opportunity of communication to ask about their packages delivered at neighbours' places. Those responses were not directly contributively to my research, although the flow of messages that followed rehearsed my announcement. Also, some feeling of confidence and trust comes along, since people share personal information.

However, this approach of employing a gatekeeper assisting in participant recruitment is applied only once. The method helped me indeed to find one respondent. Most of the times, I went by bicycle and visited several Dream streets and its surroundings. When people were on the streets, I approached them with social talk. The weather was one often-used opener. Or I took up their activities at the street, like maintaining a bicycle. As soon as I got a response, I moved to another topic. With general questions like 'how is life in this street?', 'what do you like of this street?' I hoped to trigger the conversation partner to open up about street life. Ideally, I mobilised the conversation partner to talk further at a specific date and time, which enabled me to ask my questions in more rest and to make records. Sometimes, my efforts were rewarded with an appointment to do an interview. Others were less eager to talk further.

When I indeed had an interview, I always tried to learn some addresses and names of people I could possibly approach next time. Though, most of the times while interviewing, the respondent mentioned the information of their neighbours I could contact. Very often, I took this very seriously and noted their names and house numbers. One disadvantage of this snowball recruitment is you make use of one social network making the participants very equal (Hennink et al., 2011). A consequence could be their experiences and ideas are corresponding, which lowers the variety in responses.

Furthermore, I attended two informational evenings. The 21st of June, the urban government organised a meeting at a neighbourhood centre. The designing team of the Beatrijsstraat, Persijnstraat and Frank van Borselenstraat presented their plan. The dwellers had the possibility to have their say in the plans. Because I had to leave early, I didn't have the possibility to speak with the people while having a drink. The other evening I attended, 10th of July, was themed as a market with several stands, staffed by actors active in the neighbourhood like the municipality, neighbours and investors and developers. At this evening, I acquired one respondent I interviewed later. Drawback of recruiting respondents at such events is these people are often the ones that are engaged with the street. This lowers the variety in respondents and opinions. On the other hand, these events are relevant to learn about the context of the street, as I have seen how different people gather to discuss one specific theme.



Figure 2: Two of the interviews in Beatrijsstraat took place at this picnic place.

3.5 Data analysis

The processing of data is the subject of this section. The interviews, which are the main source in this study, are differently analysed than the observational sessions and conversations on the street.

First, we examine the method of interview analysis. After that, the other gathered data analysis method is discussed.

Of the 19 interviews conducted interviews, only one has not been transcribed as I did this interview with my companion. We both used the extensive report containing the highlights of the conversation (to be found in the appendix) for analysis. After transcribing, the interviews were coded in Atlas.ti. This programme enabled me to assign codes easily to specific fragments or outstanding words relevant to find meaning of the words. Human science, as Van Manen (1990) argues, can only be articulated textually, thus it helps the researcher to structure the meaning of texts by using themes. Themes in phenomenological research are the structures of experience. Essentially in his work is the four types of 'existentials', the ground categories of lived experience we are always confronted with. We are talking about the following feelings: lived space, like the height or corners as aspects of space; lived body, our physical connection with everything else in the world; lived time, what is the experience of objective time when something is over very quick and finally: the lived other. How we bodily experience space with other people (van Manen, 1990).

In terms of creating themes and making structure, while coding the interview transcripts several themes or family codes was the first step in ordering the collection of codes. Inspired by Saldaña (2009), the chosen approach of value coding is applied.

This can be understood as:

"...the application of codes onto qualitative data that reflect a participant's values, attitudes, and beliefs, representing his or her perspectives or worldview. Though, each construct has a different meaning, Values Coding, as a term, subsumes all three" (Saldaña, 2009, p. 89).

In this approach, there world views of interviewees is structured by three terms: value (what we regard as important), attitude (how we think and feel about things, others, ourselves, ideas) and beliefs (our values and attitudes grounded in our personal ideas of the world around us) (Saldaña, 2009). There is chosen for this strategy as it gives insights in how people experience the world around, what can be seen as lived experiences. Saldaña (2009) argues this method is specifically appropriate for studies exploring intrapersonal and interpersonal participant experiences and actions. The experiences of community are interpersonal making this Value coding as appropriate in finding out how this phenomenon is experienced.

To return to the phenomenology, Value Coding is subsequently applied to shape the themes which build on the existentials of Van Manen. In this research, living with difference, liveability, togetherness and atmosphere are themes shaping the phenomenological reflection. When looking closer, we see these themes are to a great extent complying with the four elementary themes.

For example, thanks to atmosphere, we can feel a specific space (Böhme, 2006). Also, togetherness is about a living with neighbours. The individual and his or her neighbours share a space, that is the street. A physical element of presence is preceding this felt experience.

The two methods of sorting out the data and codes are helping me to describe the lived experience. By assigning codes as done in the Value Coding, the subsequent phenomenological categories (togetherness, living with difference, atmosphere and liveability) become loaded notions. Figure 3 clarifies how one quote goes through several ordering foundations.

Also, memos are used during the process of coding. The memos are analytical arguments made that popped up.

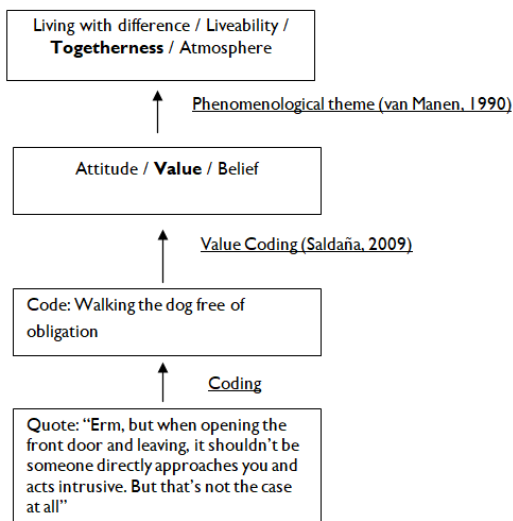


Figure 3: The process of coding and structuring interview data

This chapter outlined how the research is performed. By choosing a qualitative approach we are looking for meanings. The phenomenology stresses the importance to unravel how people give meaning to their street and neighbours. Very important here, is that the researcher is positioned in the context. Therefore, his role should be neutral. The next section aims to give insights in the context of where the fieldwork took place. It is relevant to give a thorough description of these places, as someone's lived experiences can be influenced by where one lives and acts.

Chapter 4 Defining the context

The empirical gatherings of the fieldwork will be presented in this chapter. Chosen is to continue next sections by making use of phenomenology as a interpreting framework. Phenomenology - of which the Canadian-based Dutchman Max van Manen is one of the main thinkers - is not about inventing technical instruments or prescribing tools to improve things we do. Instead, phenomenology of practice is employed to “open up possibilities for creating formative relations between being and acting, between who we are and how we act, between thoughtfulness and tact” (Van Manen, 2007, p. 13). To unravel how the people of Dream streets behave, express themselves and give meaning, it is essential to give room for their experiences. These perspectives will be outlined after looking at the governmental intentions and actions in Rotterdam neighbourhoods.

4.1 Rotterdam policy

Rotterdam, second biggest city in the Netherlands, is home to relatively few higher educated people compared to the other biggest cities of the Netherlands: Utrecht, Den Haag and Amsterdam. The population statistics over the last centuries illustrate how Rotterdam became a metropolis, thanks to the port and heavy industries. The share of higher educated¹ people in 2018 for Rotterdam is depicted at 31%. To put this in perspective; Den Haag has a share of 36%, Amsterdam 48% and Utrecht 56% (CBS, 2019). Traditionally, labour-intensive sectors have been indispensable for Rotterdam and its people in terms of employment. However, Rotterdam is becoming more and more a city supplying services instead of sweat and raw (man) power. The city government monitors this trend and actively works on removing the gaps in education level among its citizens. Particularly the statistics of surrounding, big cities is underlying the efforts in closing the gap. Ideally, the stake of higher educated people in Rotterdam is 40%. Rotterdam has made policy aiming to increase the number of higher educated people living in the city to ensure a more balanced population. These people are essential in keeping alive the small and medium enterprises and to maintain vivid spaces. Target groups selected to contribute to Rotterdam of Tomorrow are:

- Students
- Young Professionals (till age of 35)
- Highly educated couples with or without children (age range 35-55)
- Empty nesters (from 55 years old), highly educated adults/seniors with no children at home

Even more important is that these ‘Sterke Schouders’ (Carrying shoulders) feel connected to the city and make local networks with Rotterdammers with fewer capacities.

The posterior is thought of enlarging the opportunities for the lower schooled people, thus contributing to a more balanced city composition (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016a).

In policy terms, ‘Kansrijke Wijken’ (Promising Places) is the programme engaged with some more tangible measures supporting the higher goal of the Carrying Shoulders. Carrying Shoulders intends to attract and bind higher educated people to Rotterdam. The following districts are designated as places with lots of potential: Liskwartier, Oude Noorden, Nieuw-Crooswijk, Kralingen-West, Middelland, Nieuwe Westen, Lloydkwartier, Katendrecht and Kop van Zuid-Entrepot.

The Guardian also wrote about these places, as being part of an ‘unashamed programme of state-sponsored gentrification’ (Laker, 2018). Intention of the Rotterdam government in these districts around the city centre is to strengthen ties of young, highly-educated families with their place of living. Some concrete actions that are taken is the creation of DIY-houses, where families can adapt and refurbish dilapidated houses to their own wishes and needs. Other examples are facilitating citizen initiatives, creating more green and attractive living environments or improving the existing school facilities (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016b). Dream streets offers residents to work on an improved design of their street. Interventions contributing to achieve this are for example the substitution of traffic space into sociable space, public seating or vegetable flecks. Measurements done in 2017 by the Rotterdam municipality show us that the growth of full-potential families is 8,5%, where the goal for 2018 is to have a total of 10% increase. In other words, the young and potential families feel attracted to these places. Simultaneously, this has not gone unnoticed by investors and developers, showing their interest to construct new houses there (Laker, 2018).

How the Promising Places appeared to me is discussed in the coming paragraphs. My observations, some insights of residents and statistics at neighbourhood level are used to present the areas. This is evident, as this enables us to critically reflect on these places. Principle point of this study is how the residents ascribe value to their street. In

¹ Higher education in the Netherlands entails a degree of a university of applied sciences or a regular university degree.

researching these meanings, we cannot isolate ourselves from these streets. In doing so, we find support by Heidegger (in Van Manen, 2007). The essence of his allegation is that our given meanings is in relation with ourselves connected with the things of our world. The moods we experience have its own source and ground. It is the context that matters according to Heidegger. Our moods already mirror how we are positioned in the world. Our given meanings are grounded in our actions taking place in the material world we are part of. Before we reach understanding of something, we already deal with the world we are positioned in. We can apply these insights in the coming sections. The interviewees are part of a street, so with their everyday practices are embedded in the context of a Dream street. Following section is about portraying the contexts of the people.

4.2 Case descriptions

The selection of dream streets is done by taking into account the overall developments in the neighbourhood. Though cities are always in transformation, where state-led gentrification affect these neighbourhoods is a central criterion in selecting Dream streets. In doing so, I selected the Dream streets after discussing the projects with Jan van der Wolde, the so called 'dream coach' of the municipality of Rotterdam. He is mediating between the residents of Dream streets and the departments of the urban government concerned with physical development and participation. Also, I extensively read De Graaf's (2017) master's thesis in which she examines the experienced pros and cons of Dream streets activities. There is overlap in the chosen streets in this research and De Graaf's study. But the strategy in this study to find out how community is lived experience differs much making this overlap not problematic. In my opinion, De Graaf's intention is much closer to confirm or deny social mixing in Dream streets. Possible drawback could be several people are not willing to participate another time in a study regarding their street and its soul. Possibly, they tend to deny my requests earlier because of that.

All selected Dream streets are situated in so called 'groenere stadswijken' (greener city centre neighbourhoods): Liskwartier, Oude Noorden, Katendrecht, Middelland and Kralingen-West. This distinction of districts is made by the municipality of Rotterdam (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2016c) and uses neighbourhood characteristics as a starting point. The authors made use of characteristics and typologies found in literature by desk research. In their report they found the following: mixed functions (city centre) neighbourhoods, compact city centre neighbourhoods, greener city centre neighbourhoods, green suburbs, traditional villages and golden edges.

A greener city centre neighbourhood is featured as:

- Its location in between the diamond shaped high roads that demarcate the centre of Rotterdam
- High density of houses, but not as high as in the 'compact city centre neighbourhoods'
- Most houses are owned by private individuals instead of rented housing
- Most houses are built before 1945, stacked living
- Higher property value compared to the houses in 'compact city centre neighbourhoods'
- The share of students and middle and higher income people is higher than in the 'compact city centre neighbourhoods'
- Mostly the red and yellow lifestyle is represented in these neighbourhoods.

Last feature requires some more explanation. The Brand Strategy Research model (BSR) is used in studying segmentation and experience. In this model, personal motivations and needs are starting point to find out how personal needs are satisfied (Wolters et al., 2007). On basis of two dimensions, four types of consumers are distinguished. The red life style is mostly applicable to people looking to enrich their personal lives with an open, extravert life vision. This person perceives his world in an intuitive, expressive and interpersonal way (Wolters et al., 2007). The yellow life style is characterised by people who have an open mind, but try to find kinship, so doing it with others. Their objective is to find harmony between family, work, living place and society. The green lifestyle fits to people who also want to share their life. They choose to do this in a group or clans, like family or neighbourhood. These groups have their own rules of conduct and values. The blue group consist of people who have an individualistic lifestyle, mostly trying to improve and handle their lives (Wolters et al., 2007).

4.2.1 Donarpad and Freijapad

In the district Katendrecht, we find Donarpad and Freijapad. They are part of Parkkwartier, what constitutes a masterplan aiming to transform Katendrecht from an industrial and harbour site into an attractive living environment. This was necessary, since the neighbourhood had to deal with several criminal activities and poor liveability. In conversation with people living on Katendrecht, I regularly heard them telling about the curfew, ordered by major of Rotterdam in 2008. This measure was intended to reduce rowdiness caused by the local youth. By the time, I learned that this event is seen as a tipping point. Katendrecht left most of its trouble behind from then.

To understand these underlying drivers for transformation, it is crucial to take the historical developments into account.

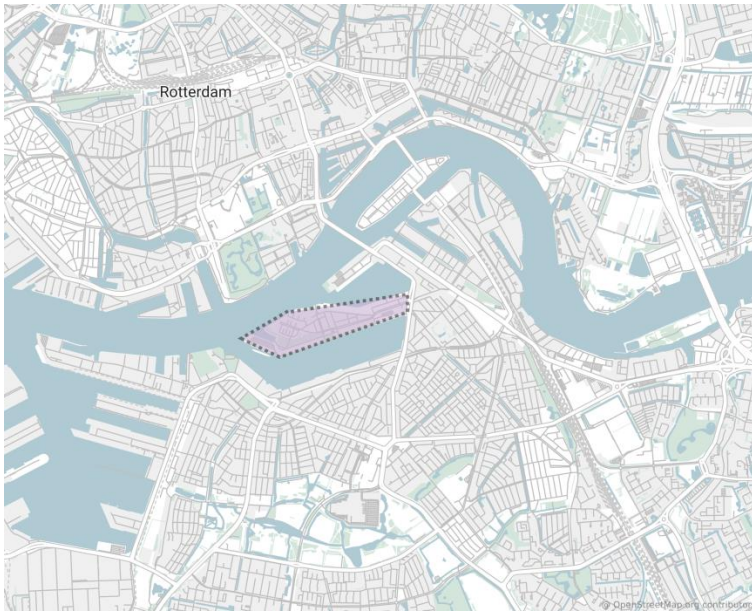


Figure 4: Katendrecht on the map. Made with Localfocus.

The peninsula of Katendrecht was one of the harbour districts of Rotterdam. This played an important role in the history of Katendrecht. The amenities were mainly focussed on needs of international seamen. Cafes and prostitution were inherent to Katendrecht. Among these visitors were lots of Chinese men, the workers on most ships. Hence, Chinatown and Red Light District became synonyms for this district. The displacement of the harbours and industrial activities to the newly engineered Maasvlakte 2 left empty spots on Katendrecht. The warehouses made place to many houses and apartment buildings recently erected at the south side of Katendrecht. That's what two women in their 60's told me. They were taking a break in their evening-walk in the neighbourhood where they lived all their life. To improve the image of Katendrecht, the municipality of Rotterdam launched a new campaign named: Are you ready for the Kaap? (Kun jij de Kaap aan?). But also the amenities, aimed to serve the new people and to a lesser the extent the traditional people of Katendrecht, contributed to the new atmosphere in Katendrecht. This atmosphere could be interesting for the 'urban and creative class', which was the target group of the project (Mak, 2012). According to the lifestyle research of 2012, the stake of people with a red lifestyle is with 29% greater than in Rotterdam (24%). Same goes for yellow lifestyle, 35% vs 30%. On the other hand, the proportion of persons with a green and blue lifestyle is lower than Rotterdam average (gemeente Rotterdam, 2019).

The extensive project gave Katendrecht a complete new look, and is still transforming Katendrecht. The building of Parkkwartier took place in the years 2006-2010 (Gemeente Rotterdam, 2005). The first people moved into their fresh, just released new homes in 2008. The phased plan made that others arrived little later, in 2010. These houses, which are individually owned, are part of the 36% private owned houses on Katendrecht. Biggest part of the housing stock is social housing, 54% while average Rotterdam social housing is calculated on 45%. These new houses in Freijapad and Donarpad, Katendrecht are fitting well to other houses in surrounding streets at the south side of Katendrecht, as they are all part of the master plan completed in the first decade of this century. In some of these streets, you find unique homes which are the dream houses of artists and architects. However, they don't dominate the general layout which consists of modern houses made with warm colours i.e. brown-orange bricks. They don't exceed the 3rd floor in height, except for some apartment buildings. Living and other functions are combined, of which the Chinese church situated in Donarpad is an example. The houses in both streets are identical to each other, as is for the street in between the rows of houses. Donarpad and Freijapad differentiate from each other in furnishing of the street, which consists of moveable elements like a picnic bench, rocks, greenery or a chess field in Donarpad.

On January 1 2018, the population of Katendrecht is 4795 people according to the Rotterdam Buurtmonitor (2019). Somewhat less than half of the population has a Dutch background. Rotterdam has a mean of 50% Dutch people. This demonstrates that other nationalities, like Surinamese, Moroccan and other (of which Chinese will take a big share regarding its history) are greater represented in Katendrecht. Most people, 2243, are in the age group 23-54 years.

This further shapes my image of Katendrecht as a young neighbourhood with many families. In my observations, the large Kaap Park with playground and football field, the modern family houses and children playing and cycling on the streets struck to me and fit to this image. Demographic statistics of the municipality show that there is a relatively high share of couples with children (23% against 19% Rotterdam average). However, there are more amenities to choose from when living on *The Kaap*. The popularity of Katendrecht last years has resulted in an increase in a variety of events. Nacht van de Kaap (Night of the Kaap) is a music festival organised every summer attracting people of Katendrecht and from other places. Moreover, the SS Rotterdam, a former cruise ship, is one of the main visits for tourists seeing Katendrecht. Food factory Fenix and theatre Walhalla are famous among most Rotterdammers and tourists.



Figure 5: Visitors Fenix Food Factory. Retrieved from Druk terras van Fenix Food Factory, vanden Broek, I., 2016, <https://rotterdammakeithappen.nl/media-objecten/druk-terras-van-fenix-food-factory/>

4.2.2 Beatrijsstraat

Beatrijsstraat was one of the dream streets in 2017, an event called Zomerparadijs (summer paradise). The people of the Beatrijsstraat, Persijnstraat and Frank van Borselenstraat have a tradition of doing it together of which the Dream street is the main result. Their topographical situation might be explaining why these three streets operate as one (see Figure 6).



Figure 6: Beatrijsstraat, Frank van Borselenstraat and Persijnstraat, Middelland. Made with Localfocus.

The Beatrijsstraat is located close to the central station and city centre of Rotterdam, in the district Middelland. The three streets (see Figure 6) are surrounded by the Heemraadsingel and Graaf Florisstraat. These adjacent lanes are

the living place of the urban middle and higher class. During my visits to this neighbourhood, I was repeatedly impressed by the high and big facades of the pre-war 20th century mansions. The huge and covering trees at the Graaf Florisstraat create a high-class and classic atmosphere. The layout of the Beatrijsstraat feels different to me; the atmosphere feels more cosy, ordinary, little festive and accessible. However, Beatrijsstraat, Frank van Borselenstraat and Persijnstraat used to be different. In the eighties of the 20th century, several houses were squatted. 'It was a mess', is what one of the neighbours told me. More recently, around the year 2000, the succession of new home owners and tenants in the streets happened in high speed. Among them, there were many people for whom was unknown how they earned their money, is what I heard from Vianne. There was lots of dirt on the street; the people felt no responsibility to take care according to Vianne. That period was not very amiable, she remembers.

How is life today in Beatrijsstraat? By entering the Beatrijsstraat, the activity on the streets makes the street feel alive. On my left hand, a group of around eight people are relaxing and chatting around their 'custom-made' terrace on the pavement. There is a small table, a pair of bar stools around. Their seat is provided with a parasol, ashtray and plants. The people of this street clearly invested time to create this place. I discovered a certain rhythm; the gathering of men, women and sometimes their children took place at the late afternoon and at evenings, when they returned from their job. People were enjoying the sun, talking with each other and smoking a cigarette or weed and enjoying a beverage. Another visit, I found at my right side a man preparing his fixed bikes for sale. For me as a bicycling-minded person, it was easy to start to talk to him. In the Beatrijsstraat, children make use of the kindergarten, their voices sound loud between the two rows of houses.

I was happy to introduce myself and to have chitchat with these and other people for single and multiple times, consequently I learned more about the street and its people.



Figure 7: Streetscape Beatrijsstraat.

Compared to conversations I had in other streets, I had the luck to speak to many people on the streets. This is how I preferred to get to know the people and the street, because my partner in conversation was directly able to show his thoughts about specific elements in the street. Moreover, it enabled me to observe the behaviour of my conversation partner with regard to his neighbours. In some cases, when a neighbour passed by, I introduced myself to him/her with the intention to gain some new insights. This doesn't mean that it only happened at arranged moments. Spontaneous passers-by mingled in talks I had with people of the street, resulting in an unstructured 'focus group'.

I learned about themes that were alive in this street. One of them is the Dream street, summer paradise that took place in 2017. Another, more recent topic is the extensive transformation of the street in the near future. The municipality is, in co-creation, planning to renew the sewage system. Afterwards, the street will get a complete new lay-out. The removal of plants, trees and parking spots are topics for heated discussions, is what I learned when attending a special meeting for the people of the Beatrijsstraat organised by the municipality. These topics are not

easy to reach agreement over. Especially because of the composition of people living in these streets. Tenants with low-paid jobs and directors of companies and organisations inhabit these houses. In terms of ethnicity, Piet considers the street as a mainly 'white' street, he recognises not too many non-Dutch people. Paradoxically, Middelland (the district where the Beatrijsstraat are situated) is a typical multicultural neighbourhood, with a 59% share of non-Dutch people in comparison with the Rotterdam population, where 50% has a non-Dutch background. Moreover, the *wijkmonitor* also emphasises differences on lifestyles. Middelland has a much bigger representation of people with a red life style, half of Middellands population can be classified as 'red life style', while the percentages of yellow and green life styles is much lower than the Rotterdam mean. People 'living' a blue life style equate approximately the Rotterdam average of 20%.

4.2.3 Kettingstraat

Kralingen-West is one of the *Rotterdamse* neighbourhoods reconstructed after World War Two. According to architectural historian Galema (OPEN Rotterdam, 2016), different architectural styles characterise Kralingen. This has to do with the bombings in war time, urban renewal projects and transformation of a former gasworks site. The architects had limited time and money; the urgency to provide Rotterdammers their new home was high. This resulted in plain urbanism, with very limited elements of decoration or differentiation. The figure below (see figure 8) shows how this is the case in the Kettingstraat, Rotterdam. The dead-end Kettingstraat and their houses from around 1900 escaped from the flames, but the surrounding Weteringstraat did not.



Figure 8: Two styles of construction in Kettingstraat, Rotterdam. Retrieved from Stadsarchief Rotterdam (n. d.). Kettingstraat 74-76: construction date no 74: 1894; construction date no 76: 1957. <http://www.brandgrens.nl/home>

The historical events make that entering Kettingstraat feels like walking into sort of 'pseudo-world'. The neighbouring streets feel different in many senses. Its unique morphology changes the *Geist* of the place. Kettingstraat is a blind alley so there is no movement of cars. Moreover, the flats around are conventionally built and look dilapidated and far from inspiring. Furthermore, the surrounding streets raises expectations of a living with poor conditions. The public space and houses of the Kettingstraat conversely suggest that the life situation is quite different. There has been decent maintenance to keep the houses, which are built between 1894 and 1900, appropriate for families to live in. Also, the public space has a human-oriented design, which means that there is place for meeting, animals, greenery and relaxation. Parking space is situated in the first meters of the alley which leaves an plaza used and planned by the people at the end of Kettingstraat. A small bush, a court for petanque, a large table with chairs is what directly struck me. However, in my perceiving, the plaza has a stony layout, with lots of pale colours. Also the self-made lampshades mounted on the public lighting used to be colourful and striking, but weather influences left the decorations in desolate state. The wooden benches and stray chicken relieve this hard appearance (see figure 9). The street and plaza are obviously domain of the people living in the Kettingstraat. And these people diverge from the overall impression Kralingen-West gave me. The statistics of the Rotterdam Buurtmonitor demonstrate the neighbourhood as a multicultural area. The 12 houses of Kettingstraat are inhabited by mainly Dutch families. One of those houses is home to female students and there is a South African expat family and a Polish family. One of the ways the space is used is to held street events. They vary from clean-up days to lighting a fire to celebrate John the Baptist and from organising dinners to a competition in petanque night.

As Kettingstraat might feel different in this neighbourhood, statistics of the neighbourhood monitor demonstrate that Kralingen-West is not that much divided from the Rotterdam means concerning the income distribution. There are no significant more or less low, middle or higher incomes. What is different, the people living a 'red lifestyle' are

greater represented in Kralingen-West than the Rotterdam share of people with a red lifestyle (35% vs 24%). On the other hand, people classified as yellow or green in terms of way of life are to a lesser extent represented in Kralingen-West (yellow 24% vs 30%, green 22% vs 28%).



Figure 9: Petanque court and streetscape of Kettingstraat.

4.2.4 Blommersdijkselaan

From Kralingen-West, we head up to the north of Rotterdam. The greater part of neighbourhood *Het Oude Noorden* is constructed in the second half of the 19th century. Although most of the area is built compactly, the zone of Blommersdijkselaan and Soetendaalseweg is physically more spacious. The houses of the Blommersdijkselaan date back from 1908-1910, except for some apartments close to the Bergweg and one apartment building in the centre of the street. They are built in the 1980's and 1990's. At the west side, Blommersdijkselaan is perpendicular to the busy Bergweg, at east side the ancient Catholic church and Hildegardisstraat are physical boundaries.

Like aforementioned streets, the residents of the Blommersdijkselaan think and work on making changes adjusting the street to better meet the desires of the current inhabitants. What is different to the other dream streets, is that the initiators of Dream street Blommersdijkselaan present their master plan which aims to relive the lane as it used to be. Starting point is to create a free view all through the lane from the Bergweg. In the end, the church is the absolute landmark, this also emphasises the extraordinary state of the church, as national heritage. To realise their goals, the bend around the plaza of the street need to be straightened (see Figure 10). Also, the pavements will be extended to give space for children to play, to meet and to relax. The one-direction road needs to be narrowed in order to achieve so. Parking cars is still possible, but the parking lots are positioned diagonally instead of horizontal. Trees are planted parallel to the road to ensure the view.

Another obstacle that needs to be tackled is the transformer facilitation, just at the opposite of the church.



Figure 10: Streetscape Blommersdijkselaan. Retrieved from the Facebook community 'Blommersdijkselaan'.

When turning into the Blommersdijkselaan, the one-way road seems to be central. It is used by cyclists, scooters and cars. In my view, the road is not appropriate for numerous movements of cars. Despite the small driveway, also caused by horizontal parked vehicles, the unconventional bending and several road thresholds, I witnessed many cars driving through. The plaza, furnished with benches, planter boxes and a small playground, doesn't invite to hang out at spring or summer nights. This has to do with the green leaf that in the middle of the summer cover most of the street and clog the playground (see Figure 11). Between the trees and public lighting, the hanging light cord creates a convivial atmosphere.



Figure 11: Plaza and playing attributes in Blommersdijkselaan.

Like the Drie Straatjes, the municipality plans to renew the sewage system. This is going to be the direct cause to adjust the street, but uncertainties about this project postpones the fresh new lane for the people. From 2016 on, the people of Blommersdijkselaan are working on changing the street. By social drinks and a breakfast organised for all people, plans and developments are discussed and presented. Both in the Blommersdijkselaan and in The Oude Noorden, people find their amenities and venues to recreate and socialise. The neighbourhood is obtaining fame as a popular spot, especially for young urban professionals, students and artists. A variety of cafes, restaurants and a brewery are examples that The Oude Noorden no longer is a neighbourhood of problems. In conversation with a local policeman, 10 years employed in the neighbourhood already, I learned that there is a stimulus going through the streets. I heard the same of a man, around 30 years old, who just moved into his new house in the Blommersdijkselaan; "The Oude Noorden is up-and-coming". One of the factors is the reconstruction of houses,

which attract people from higher income classes. This is one of the trends in this area, still Blommersdijkselaan is home to many different people. Students, young families, elderly, people with non-Dutch ethnicity and young urban professionals all share the public space of Blommersdijkselaan.

Same goes for the neighbourhood in general; just 35% of the people has a Dutch background living in Het Oude Noorden, more than half of the population is constituted of people with a non-western background. Also, lower income class is higher represented (63%) than middle- and lower incomes. It considerably exceeds the Rotterdam share of lower incomes, which is 51%. Remarkably, all life style colours are more or less corresponding the Rotterdam figures.

4.2.5 Berkelselaan

Coming from the Insulindestraat located in the Liskwartier neighbourhood, I followed my path in the Berkelselaan. This street is a long in length and crosses several other north-south roads like Bergsingel, Rodenrijsstraat and the Akerdijkstraat (see Figure 12).



Figure 12: Berkelselaan on the map. Made with Localfocus.

Although the Berkelselaan is in cut into four segments (west, middle-west, middle-east, east), the architectural styles are to large extent in accordance with each other. The Berkelselaan is, like the other cases, designed and used as a street for living. The houses are constructed around 1910-1913 and the people living in this neighbourhood, Liskwartier, have little natural amenities nearby, like forests, green squares or other recreational facilities. This is somewhat striking, as the municipality of Rotterdam labels Liskwartier as a child-friendly neighbourhood. Another feature of Liskwartier neighbourhood distinguished by the municipality is the tight bonds among its inhabitants. From my visits to the Berkelselaan, I noticed separation by physical elements. At the centre, western part (see Figure 13). there is a small plaza. The blue artificial soil catches the eye. It is designed as a playground with climbing bars, a slide and wooden benches that can be used as storage space by simply tipping the seat. Also, there is a frame that enables the people of the Berkelselaan to organise events or meetings in case of bad weather by transforming the wooden skeleton into a party tent (see Figure 13). Moreover, this section has, one-road movement, as it is closed for cars entries at the Rodenrijsstraat.



Figure 13: Plaza at the Berkelselaan.

To realise the new plaza of the Berkelselaan, several experiments preceded. These ‘warming-up’ initiatives have taken three years for the plaza to be finalised in 2017. These moments are memorable to the inhabitants of Berkelselaan, while a few years ago the street was blighted by Bulgarians and their activities in prostitution. Vans with blinded windows carrying women and fights made the police to come to Berkelselaan, told Vicky and Elim. The overall feeling was that they couldn’t leave their children alone. They experienced their street as unsafe. Yet, in cooperation with municipality the Bulgarians left and the street revived its calm and friendly atmosphere.

Liskwartier is to a lesser extent multicultural compared to Katendrecht, Oude Noorden, Middelland or Kralingen-West. Still, it cannot be marked as a ‘white neighbourhood’. The Berkelselaan as a whole is quite diverse and houses many different people and ethnicities. The focus in this research is on the western-centre part with the plaza, as these people are mostly involved with the dream street. In this street, there live families, older people, students, single people, young couples and non-Dutch people.

The classification of life styles in Liskwartier might raise some expectations of how these people experience their place of living. What can we learn from the statistics? In Liskwartier, almost half (46%) of the residents can be characterised as ‘red’ in life style. This is almost doubling the Rotterdam average, whereas all other colours are not matching the Rotterdam means.

Now we have an idea how these streets feel, look like from an outsider’s perspective. Also, we know how these streets are situated. The next step is to dive into personal experiences in these contexts. Before we do, we describe the how the above analytical approach employed to better distil the essence of given meanings of the residents. We are inspired by an individual motivation (for example the BSR ‘life style colour’ model) and how the context affects the individual. The latter aspect has to do with the social aspects and the physical outlooks of the direct living environment.

4.3 Personal contexts

In this section, we will examine provide a tool to better understand how interviewees perceive the living in their street, i.e. living with difference, tolerance towards difference, togetherness and the atmosphere and generators of atmosphere. In researching that, we move beyond a classical distribution on level of education. This study, performed with a phenomenological approach, is essentially concerned with the lived experiences. In finding the lived experience, the close, not yet reflected feeling of consciousness of life is key. It’s the stadium before one is consciously aware of it (Dilthey, 1985). Bovens, Dekker & Tiemeijer (2014) have demonstrated how college and more practical educated people perceive and value the world around them differently. Inequality is to a lesser extent a matter of socio-economic differences, rather the cultural features make sense in explaining inequality (Houtman, 2003). The importance of culture is also emphasised by Blokland (2017). She argues to see community as culture. That makes us to understand community as a relational concept, as something which is not fixed. The performances

and habits in public, constituting community are thus symbolisations of culture. The meanings they have can foster disengagement, belonging or inclusion and exclusion, as Blokland argues (2017).

The importance to get deeper into community is to get a greater understanding of how people share and live together in a Dream street. Community, as we have seen, could be researched as culture. The acts touching the living together, in that sense, contribute to community. Because 'communities are relational and interconnected rather than isolated from each other' (Blokland, 2017, p. 46), we choose not to classify people solely on basis of their educational level. That would, for example, imply the higher educated together constitute one community. In this study, obtaining a better understanding of the lived experiences we took our inspiration from studies like Veldboer et al. (2008). They distinguish the 'middle class' as three groups: a creative class tolerant towards other classes, social climbers of non-Dutch backgrounds with a big network in the neighbourhood and the social professionals like nurses, police officers or teachers. Also, the work Duyvendak and Wekker (2015) is useful in that perspective. They created four types of residents, characterised along two dimension: social distance and physical distance. Four categories resulted: those who prefer physical proximity but social distance, people who want to be physically and socially near to each other, people preferring physical distance but social closeness and a category of people who distance themselves physically and socially of others.

Both ways of grouping people are touching the attitude or activities of people. Someone labelled as a social professional for example is suggested to be helpful to others naturally. On the other hand, someone who does not want any social closeness could still like the idea of living with many (unknown) people around, like what happens in many cities. What we miss in these approaches, is the focus on neighbourhood initiatives. That's why we don't make use of class, social and physical distance but we concentrate on the stance in community life in one street.

Chosen is to create a starting point from which we can to classify respondents. Important to note, this method of classification is no attempt to simplify the spoken people on basis of this profile. After all, making use of two continua is helpful in understanding *modus vivendi*. We understand a *modus vivendi* as a set of actions, attitudes, experiences and thoughts concerning a rich community life. In this research, we sometimes refer to 'pavement culture', by which we mean a rich community life. The following concepts are the extreme poles of the continuum:

How is the respondents' stance towards change in the street?

- Progressive: open to change making the streetscape more safe, liveable, social or attractive
- Conservative: preserving the current street design or thoughtless about street design, in some cases responding to a change in parking space as a result of the Dream street activities

What are the actions concerning practicalities and convivial street activities?

- Spectating: mostly inactive in the entire/inclusive 'street scene',
- Contributing: helps to keep the soul of the street alive by thinking, doing, lobbying etcetera

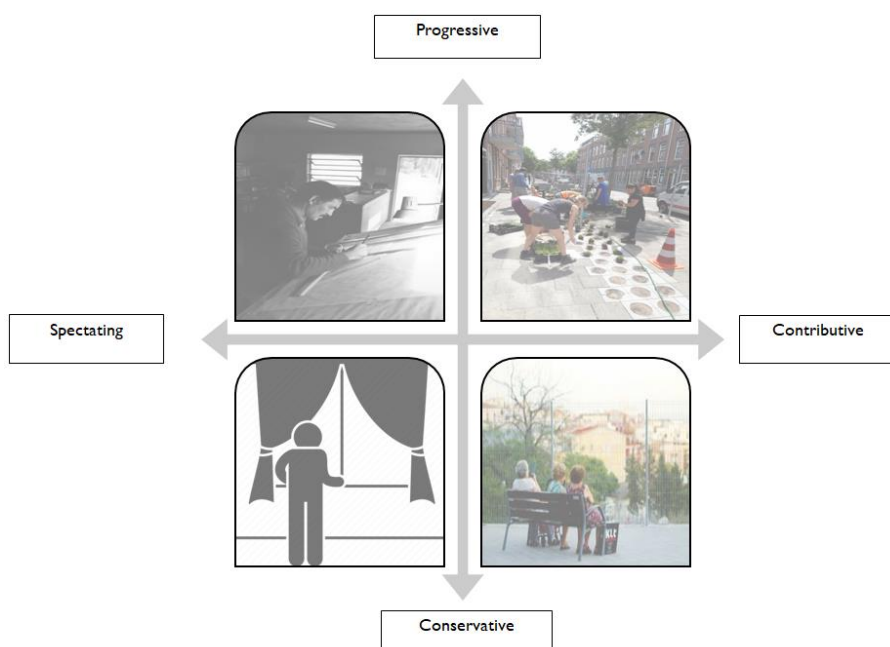


Figure 14 presents these categories graphically. The horizontal axis entails the acts of an individual, whereas the vertical axis represents the attitude.

Figure 14: Better understanding individuals by reviewing their acts and thoughts.

Since this study aims to give an illustrative and vivid image of how life occurs in Dream streets, the following ideal types help to understand the attitudinal and mobilising features of Dream street dwellers.

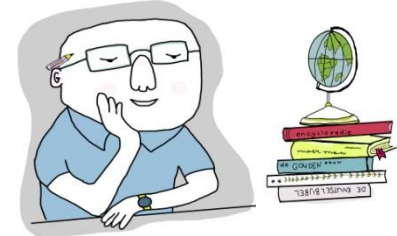


Hetty

This middle-aged woman of Dutch background lives for a long time in the same neighbourhood and street. She appreciates live there, and likes to keep as it is. Together with her neighbours, she speaks about the developments around which she rejects. With some of her neighbours, those who also live there for long, she has meaningful contact. They share lots about their life. To others, her attitude is more ignorant. In the axis scheme, her position would be right in the lower part.

Hendrik

Although Hendrik is not the typical hermit, his desire to interact with neighbours is lesser than Hetty has, for example. The neighbours who know him, would tell you they don't really know Hendrik. Though, he likes to put his efforts of thinking about and acting to improving the street. Therefore, he has contact which is mostly practical and entrepreneurial instead of convivial interaction. His position in the scheme would be upper-left.



Wendy

This woman, busy with her career life, family and husband, is organising events and plans to make the street more liveable or to encourage bonds among the neighbours. These activities make Wendy a very known person in the street and municipality, as she acts as a mediator as well. She is a typical leader, a driving force of pavement culture and progress of the street. Wendy belongs to the upper right section in the scheme.



Joyce

This young woman, around thirty years old, recently moved into the Dream street. Some of her neighbours know her, others don't as she doesn't mingle that much and because of her flexible working times meeting at the street is a challenge. The weekends she likes to travel, to visit clubs and festivals and spending time with friends. She likes the living in this place, because the amenities and city centre are nearby. If something is wrong, she can contact her neighbours. She doesn't feel the urge to devote some of her spare free time investing in the street and her neighbours. Though, sometimes she meets one of her neighbours when she walks the dog. The lower-left section of the scheme is taken by Joyce.

With these models in our mind, our path will bring us to interviewee's experiences of street life. We don't expect to find any respondent to be similar as the above presented characters. Though, it is likely some characteristics, some preferences, acts or thoughts of interviewees to comply with one (or multiple) ideal types.

Chapter 5 Understanding Dream streets: Tolerance – living with others or with peers?

We redden de buurt
We maken het hip
We houden van authentiek en rauw
Kom jij hier vandaan
Dan mag je nu gaan
Het is voor iedereen
Maar niet voor jou

From Sef featuring Aafke Romeijn 'Alles Went'

How the respondents perceive living with difference is what will be discussed in this section. Difference in this sense, is seen as people and their behaviour that deviates substantially from the own life style and behaviour. For example, this is the case when someone feels insulted or touched as a result of one's acts. The experience of anomaly can happen on a small spatial scale, for instance direct neighbours' habits which trigger a response. There's always a chance of frictions among neighbours when at certain moment their lives intersect.

To do so, the interview data obtained is analysed by value coding. The personal characteristics (also called attributes), values, attitudes and beliefs are discerned from the interview transcriptions by group coding. Consequently, they are the seeds of these paragraphs. In this section, we learn more about the living with difference of the respondents of Dream streets, by analysing their beliefs, values and attitudes.

5.1 New neighbourhoods and 'old' Katendrecht

As the houses of the Freijpad and Donarpad were constructed in 2008, the people moving into their new homes are part of the tremendous transformation of the peninsula of Katendrecht. Their new residence was not just moving to a bigger, better, more luxury home or new neighbourhood, they also became part of the Katendrecht district. This neighbourhood, which used to be populated with mainly the lower income classes, the working people, now had to 'digest' the influx of pioneers. The pioneers or first people moving in were experimenting artists and architects making their dream houses reality. The popular Fenix food factory was used and managed by people who liked to do it different, told Marieke. These and others were attracted to move to Katendrecht by the governmental campaign 'Kun jij de Kaap aan?' (Are you ready for the Kaap?). Pioneers were commissioned as the investors of Katendrecht and had the courage to do so, is what the councillor told at an information session. For Lisa, this was quite alarming when she heard this: "... is it going to be worse than we thought it would be?" She adds that is it was not that bad afterwards.

However, the pioneers experienced some hard times, especially in the beginning. Both Marieke and Lisa had the feeling to be tested by some Katendrechtters. This resulted in youngsters accessing the private garages of the pioneers and throwing stones on the garage doors. In short, the boys were testing the limits of the pioneers. As a reaction, Lisa taught her two sons to act more assertive. This was a strategy to keep up with the other children on the streets of Katendrecht. Acting assertive is crucial in Katendrecht, is what Lisa learned. Not reacting accurately could result in theft of the non-motorised scooter while playing, to name one example. When one bicycle was stolen, Lisa was outraged. For her, this felt like "stealing of your neighbour", because she recognises the suspected boys to attend the same school of her sons.

This hardship might have to do with the loss of a former playing area. Before the houses were constructed, the spacious unexploited lands were occupied by youths, Lisa tries to imagine. Possibly, the wantonness is frustration because of the loss of a former public ground. Similarly, Mark recognises that certain places in Katendrecht are claimed by specific groups. He names the café nearby, mainly visited by his close neighbours. On the contrary, the Verhalenhuis (House of Stories) is mainly on the interest of 'old Katendrechtters', says Mark. He alludes on the people who are born and raised on De Kaap (Katendrecht), or at least live there for a longer period than he and his neighbours do.

5.2 Desire of belonging

Speaking in terms of difference, the contrast with the life style of existing population of Katendrecht is what comes up by most respondents. This is still the case, recognises Marieke. Even after more than ten years. According to

Marieke, this has to do with the displacement of 'old Katendrechtters'. The 'for sale' signs put in front of houses and renovations of old houses are the symptoms of displacement, says Marieke. Although the similarities between the long-term and short-term inhabitants are little, Lisa and Marieke both want to feel united with the 'old Katendrechtters' and mutual acceptance. Lisa: "I just want to be an inhabitant of *The Kaap*, just like them". From this, we could say that these two ladies feel separated from 'them', the 'ruling' group. Does that mean that this group of people, grown up in Katendrecht and still there, determine the identity of the Katendrecht people? Considering above, we cannot answer this with a yes or a no. Though, we see how the pioneers don't isolate or ascend themselves above the long term residents of Katendrecht.

Moreover, Lisa regularly uses the word 'new inhabitants', aiming at herself: "I am the prototype of the new inhabitant, well that doesn't make sense". Still, she feels usage of this term to categorise her family and neighbours is not fair. Living 9 years at a place is nothing but new. Meanwhile, the term 'new inhabitant' has a bad connotation among the 'old Katendrechtters', Lisa sees on social media. She feels insulted and touched by this: "For them, my existence is a big problem apparently".

Mark uses a somewhat more analytical perspective. He distinguishes different groups: the 'old Katendrechtters', non-Dutch background people and the 'new inhabitants'. He points out that these groups do not mingle, because they live for themselves. The 'new inhabitants' are seen as workaholics, career making freaks, the 'old Katendrechtters' live their jobless lives at home. It's just a complete another life style, according to Lisa. One incident she experienced strengthens that image. Lisa parked her car on another parking spot, a spot which was allocated to himself, an 'Old Katendrechtter' living in the opposite house. He was drunk, aggressive and insulted Lisa, who arrived home heavily shocked.

5.3 Acting towards difference

How does the desire to belong to 'them' relate to the own stance towards 'the other'? This seems to be rather conflicting than harmonising. For example, the area at the opposite of the park and football field adjacent to Freijapad and Donarpad, is primarily populated with people from lower social classes. A dinner organised by the people of Freijapad, Donarpad and surrounding streets have chosen not to invite the people from the other side of the field. By doing this, the park is a physical barrier that separates groups. Anna felt very delighted about this, she's not eager to get in contact with them as they might be less civilised. When I spoke with Lisa, her husband Joep joined for several moments. When I spoke with hem about 'the other side of the field', he imitated mockingly how the people living there have plain conversations together about their new bought shoes. On the contrary, the people in his street and adjacent streets are the people with which you can have nice conversations. Joep clearly feels he could not mingle with those people. Joep and Lisa purposefully choose to live here 9 years ago so they could immerse themselves with similar people. Joep likes the resemblances that some of their neighbours also are running their own business and have children playing hockey as well. Meanwhile, Lisa thinks the urban diversity is very interesting, appreciates the rough aspects of Rotterdam and enjoys cycling along a café filled with 'old Katendrechtters' and hearing loud Dutch music. Her stance towards living with difference might be summarised in best in her own words: "I shouldn't live above that café, for I ask God why..."

Now, most of the wantonness is over and Lisa thinks that they, as the 'new inhabitants' are accepted by most of 'old Katendrechtters'. Though, the mutual differences are not be vanished on short term. And, the wish to keep in touch with the 'old Katendrechtter' is still alive for Lisa and Marieke. That's not all, Lisa and Marieke are feeling with the bearings the other Katendrecht people have. Lisa was about to be engaged in a case in which an apartment building in Katendrecht was nominated to be demolished because it didn't meet the current standards. The residents of the complex risked to end up on the streets, something which worried Lisa. However, Lisa estimated her chances to be helpful for the Katendrechtters as little, leading not to intervene. Similarly, Marieke wonders where the displaced people of Katendrecht end up. Of course, not everybody thinks like that. Anna feels not compelled to help the 'people from the opposite'. She sees that some of the people living at the other side of the field are to a greater extent needy. In her opinion, family and friends are the people designated to help. This is not surprising as Anna proclaims herself to be liberal, which might resonate in her acts and thoughts in a the neighbourhood.

Personally I experienced the cold bonds between 'new inhabitants' and 'old Katendrecht'. After my extensive conversation with Lisa about her experiences of Katendrecht, Lisa pointed to me that two 'old Katendrechtters' ladies in their 60's were taking a rest at the picnic table. After one moment of doubt, I stepped in their direction and started to talk about the weather. The days were hot, the sun was still shining at the time of 6 o'clock p.m., and in this spot the ladies found some protecting shadow. They felt caught when I approached them and expected me to

expel them, meaning they didn't feel really welcome to sit there. I felt the need to introduce myself and my objective of the visit; to talk about the neighbourhood and to get to know how people experience their life there. I emphasised that I am no resident of Katendrecht. The ladies, on the other hand, assessed me at first sight as one of the young urban professionals living there. This encounter, and their first response, was full of meaning to me. Although the people of 'old Katendrecht' and 'new inhabitants' with no doubt are getting closer to each other, the air between both worlds still feels cold.

The people living in Freijapad and Donarpad are rather similar to each other than they differ. This fact is ratified by enlarging our scope of view and we take the inhabitants of the surrounding streets into account. When doing this for Katendrecht, the housing stock at the south side of the park is constituted with mostly private properties. This given, certain groups are precluded to live here. But, the tradition of the Dutch cities to have a big share of social housing stock is also applicable for Rotterdam. Many streets have a mix concerning property rights i.e. there's social housing, sublet and private properties. The Beatrijsstraat is a street with mostly private houses, which is beneficial in keeping the street proper, says Wessel. Beatrijsstraat is habited by a variety of people; you'll find directors, architects but also lower class jobs or to quote Piet: "look, over there, there live many people that have never heard of politics". Beatrijsstraat can be described as a working class neighbourhood, but very mixed, says Wessel. That variety of people even incorporates someone involved in criminal activities. Wessel was in a conflict with that person to make clear this is not how it works here. This exemplifies the moral citizenship and the maintenance of street norms. Equally, Meike and Sander know someone living in the Blommersdijkse laan who's not working but still earns his loan. He is known as the drugs dealer of the street. For Meike and Sander, it's someone just to greet like any other of their neighbours.

This variety of people is not of everyone's like, the female neighbour of Wessel feels no warmth towards a group of residents that initiated to organise meetings and events with the neighbours. They wanted to transform the street, just after they moved in. Wessel's neighbour, let's call her Miranda, is not sympathising their ideas and feels "they are not my type of people". Wessel agrees: "Of course, everybody is equal, but there are people living here all their lives. If you are a newbie, I would reckon that. Don't play the master".

Although a quite diverse street doesn't work for everyone, several of my respondents explained that living between different people is a plus to them. Meike and Sander - despite they are sharing the street with a drugs dealer - purposefully choose to live in a mixed neighbourhood. Likewise, Piet doesn't like to come in the suburbs, as they are habited with a uniform population with a complete different mentality. When he lived in Hellevoetsluis, he couldn't adapt to the people and returned to the Beatrijsstraat in Rotterdam. To cite his words: "not living in a complete white world, that's why I choose for the city". And Jeanine's choice to live between students, children, families without children and older people in the Blommersdijkse laan was partly based on her friends living conditions in a Vinex neighbourhood. Since all people work by day time, no one's at home which Jeanine doesn't like. Moreover, there are no grocery stores around the corner, something which she has now. For Meike & Sander, who also have friends living on a Vinex location, such neighbourhoods make life oppressive.

5.4 Disturbance of others

Living in a mixed neighbourhood implicates a living *with* a diverse population. In some way, people have to deal with each other. This can lead to encounters, conflicts, exchange or friendships as observable symptoms. Simultaneously, non-observable cues can occur which have an impact of someone's thoughts and feelings. This affects someone in a more psycho-social way, like anxiety, excitement or anger towards neighbours and their behaviour. The people of Kettingstraat demonstrated to me that both 'forces' are touching. The Kettingstraat, which is a dead-end street, gets visits from inhabitants of Kralingen-West. They use the street and the benches to hang and drink soft drinks, eat pizzas and leave their trash behind. By this, the youngsters disturb the order and tidiness of the Kettingstraat and thereby leave the people of the street disappointed behind. For Kyra it's all fine they come here to enjoy the street and the protection of a 'closed' street. However, she expected them to put the trash in the bin in the beginning of the Kettingstraat. "It's just little effort and politeness", and further in our conversation she tries to find an explanation how this occurs. It has to do with the upbringing, as these children are not used to treat possessions with care. They simply drop their garbage, "it's like an automatism to them". For Kyra, there's no doubt children from other streets are suspected, as their children wouldn't get those snacks from their parents. Sometimes, especially during summer holidays, the children of the surrounding streets are on the streets with no controlling of parents. They gather at Kettingstreet and sometimes start to look like "a gang", says Kim. Then, they start to occupy street furniture and even demolish it. According to Babette the trouble exceeds leaving garbage; they even

come to steal bicycles. Remarkably, Babette thinks this is normal in a city like Rotterdam and she doesn't seem to be affected. According to Filip, some nasty young Moroccans are engaged in these practices.

Understandably, these visual infringements are the moments to undertake action. Kim, Kyra and Filip feel urged to start the conversation with these youngsters. Kim welcomes the youngsters in the street and mentions the rules of conduct. That basically encompasses regulations of taking care to the street and equipment and don't steal playing tools. Most children accommodate to this, whereas others directly start to get anxious as they expect to be punished. However, Kim chooses to address their behaviour in a constructive way, for example by handing over a garbage bag to hanging youngsters to prevent waste on the street. The efforts of the Kettingstraat residents have, until now, not led to a transformation in behaviour. Kyra gets frustrated and exhausted about this; "who am I to raise those children?"

The neighbours put their energy in sustaining the norms and values of the streets. Kim observes the street to watch the visitors from outside. And Filip remembers, once they had a group acting very stubborn. "There has never been a fight, but mentally we did". He intended to convey the message some inhabitants of Kettingstraat are present, as a warning to the visiting group youngsters. The objective of this strategy was to prevent the youngsters from doing what they want.

This example demonstrates that the people of Kettingstraat are alert to maintain the rules and norms of the street. Clearly, they are the members with agency to enforce others to behave similarly. They are highly motivated, as it touches the liveability of the street. How they perceive the liveability and what is undertaken to sustain or consolidate liveability is the topic of next section.

This chapter has shown how the people of Dream streets cannot demarcate themselves off their neighbours and people from the neighbourhood. One learning point is that concentrating on 'living with difference' often has a negative connotation. Other people bring trouble to their street, for example. These negative experiences can be seen as a strengthening force of the symbolic boundaries. Even someone intends not to strengthen symbolic boundaries, the impact of one incident could be a hard and painful moment of realising the gap between groups and their behaviour.

Difference however, is also considered as a positive characteristic of a neighbourhood. On the contrary, it is hard to deduce any strengthening of symbolic boundaries out of this. We would like to stress the role housing and the spatial design of the street plays in a living with difference. In the first place, social housing is accessible till a specific income. This already makes up how people perceive difference as most interviewees don't live in social housing. As an outsider, I'm not informed or able to see what rows are social housing and which aren't. This enhances my neutrality as a researcher. The interviewees clearly stated this difference, to them this is one distinguishing criterion. Concerning the spatial design of a street, we see how the Kettingstreet deals with visitors from other streets. Their conduct 'rubs' with the manners of the people of Kettingstraat. This implies the living of the residents is a more fine-tuned behaviour, which might have to do with social cohesion. The following chapter and the chapter about togetherness will try to address this – and other – issues further. For now, we can state that this differs from experiences in Gent, Flanders for example, where visitors acted reserved to enter a Dream street (De Weerd, n.d.).

Chapter 6 Understanding Dream streets: Liveability

How do the people like the living in their street, with regard to the physical and social elements of the street? And how relates this to their desired situation of the street? Following that, what is needed to meet personal needs modifying the street into a better liveable place? This section aims to analyse these matters. In obtaining a greater understanding of liveability our focus will be on experiences among the 'state of the street'. Themes accounted in this respect are: maintenance of the Dream street, mechanism of keeping peace and lastly the role of cars, bicycles and children. Also, means to improve the liveability of the street as mentioned by the respondents is discussed, as well as the expectations for how future life will be in the Dream street.



Figure 15: Streetscape Donarpad, Katendrecht.

6.1 Preserving the street

As seen before, the people of the street are committed to maintain the norms and values that are stated and continually challenged. Thanks to the variety of time of residence of the people I spoke with (from five years to being born and raised there) and their connections to the street in physical and social sense, their points of view are the main sources telling how the street 'breaths and acts'.

A disclaimer can be made that highlighting their opinions shows just one side of the story. Exemplary is Wessel's viewpoint of the Beatrijsstraat telling that new people in his street should adjust and listen to what he and his neighbours think of their street. He and his neighbours basically argue to keep the street as it is. Due to a limited number of interviews, there is not always data available of how these 'new neighbours' think about such issues. However, this is a very interesting viewpoint to me as an urban geographer since it touches upon a collection of relevant topics like gentrification, distribution of power, social entrepreneurship and a do-it-yourself society.

What I learned from my fieldwork is that there can be three actors affecting these rules of conduct: street residents and their pets, people from other streets and institutional actors like the local government or municipal police. All these three influencers require some more explanation. The first category, people living in the same street can be direct neighbours or living at the other end of the street for example. One neighbour's acting can simply conflict with the respondent's views on the street living.

We use the example of maintenance to discuss this first group. When talking about maintenance, we could think of effort put in keeping the street a neat place. It entails the preservation of physical amenities of a street and all private property with direct access from the street. It wouldn't come as a surprise that residents like to live in a clean and proper street. When reality doesn't meet their image of how the street should be, this could raise irritation or worse. When sitting and chatting with Wessel about the Beatrijsstraat, his neighbour Patja came by on his scooter. He joined in our conversation about the pros and cons of the street. According to these men, others aren't active in keeping the street clean, something which annoys Pedro: "we are the only ones doing it, all others are pigs". Wessel, also known by his neighbour as the concierge of the Beatrijsstraat, sometimes misses the motivation to pick up garbage from the street with the waste picker. Also the public garbage bins in the street aren't used correctly. People

put their waste next to it, and Wessel even witnessed there “a complete bed room interior”. Similarly, Kyra is one of the people in the Kettingstreet sacrificing herself to clean the mess. Some of the street furniture like benches and wooden frames show signs of age and deterioration. In her eyes, these defects should be repaired as soon as possible. She expects her neighbours not bothering themselves as she does; moreover her neighbours lack the time or motivation to do the job. This activates Kyra to ask her dad. He’s not living in the Netherlands and is therefore only available during visits to his daughter. Kyra then mobilises her dad to do the repair jobs. Later, Kyra admitted that she isn’t daily suffering of annoyance because of these defects.

Though, these expressions of frustration about misappropriation have also found their way to the social media. The photos below are posted by residents of the Blommersdijkselaan on their Facebook community, attached with comments like: ‘sad’ and ‘van dreamstraat naar milieustraat’ (from Dream street to waste processing facility). Also, there’s a small note where one of the residents is directly confronted with dumping trash next to the bins by one of his co-residents. As a suggestion, a paper bin nearby is mentioned to loose garbage. In the reply section on the Facebook community I found a response in which the receiver wants to know who sends her this message.



Figure 16: Misuse of public bins in Blommersdijkselaan is publicly raised on the Facebook community.

These examples clarify how the stance is towards a messy street and the polluters. The dirtiness and reactions described above is caused by people living in the same street. In conversation with Piet, Veerle and Sivfi I heard how students admire the street and its furniture in a different way. To them, the planter, fruit trees and vegetable plants can function as convenient public toilets. Especially at night, when the students have drunk, the norms of purity vanish resulting in mess. As a consequence, the residents cannot harvest these natural goods. These larks do not fit in the street according to Piet: “I think this is no social behaviour, while the street itself is social”. In other words, the faced misuse of these planters are against the street’s principles.

Before, I specifically referred to animals as influencers touching the norms of the street. As well as human beings need to pee, animals pick the plants to pee. Veerle witnessed dogs polluting the plants. As a response, Veerle’s mother provided the planters with a message asking the dog-owners to let their pets use their own pavement to

defecate. And it worked, though approaching the owners directly was more effective, acknowledged Veerle. “If they [dog owners] stand still over here, then we already...”, says Veerle while she demonstrates the responsibility of herself and her mother to confront the dog owners. Though, animals is not by many residents mentioned as impacting the street norms.

Besides residents and animals, some of the people in Dream streets have or had to cope with severe misuse of visitors. We then mean criminal incidents like stolen bikes in the Blommersdijkselaan, theft in Donarpad and Freijapad and even a robbery in Kettingstraat. The strategies of prevention and counteracting require a different approach with profound means to be deployed.

Famous are whatsapp groups in the Netherlands, also known as ‘whatsapp buurtpreventie’ (whatsapp crime prevention around the corner) as tools set up to make neighbourhoods more safe. The people of Donarpad and Freijapad are also active in running a digital conversation group. When the people felt they were ‘targeted’ as the hotspots of thievery, they started their whatsapp group leading for everyone to be very alert. Lisa names a situation repeatedly observed: a car with running engine filled with four young guys standing on the pavement. Photos of the car and sign plate were taken and shared in the whatsapp group, to warn others. For Mark, these modern tools are not necessary in guaranteeing a safe street. He simply doesn’t possess a smartphone, only an ‘old school’ Nokia, and still feeling safe. Even when I asked him how he was affected after one shooting in Katendrecht. Of course, these groups are no final solution in crime management in streets, which is also concluded by Mehlbaum, van Steden and van Dijk (2018). In addition, Marieke living in Donarpad, felt frustrated when someone explicitly asked to correct children spanning an elastic string over a path. Marieke replied: “I thought, just remove that string, idiot”. So, not all messages and their intended effects (like parents calling to account their children) are considered of high priority or are well-received. Eventually, approaching intruders is what works best, confirmed by most residents I spoke. To guarantee the safety for them (the visitors), as for us, says Filip from the Kettingstraat about this approach. And, I heard many times that the residents manage a system of social control that works. The people are the so called ‘eyes and ears’ of the street. “Don’t think you can just intrude in that house. When there’s an open window, the residents already observed that”, says Anna from Donarpad. What’s comfortable of this system is that it contributes to a safe street where the norms are bolstered and the controlling doesn’t go that far that it violates personal space and privacy, believes Nienke who just came moved to a house in the Blommersdijkselaan.

Another theme concerning many of the people living in Dream streets are cars, i.e. parking vehicles and the movement of cars through the street. Kettingstraat, which has a closed design, has not to do with cars in transit. Also the Berkelselaan, Donarpad and Freijapad don’t allow passage of cars. Drivers can only turn into, park and leave in these streets. Some of the respondents have notified to appreciate the limited movement of vehicles in the street. Others state that they ideally live in a street that banned the car completely, of which Naomi is an exception. Naomi doesn’t possess a car, but she thinks nobody would really like to live in a car-free street. Motivations to indeed live without moving cars are frequently related to children. Donarpad and Freijapad suffered with delivery vans using these streets as a shortcut. They drove that fast that safety was not secured “it’s about our front doors, where you almost got hit”. Marieke explained that this was no direct threat to her and her children, as they reached the age of 12. So, younger children could be the victims of these vans. Mark foresees no problems with these vans: “I think you won’t walk outside with your eyes closed, so it won’t be that bad”.

6.2 Dealing with urban trends

All these viewpoints are interesting to analyse deeper, but we choose to focus on how dwellers deal with feelings of unease or unsafety. Let’s find how this took place in Donarpad and Freijapad. Now, rows of rocks block the passage of big cars through the street. Consequently, these obstructing elements were not to the like of Anna, as she is convinced that the accessibility for emergency services is limited as well. She decided to take initiative and moved, with a few allying neighbours, the rock a little bit. Now, everyone is able to reach his house in a normal way, says Anna. The frustration Anna feels might have to do with an event she experienced before. When the street was transformed, Anna was on a trip so totally missed out on the preparations and works that changed her direct living environment. Anna was not amused by her arrival back home witnessing another street design. She was worried about the delivery of her new furniture, and directly contacted her neighbours organising the street transformation to get more details of the ‘what’ and the ‘how’. Although this all is in the past, Anna now looks forward to the moment all rocks are removed. When she talks about this issue, I constantly detect a negative connotation. Anna feels left out when the street transformation is discussed and therefore perceives the physical modifications rather negative. During the prolonged process of decision making and planning at the municipality, some neighbours moved

and new people came. They don't have the same history regarding these developments, resulting in different processes of opinion-making to those that experienced the full process from the very first moment in comparison with those that inflows and obtained information in a different way.

This example shows how the communication around a physical intervention can result in outrage, confusion and anger. As most streets are originally designed to generate efficient parking and movement of cars, transformations to make a street car-restricted can be drastic. One popular vision among dwellers is to 'keep the street as it is'. This might imply that these people don't like the alternative design and the preceding construction works. They think the current street works best, are not interested in alteration and therefore react negatively or might have other reasons to reject. The number and integration of parking places in the street is such a difficult subject. As the Dream streets have the principle of giving space to the people, the freedom of the car will be bounded. I learned that this leads to feelings of aversion on the one hand and embracing associations on the other hand. The initiators of Dream streets indeed plea for giving up parking places, Meike and Sander in the Blommersdijkselaan talk about 6 places, the Berkelselaan lost three places to create a new plaza. And, in the Beatrijsstraat I got a sneak peak of the ideas around transforming parking places. Now, car-owners can park their vehicle in angled stand. There is suggested to park straight, as a consequence fewer cars can park in Beatrijsstraat. "In Rotterdam, there are lesser and lesser parking spots, so keep them angled. Because you miss double the places and you still need to harbour the cars in the street, so I don't understand it at all". Miranda does not see the added value to realise this. Piet also values parking in the street to harbour his car. The initiators of Dream street on the contrary wanted to remove all parking spots to implement the dream street. Piet and others were not happy to hear this; "I'm not planning to recreate in my street. If I want some rest, I visit the coast".

One specific outcome of giving up parking space would be a widened pavement. Dutch newspaper *Trouw* already headed: "In the living street, life's back on the pavement" (2017, August 12). What do these renewed and widened pavements actually mean to people and how are they used? The sentiments around transforming parking space are not unanimous positive or negative. Does this influence the usage of pavements? To go back to the Beatrijsstraat, Wessel perceives a serious problem concerning the number of bicycles and the pavements of the street. Most are parked on the streets and the increasing number of students in Beatrijsstraat all bring along many bicycles. Dilapidated bicycles and stuffed pavements are undesired consequences, problems that go to Wessel's heart. He puts his effort in removing these unwished bikes together with Pedro. People in Blommersdijkselaan are suffering of similar issues. Nienke wants to approach the municipality to create extra storage facilities for bikes. Too much unused bicycles occupy the storage facilities at the moment, preventing Nienke to properly lock her bike. However, the unfamiliarity with governmental institutions withheld Nienke.

I reacted to her that I don't know either and from my position as a research intern at the municipality I'm not able to assist her with this demand. To her, this was understandable. For Jeanine, the parking problems restrain her to buy a desired new bike. Not only bicycles are put on the pavements, but also self-made furniture are obstacles in the Beatrijsstraat. They block the side paths according to Wessel and his neighbour. They both see the 'overgrown' of these wooden constructions cluttering the street. When the extensive construction works are finished in the street, they both don't want these benches and planters to return.

Is this the life that returned on the pavements as headed in *Trouw*? In the article, urban geographer Lia Karsten speaks about a 'stoepencultuur', a sidewalk culture implying a living together outside, like the labourers did in the past. For now, we cannot conclude if the people of Dream streets live a pavement culture. We *can* confirm that the pavements are part of the street life. After all, the dwellers perceive the sidewalks differently and how it can be used is topic of discussion. In the Kettingstraat for example, the dwellers are united in how the pavement and parking spots lost its initial function and is now used as an outdoor meeting room, although the residents had to conquer a conflict with municipality police who tried to enforce the residents to remove their chairs and table so cars could park there. Here we see how neighbours have to cope with institutions to fulfil their desires of how the street should look like. Another thing we *can* confirm is that Dream streets aren't fully habited with workmen and their families nowadays. We rather see a mix of people, new and long-term residents and varying career lives. How they together perceive a 'stoepcultuur' will be discussed in the next section.

6.3 Importance of street elements

We first continue on the elements of the physical street. The themes already discussed are topics very meaningful to most habitants. But, what aspects are appreciated by the people? What makes them actually choose to live in that

street and why do they like to stay? Dream streets are also aimed to make streets more inviting and better meeting the needs of its people.

One of the qualities of the Dream streets is that they don't allow movement of cars or limit their movements. This is applied in Kettingstraat, Berkelselaan, Donarpad and Freijapad. Babette explains this as: "it was a common decision because this is more life quality than looking all the time from the window to cars that are not moved very often". Noah and Harrie like to watch children playing instead of cars. They prefer to be in streets with limited presence of vehicles anyway.

Another quality found in the Dream streets is the greenery, and therefore by many on the wish list to develop more and better plants and other green. The dream street subsidies contributed to that substantially, although Wessel and his neighbour have a tradition of buying plants for the street for long. It's not all natural elements that were bought of this budget, as the Blommersdijkselaan hang up the positively appraised light bulb cord. And the Kettingstraat bought a barbecue for example.

Another well received feature of Dream streets is the child friendliness. They can be outside, play in relative safety in a relative green environment. For Noah and Harrie, it's recognisable to face one parent watching and overseeing the children when they are playing. Filip names the Kettingstraat even the "happiest street for children" and "they have the greatest freedom as possible for a city life, compared to a living in a village. And this, centred in this basal, bad situation. So, that's something we fight for".

The Blommersdijkselaan, not just by chance the street that had no physical facelift yet, is seen as unsafe to the children because of the very small pavement to play. The street plaza is seen as dirty and not sufficient by Sander. To this young couple, this makes them considering moving to a more child-friendly place.

Other elements that were integrated are seen as failed or redundant by some. The petanque court in Kettingstraat and the chess field in Donarpad passed by for example. The rocks blocking the vans in Donarpad and Freijapad are negatively criticised for their aesthetics as well.

Also, for the newest residents in the Berkelselaan (Noah and Harrie) and Blommersdijkselaan (Nienke and Naomi), the Dream street event, history and outcome have not played a role in moving to that street. To them, other features like a private garden, the location close to the city centre and the upcoming vibe and amenities of neighbourhood Het Oude Noorden were reason to move to this street.

As cities are developing continually, we see rising housing prices, upgrading of streets and neighbourhoods and an influx of a younger, working generation. Those signs suggest the neighbourhood is gentrifying. This is often told by many of the people. We don't aim to present an image of how this process of gentrification takes place, rather to what the direct effects are to the residents. Piet for example, he receives notes of real estate investors and interested house hunters. This triggers an uncomfortable feeling, as he fears Amsterdam gentrification developments to happen in Rotterdam as well. He, as a dweller, sees how houses are bought by Amsterdammers. In that sense, gentrification is considered as harming the life quality. Importantly to note here, is that the notion 'gentrification' hasn't been used in my conversation. My intention was to learn about the liveability, where gentrification seems to be a negative impact.

6.4 Sensemaking personal characteristics

A liveable street is not something created, it develops. We see how some people wait for the municipality to take actions, whereas others are active in cleaning the street or constructing street furniture. In this respect, the personal characteristics might help to give meaning to what the respondents told about liveability in their street. The ideal types embodied with the caricatures Hetty, Hendrik, Wendy and Joyce (see Section 4.3) do not equate the interviewees. Though, the caricatures' 'qualities' in relation to the street culture are to some extent traceable in how the respondents presented themselves towards me.

In essence, the two axis scheme, which is organised around a progressive or conservative attitude to street transformations and an exuberant or reserved stance to neighbourhood relations, is employed to indicate one's contributions to the soul of the street. Moreover, this approach contributes in obtaining a better understanding of the personal contexts of the residents.

For instance, Kim from Kettingstraat actively contributes to the streetscape by taking care for the street chicken. In this regard, we consider Kim to be in the upper 'progressive' half of the scheme (see Figure 14 on p. 39). Though, she recognizes her co-residents and herself to be less organized than the prime driving force behind Dream street Kettingstraat in the person of Etienne. This implies how the efforts in the street making process vary. Neighbours are conscious of how works are distributed among each other. The works are intended to keep the street clean or to implement a Dream street event. When Piet speaks about Wessel, the concierge of the street, he stresses the

importance of such characters. He also gave his credits to a former female neighbour. In that respect, we comprehend that some people of the streets are remembered or understood as substantially devoting themselves for the street. Therefore, they could be placed in the upper 'progressive' half of the two axis scheme, which means they play a role in a physically transforming street. The status of those figures is mainly created by others. Illustrating is the anecdote of how I got struck by a trophy standing on a book shelf in Veerle's house. It was granted to Veerle's mother by the residents of the Beatrijsstraat because of her commitment to the street. It is no common Dutch use to congratulate oneself on services like maintaining the street. In that light, it is evident to have several conversations in the street to get an overall image of the interviewee himself and others. In addition, giving credits to some active individuals in the street underemphasizes or devaluates the own activities in street making. This again demonstrates how the two axis model is no final representation of real life persons. Because we deal with the complexity of social beings, one individual is not to be simplified in the model. The model's value lies in better grasping someone's attitude.

We learn how attitudes affect the physical and social outlook of a street. The following chapter's objective is to find out how attitudes of togetherness manifest in Dream streets. It is expected that residents' attitudes about togetherness contribute to social structures as well as physical structures. For instance, Anna from Donarpad believes the people from the other side of the park have lower cohesion. She tells about these people:

If you rent [a house] for 500 euro's, and you are an alcoholic or whatever. And you'll find those [people] more at the opposite than here, just walk through those streets. You are busy to care for yourself, what's your motivation to be engaged in the neighbourhood then? You cannot always blame the people with lower incomes. There are lots of people suffering of mental problems, those things.

With the next quote of Anna, we see how perceived differences among people are linked with togetherness and the physical state of the street. Besides that, Anna establishes the symbolic boundaries between her co-residents and people from other streets in Katendrecht, based on the physical outlooks of the street.

Chapter 7 Understanding Dream streets: Togetherness

Ending the previous chapter by mentioning the complexity of transformations, physical changes and social relations and boundaries, in this section we further explore and analyse how this affects the community. To do so, we first examine how residents desire a 'being together with neighbours' and how their behaviour relates to this social affair. Next, we focus on how people perceive the being together and how this narrative is conveyed to new residents. After that, how the pavement life is lived will be elaborated, followed by an exploration what factors improve or hamper pavement life.

7.1 Looking towards togetherness

Classical works of Tönnies and Wirth argue that urban life differs substantially from small-scale, rural communities. The sociologists both intend on deviant social structures to be found in cities. Even in the most vivid cities, where one is surrounded by thousands of people, it's not obvious to have bonds like people do in smaller, non-urban communities. Also, anonymity seems to be life advice to survive the daily urban structures rather than creating close bonds with people around you. The proximity of people doesn't mean that individuals enhance and strengthen their personal, urban network. The conversations I had with the respondents directly and indirectly provided lots of information on how the attitudes towards togetherness comply or divide of the classic theories. Although we not attempt to demonstrate these classic works are superseded or alive, it's an interesting viewpoint to bear in mind while studying nowadays social structures.

On how people like to live with their neighbours, the Rotterdammers of Dream streets presented me some views. One possible way to discuss these opinions is to measure the variety in viewpoints. However, in this case one extra dimension is used to get a greater understanding of this desire; the attitude towards neighbours. So, a behavioural aspect in contact with neighbours is taken into account. On beforehand, I have no presumptions how behaviour follows personal opinions on living together or challenges these thoughts. My data concerning this topic is acquired by personal stories of how living in the street evolves. Ideally, extensive observational sessions could support the statements, making them more robust. However, time limitations averted me from doing so. The strategy to present an image on togetherness is by making use of personal stories and reading between lines. Some of the quotes really speak for themselves in this regard. I spoke with Mark for example about the neighbourhood party, two or three weeks ago before our conversation. It was such a party where everyone brings his own refreshments, chairs or food. Although he attended the activity last years, Mark clearly expresses his disfavour towards this organised fellowship: "Those things, I prefer to bypass on them". "They are all strangers to me", is how Mark describes his co-residents at this event. Nevertheless, when Mark was there, he messed around with some of his neighbours and brought something to eat or drink. This year he was not there.

Another example of how Mark positions himself in the network of neighbours is to consciously keep distance in neighbourhood communication via electronics. What I mean to say with this: the neighbours run a common whatsapp group, since the beginning, says Mark. The driving force behind this chat group, meant to keep each other up-to-date of the latest developments, was one lady that used to live in the street. She passed away around two years ago. The death of the lady negatively affects the activities in this chat group, is what Mark understood. The chat group wasn't used anymore since then. With his 'dumb phone' Nokia he is not able to join this group. One implication is that the actual status of the chat group cannot be verified. To Mark, it is no issue he is not in the chat group.

"Well, I think, I think it is okay. I feel no desire to be involved or so. I prefer to be on my own, and then I'm free of harassment, to me that's fine".

While Mark sees himself living surrounded with people he don't really know, Lisa (also Katendrecht) believes that recognising each other is very important. In one breath she mentions that recognisability helps in overcoming any barriers in approaching neighbours. This can also be applied when discussing social unease among neighbours. Knowing each other is precondition to do so, tells Lisa.

What's more, Sander thinks that staying in touch with your neighbours is precondition to live a happy life. Meike and Sander are both in a special position compared to most of their neighbours. The couple worked intensively on transforming the old monastery very nearby. Now, this monastery has the function as *Huis van de Wijk*, a neighbourhood centre. Moreover, Sander and Meike are one of the initiators of the dream street Blommersdijkselaan. These activities broadened their personal network in the neighbourhood, with which they can have chitchat when on the streets.

As found by an earlier research of Weltevrede et al. (2018), almost all of the respondents spoken in Nieuwe-Westen, Kralingen-West and Oude Noorden in Rotterdam highly value social contacts with neighbours. Babette could be one of them, considering her words about contact with neighbours:

“I mean I find it not normal to live in a neighbourhood, not nice, it is normal but not nice to live in apartments where you don’t have contact or good contact with your neighbours. It’s horrible if you have a bad contact with your neighbours. It doesn’t work. Here it works. It can be amazingly stressful, if you have conflict with your neighbours. And this is also one of the intentions here, people want to have a good relationship to their neighbours”.

None of the residents I spoke with, expressed hard feelings towards having any form of social contact with neighbours. Instead, speaking about neighbourhood relations often led to explanations of how social contact manifests and how often people come together. This can be clearly demonstrated when taking a closer look at the following quotes of Anna, Veerle and Marieke.

Anna:

“But, we are not visiting each other repetitively. And to me, that’s fine. I’m not such a ‘neighbourhood-person’... I don’t want to open my doors for them every week. That sounds unkind, but there’s a network of friends, family. When I’ve all seen them in one month, then I’m more than happy. Then, my week is stuffed. To meet the entire neighbourhood... I like many people, that’s not the thing. To me, being on speaking terms is sufficient”.

Veerle:

“I get happy then. Lots of social contact. I can do without, but I won’t like it if my neighbours are not pleasant. I won’t feel good about that, I guess”.

Marieke:

M: Yes, just some social talk, that’s it.

J: And to you, that’s...?

M: That’s satisfying. You know, I prefer to have a good neighbour than a far friend. You know, borrowing some sugar if needed, eh, you’ll find such an atmosphere.

Anna speaks about the regularity of inviting and meeting with your neighbours, where Veerle shows her appreciation towards having good contact with neighbours. Marieke explains how she likes to stay in touch with her neighbours. And that’s not all, Marieke believes she can influence how and how often this meeting evolves. I asked if she preferred to increase the moments of meeting her neighbours. She answered: “No, and if I wanted so, I went looking for that already”.

Also Babette thinks she has a finger in the pie when it comes to socially engaging with neighbours.

B: “I could change that, you know. But I’m not such a person. I’m busy with my own stuff on a time. I know I could go deeper and more engaged, I was also engaged with the daughter because I showed her at the piano some things. So I know the daughter also. We have contact.

J: You could change it, but would you feel better when...

B: No, not at all. This is, if I would feel better I would change it. You know. This is the logic. There’s nothing I cannot influence myself. So it’s up to me to change it. And this is also the mentality of all the people here. And if you are not satisfied with something, if you are discontent, you can change it.

J: Yes.

B: So if you want to have a more distant relationship, and you feel good with it, so why would you change it. If I think I would feel better, then I would change it”.

One of the aspects the research of Weltevrede et al. (2018) is not touching is the desire of people to stay in contact with their neighbours. They extensively discuss who has contact with who, and how they perceive this. The focus is mainly on concrete actions addressing togetherness of neighbours, whereby ‘new’ residents are sharply distinguished from ‘original’ residents. Before I move on to concrete actions of the interviewees in Dream streets or their roles in street life, I would like to highlight how the ‘new’ or ‘incoming’ residents I’ve spoken, wish contact with their neighbours, either ‘new’ or ‘original’. Naomi for example, who walks her dog four times a day, knows that there’s always chance of other dog-owning neighbours joining her on the walk. To her, this is fine. However, she wishes no ‘followers’. So, she likes to keep these encounters as unexpected instead of on regular base. And, a living in the Blommersdijkselaan implicates a social drink almost every winter. The neighbours move out their heated interiors to

celebrate togetherness thanks to the initiators. Naomi has a positive stance towards attending this social gathering as she expects to get to know many people. Knowing who your neighbours are, feels pleasant says Naomi. Nienke, living in the same street, has similar desires. She likes to get to know her neighbours better. Having a neighbour you can approach in case of need, that's how Nienke sees her ideal neighbour. He or she doesn't have to become the new best friend, she explains. Knowing who your neighbours are, is sufficient in this case.

Moving to the Berkelselaan, Harrie's desire is to create and sustain a good common feeling. How this should look like, is somewhat specified by his girlfriend Noah. She notifies that she likes to know her neighbours better. However, her expectations of an 'ideal neighbour' as someone who reacts on greetings with a smile, might not directly lead to the most deep relationship.

These longings to contact, social togetherness and meeting require a deeper analysis of respondents' behaviour in the street. We cannot bypass on actions enacted by the residents themselves to challenge the togetherness properly. The theory of Erving Goffman about the presentation of the self presents the theoretical body to create a better understanding of this behavioural composition. As one aims to convey an image of himself as desired or to direct perspectives of those present in the same social situation. Goffman discerns two modes of communication. Sending messages in a direct way and by indirect acting. Latter can happen on intentional manner but this is not always the case. As this is a non-verbal communicational method which lifts the veil, the context is of great importance to make sense of these signs.

My understanding of how one's role is in the social togetherness of a street consists of several aspects. Obviously, the above described conceptions of living with neighbours are one aspect. The following sections are designated to examine the role in the street, what narratives keep the street's soul alive and what – according to the respondents – brings people together widens the gap between residents.

As we have learned before, Mark is not really longing to share his life with neighbours. Analysing his spoken words about being close with neighbours, we see he lacks this feeling. Does that imply Mark lives like a hermit, whatever that might entail? Even though Mark habits a corner house and accordingly is not physically centred around his neighbours, he is connected with several other people living in Freijapad and around. Considering his actions and his way of telling about his actions, Mark seems all but a self-chosen socially isolated person. One example is how he dealt with one neighbour suffering of a life-threatening disease and spending her last years at the Freijapad. I asked Mark if he was involved in this process, which he answered: "No, sometimes I asked for updates, how are things going. But, that was all". Also, Mark and his neighbours from Freijapad visited the funeral. People of other Katendrecht streets were also attending the burial, but Mark recognised his co-residents: "At least, the people from this street because I only know very few adjacent people. Also no face recognition, actually". An often used term in analysing neighbourhood relations is public familiarity. Mark recognises his neighbours and attends a burial ceremony. These activities can be reviewed in the light of public familiarity. This is explained as trust and safety among neighbours by Blokland and Nast (2014). Duyvendak and Wekker (2015) expand the definition by stating familiarity also implies amicability. This term involves a friendly manner, just as friends approach each other. However, to maintain such an amicable relationship, real emotions and depth are no preconditions as they do in a real deep friendship. People conveying amicability act like friends, but are not getting close to real friendship.

How can we trace back amicability in neighbourhood relations? Of course, it is not up to me to assess if Mark acts out of sincere compassion or can be labelled just as amicability as proposed by Duyvendak and Wekker (2015)? Moreover, there are no final answers in this issue. Though, attempts to unravel social behaviour helps us to give meaning to the attitudes of respondents.

What makes me to consider Mark acts out of amicability? When talking about the diseased neighbour, Mark showed no signs of emotions and speaks about facts just as they happened without any value given to all what happened. About the diseased neighbour he said:

M: "Yes, but they already knew [neighbour suffering of disease] when they came here, I guess. That it was just a matter of time".

J: "Okay".

M: "So, that can happen, I mean: you're sick. They can extend life with a year or what, yes. She survived for six years".

J: "That's quite a while".

M: "Yes, and she worked normally. At certain moment the deterioration sped up and then it was over".

Amicability entails acting which exceeds acting friendly but doesn't touch upon friendship. In compliance with Mark's view and desire concerning a living together with his neighbours, he visits the funeral of his neighbour as a neighbour and not as a friend. Considering the next quotes, we can 'verify' Mark's stance towards close neighbour relationships.

But we don't visit each other to drink a cup of coffee. (...)

Well, the people living over there, the third house seen from mine. They say goodbye, but I see them sporadically. I see him arriving home by bike, but I don't have deeper contact with them. (...)

Small talk at the terrace and so on, if someone's outside. In that sense, it's fine to me (...).

Another example of how Mark positions himself in the street is his positive description of his neighbours, as people who you can call upon, in case something happens. The last part implicates the existence of togetherness which reveals when there's a practical demand. Mark's role illustrates how togetherness is like a practical facility to him.

Sometimes, I take care for the rabbit of the last house in this row. When they are on holidays, I never go on holiday, as I'm always staying at home. So, if you have some pets, they need the care. That's what I do. (...) When they go, they always ask me if I'm at home. (...). Most of the time I'm here. I don't leave haha. So, in that sense it's very practical I think.

Although Mark would not be typified as the life of the party, a facilitator or the main character of Freijapad, his acts are contributing to a the practical neighbour relationship as it prevails in the street. This attitude of amicability is helpful in encouraging others to feel at home, while it also stimulates own feeling of being at home (Duyvendak & Wekker, 2015).

However, Mark is not on his own when it comes to contact on practical base. Marieke, living in Donarpad, wishes her contact with neighbours to be like 'where you can lend some sugar when you need it'. Marieke consciously limits the contact with neighbours to what she calls 'social talk'. She acknowledges that she's not 'that type what stays in contact with neighbours frequently'. Anna's attitude towards her neighbours looks similar to Mark's viewpoint:

I'm not that neighbourhood-alike. For the neighbours, I take care for the plants and I administer the incoming letters, that's all no problem to me. But I don't like them to visit me every week.

As Anna can be seen as a contributor to this system of 'help when needed', she emphasised how happy she was to use this neighbour facility when she had trouble with her fire alarm:

Last, my fire alarm went off and I failed in setting it off. One was broken, which activated other alarms. See to find which is one broken at that moment, and it was in the middle of the night. Half past 3. Really guys, I felt that happy. I finally found out which alarm was the instigator, two of my neighbours were at my door to check if there was something wrong. If there was fire, if they could help.

(...)

So, I can count on them if there is something. And I would do the reverse as well.

Also outside Katendrecht, these neighbourhood 'safety nets' are active and maintained. In conversation with Kyra in Kettingstraat (Kralingen-West) I learned how neighbours doing each other a favour surpasses easy and plain tasks like watering plants or take care for the incoming post.

Kyra explains:

Yes, I don't know. Everyone has some... Filip is very handy, so if something goes wrong or so in house, you know, or the washing machine stops functioning, then we just ask Filip. And he checks if he can do something about it. And Yasser as well. Then I just ask Yasser, do we need any tools?

(...)

Everyone has his own speciality. How should I say, his quality.

Naomi, who lives only a few months in the Blommersdijkselaan highly values how the neighbours are concerned about her residence. The former tenant encountered leakage several times. Last month, one of her neighbours asked

if she still faced these defects. To Naomi, this is illustrating the highly committed attitude of her neighbours. As she hasn't been confronted with leakages yet, there was no need to deploy an appeal for assistance.

Neighbour relationships on practical base, as we have seen above, might at first not lead to a closer connectivity between neighbours. All knowledge and skills of the people living in one street aggregate a supply which can be utilised when there's a need. However, offering your services, which can range from keeping your weather-eye open when one family is out for holidays to cooking for neighbours, and making use of this safety net requires knowledge of each other as neighbours. Contact with neighbours is the key to get involved in this safety net. Interestingly, this contact not only takes place face to face. Whatsapp chat groups and Facebook communities play a big role in this. I remember how Anna handed over her phone to me while I visited her, showing how neighbours use the Facebook group to offer redundant toys or a complete dinner. Though Anna is not dreaming about approaching the lady who had food left and asking her for a meal:

A: No, not that, I would feel a bit uncomfortable. Like: dingdong. Hi, I would like to pick up free food. No, that's just stupid.

J: Yes, but she's offering it.

A: Yes exactly. But I don't know what her kitchen looks like? So, you can have it. I don't want it haha. I have been a student, then I would've done that. But not everyone is that hygienic, so, yes.

In Blommersdijkselaan, one neighbour offers on the Facebook community a product. Some of his wood as a residual product can be used to heat a stove or fireplace, he suggests. Later he added to his message that one of the neighbours accepted his offer. The effectiveness of the safety net finds its way via social media as well. Social media are one mean to get into this net of demands and offers.



Figure 17: Using Facebook to offer a service or good. From the Facebook community Blommersdijkselaan.

I even remembered one of my respondents from the Blommersdijkselaan who posted a message on this Facebook group, wherein she asked for help to remove some spiders. To me, this request on Facebook was no surprise. During the conversation we had, she admitted that spiders are her greatest fear. In this case, I possessed the prior knowledge of the interview.

All above examples demonstrate how contact on practical base is a two-way street. On the one hand, taking part in the safety net requires knowledge about your neighbours. What can you expect you're your neighbour when she offers to babysit for one evening? On the other hand, such systems work on a matter of give and take. This entails that oneself participates by offering his services or products and thereby open oneself up to his neighbours.

At the other end of the spectrum, neighbour relations also exist on the basis of conviviality, recreation or friendship. In the conversations I had, I witnessed several people for whom this is a very important aspect of street life. In this case, we don't speak of an amicable attitude what better fits the practical based contact. Kim mentions her friendship with some of her neighbours in the Kettingstraat. Her son also finds his buddies next-door. Kyra, also from Kettinstraat, confirms to be friends with Kim. Vicky and Elim hold tight relationships with some of their neighbours in the Berkelselaan. For them, doing activities together plays a big role. The couple travelled with their neighbours to have vacation on Greece, Ireland and went on winter sports together. Or they drink wine, by which they get drunk sometimes. Vicky describes her ideal neighbour as some who you can count on, with who you can have nice time or to have a drink now and then.

This nevertheless doesn't imply that practical contact and contact on basis of conviviality cannot exist simultaneously. How Jeanine sees this, is illustrative for this. She is active in a group of initiators of Dream street Blommersdijkselaan. On the one hand, Jeanine really appreciates close contact based on conviviality with the members of this team: *We have even visited each other's parties. With a few, we had a very big party, everyone came. And the other neighbours do that as well, so that's nice.*

What's also of her like, is the attitude of her neighbours. They can always assist her when needed. They help her to carry heavy closets and a printer for example, because they were too heavy to carry alone. Also, they take care for each other's cats. Mutual contact was simplified since they have each other's phone number. "When someone has a party, the neighbours are warned with a pair of ear plugs for example. In some cases you are invited, but not always", says Jeanine.

"So, all neighbours of this block are in contact with each other", she adds.

Although these activities with her direct neighbours of the same block and the initiator team members show characteristics of convivial and practical contact, Jeanine is clear about how she sees them:

Yes, those are not your friends, a good neighbour is better than a far friend, like that. Yes.

This ambiguity is important to designate. We cannot simply demonstrate how practical and convivial contact exist apart from each other. As a resident, different roles can be played in order to control the audience. Aim is to present the best image of oneself (Goffman, 2019 [1959]). Taking note of that starting point, in the one situation it might be convenient to take part in the safety net very actively, whereas the other situation requires the respondent to act in a convivial way to put oneself in its true light. In the next example, we can see how Wessel from the Beatrijsstraat acted very consciously in looking at his own position. At the moment of interviewing, Wessel was on sick leave. Normally employed as a civil servant of the municipality, he is engaged with keeping the street neat and orderly. He even names himself the "concierge of the neighbourhood", back in the days. Nowadays, there hasn't changed that much to this status. He is still active in detecting redundant bicycles and removing them. That's not all, Wessel also sets foot on the street to clean up, carrying his claw grabber. During the Dream street Beatrijsstraat – Zomerparadijs – he built several picnic benches evenly distributed over the street. By doing so, he serves all people living in Beatrijsstraat as they all benefit living in a clean and furnished street. When we keep this in mind, we could say Wessel's general position in the street is neutral, intending not to favour some neighbours or blocks. Because of the planned transformation of Beatrijsstraat, the municipality prepares a renewed sewage system and another street design, multiple evenings are organised by the municipality to inform the citizens and hearing their voices. Wessel told me about one upcoming evening and showed me the invitation on paper he found on his doormat. Wessel was planning not to go. This surprised me, considering his role as "neighbourhood concierge" and the associated activities, so I tried to find out what kept him from attending this session while his neighbour (N) joined in our conversation:

W: You have been there sometimes, right? I haven't attended [the informational session] on purpose.

N: I want to know what is going to happen.

W: I want to open my eyes in the morning, witnessing all trees being removed, everything emptied, so we can start from the beginning. That's how it could be. I don't want to go. Even though I'm living here for the longest period of time. I don't like to go to such a meeting.

J: Why not?

W: It is turned against each other.

J: What is turned against each other?

W: Well, someone wants to have the parking spots, others don't. So, then they tell you to start a discussion with each other.

N: That's why I didn't went.

W: No, I understand. Because of that, I'm not going too.

N: It's a game of participation, you need to discuss with your neighbours. And I don't like that at all.

J: Yes, why not?

N: Because it leads to conflicts.

W: Yes, of course. If you really want to...

While I expected Wessel to be present at such meetings, the inevitable role switch to happen during the participation game seems to be what Wessel is against. His neighbour ties in his stance. This act ensures his neutral stand in the Beatrijsstraat. Choosing side would mean that Wessel gives up on his neutral position he normally has in

the street, as “neighbourhood concierge”. Wessel chooses consciously to evade the conflict. Simultaneously, Wessel gives up on sharing his say regarding the future street design. This seems to be quite a big sacrifice, as he is clear in how he would like to fill in the street after its reconstruction. In short, he removes himself from the equation as a peacekeeping method.

Above instance of Wessel and his decision not to visit the information evening gives insight in how residents contemplate what manners are most advantageous. How their action affect the connections between neighbours, is what will be examined later, when we take a closer look to narratives of social life in the street. From the talks I had with the *Rotterdammers*, I acquired lots of details how life in the street takes place. Strikingly, no single conversation partner expressed mean feelings towards their neighbours. With that in mind, we realise the streets of examination are no geographical decors or concentrations of misery, conflicts and resentment between neighbours. This does not mean neighbours are like hand and glove. There is a variety of factors underlying the social relations to flourish or thwart. In this research, there is no valuation given to what type of contact and underlying factors might be best to create a liveable and ‘well-functioning’ neighbourhood or street. The complexity of social interaction impede me to present findings offered as a solution to neighbourhoods. We are dealing with real life which we try to understand better. Moreover, I’m not in the position to assess what relations work and what relations don’t work. That said, let’s move to find out how respondents see street developments as influencing factors in the togetherness.

7.2 Uniting or dissociating

Now, what people makes to mingle or what factors create greater distance between neighbours is the subject. This is important to analyse since it contributes to obtaining a more complete image of the people, with special regard to their view of social life in the street and their manners.

We have seen how a stance towards living with difference, perception of liveability, desires and manifestations of social contact already provide a snapshot of street life. A street life is lived by its residents. However, a street can never be an isolated object of research. Since we are dealing with real life, a gazing upon life in one street and everything happening there is only to be researched in an isolated setting. In this study, we cannot isolate the residents, street furniture and houses like that. A Dream street is a phenomenon with exogenous factors, like urban government interfering and endogenous factors like the people living there. To clarify, one event of Kettingstraat is elaborated below.

The habitants of Kettingstraat, Katendrecht, indirectly explained to me that their shared history affects nowadays social relationships. The people of the Kettingstraat united in their struggle against the municipality police. The communal usage of the pavement, of which chairs and tables are material elements, was at stake at that moment. Officially, the pavement was intended to park cars, something all neighbours of Kettingstraat are against. As already unveiled, the neighbours conquered by the continuation of the pavement as communal meeting place. The verbally fight with the institutions triggered anger and mean feelings towards the municipality, remembered Kyra. The institutional forces threated with a fine, but no fines were sentenced. One indirect of this mental warfare was a feeling of conquer. Kyra:

Yes, of course, that we together managed this. And they [street furniture] can officially stay. That improves the feeling of togetherness.

Likewise, Marieke experienced the process of thinking, meeting and discussing about the restrictive measures for passing cars through the Donarpad as “connecting, because you’re discussing about it”. How Noah and Harrie contemplate this issue in the interview, embodies the crux of the heart. They constantly parallel their engagement in the local sailing association with their involvement in the street. According to them:

(...) the feeling you create by making it together, that is, yes, if you want to build a relationship you should do something, I think. It could be one weekend doing several activities, or renovating a street or whatever. Building a playground, yes. (...) That connects, I think.

In the same light, maintaining the street and the amenities is how neighbours can gather, be it organised or spontaneous. Kyra took care for the chickens of the Kettingstraat by herself, until Kim suggested Kyra to help her by sharing the efforts. Other examples of gathering and doing it together is how neighbours pick a date to clean the

street and repair broken furniture. In the Kettingstraat and Berkelseaan, maintenance is rewarded with a social drink or barbecue, also organised by the citizens.

These interests in street maintenance and improvement have resulted in Dream street events. That is, the organisation of several recreational activities enabled by temporarily banning vehicles in the street or structural design interventions. As we saw how in neighbourhood relations the convivial and practical interests are driving forces of the citizens initiatives, it is interesting to see how residents perceive these well-intended initiatives not always as contributing to better connected residents with their neighbours and street. The Dream street narratives can tell us more about this.

Structural interventions in the first place have a practical reason, in which convivial elements are attached intending to develop well connected neighbours. Piet from the Beatrijsstraat saw how the contact increased, while Veerle from the same street not feels how the activities from the *Zomerparadijs* resulted in more bonding. Also Marieke from Donarpad acknowledges she didn't got to know her neighbours better because of Dream street adjustments. Partly, this has to do with physical outlooks of the street and its surroundings, which is subject for the next chapter.

Dream streets are results of human effort and therefore its impact greatly depends of the motivation of initiators, how the ideas are presented, his skills and networks and of course how his audience - the people of the street - react. Full with passion, most of the initiating respondents I spoke with, embarked the projects around four years ago. They bear quite a demanding process which to most is experienced as frustrating, exhausting and difficult. The cooperation with the municipality in most of the cases is all but smooth and time-consuming. Some of the respondents pointed out that their organisational energy ran out. Meike and Sander arranged every winter a social drink, till last year. Elim and Vicky, active in Dream street Berkelselaan, realise that their role as active street members diminished. From the same street, Christa was very happy to note that one of her neighbours initiated to clean the street together combined with a barbecue. At the street, she met some of her neighbours:

Well, I kept my mouth shut. Ineke and Dorien did the same, and who was there as well? He kept his mouth shut as well. We're doing enough. Right? I really appreciate it if someone else is doing it [taking initiative]. (...) No, I was not feeling to do so [taking initiative]. No. I did too much, did a lot.

The Berkselaan houses lots of families with children. Some of the initiating members of Dream street Berkelselaan are close connected to each other. One main bonding force can be found in a parental role in the street. Having children requires parents to act as a babysitter when they play outside. Simply said, the street becomes one meeting place for parents. Now, when the children have grown-up, they can simply look after themselves and decide where they want to go, the childminding role of the parents have ended to exist.

Vicky and Elim explain this:

E: No, it was just in the beginning when our children were very small. Since we had our interest, we were much more actively engaged with the street then. And now, it becomes less.

V: Now it's just spontaneous that we go barbecuing, then we have our gathering.

The other side of the coin is that having children works rather bonding among parents than it bridges neighbours. One can image that loud noises of playing children might trigger feelings of resentment towards children and their parents. For instance, I make up some resentment when Marieke speaks about how the street is changing:
But, I am, yes, I see lots of young people with small children. It's just like Blijdorp. It's stuffed with carrier bikes. All for such a 'nice' neighbourhood. That's getting more and more.

Mark sees from a distance how neighbours are closer with each other. Children are bonding factors in this sense.

M: The thing is; everyone living there has children. People go to the day care, they come at schools. They all know each other. J: Because of the children.

M: Well, because of the children you see [other neighbouring parents] at school, football club, hockey club and so on. You see your neighbours as well. Yes, I don't have affinity with that. We follow our own path.

The importance of associations outside the street should not be underestimated when it comes to neighbour connections, as we can derive from Anna's experiences. Her explanation of why the sense of togetherness in Donarpad is stronger than in Freijapad, where Anna lives, can be found in the membership of hockey clubs. Many people nearby are playing at *Feijenoord* hockey club, whereas Anna plays for *Leonidas*. She tells:

And Feijenoord, of which almost all the people here are member. Yes, that is. So, I know half of the people from that street goes there [of Donarpad, playing for Feijenoord]. And, when you play together in one team, you know each other much better.

Simply put, when we reflect on Anna's words, knowing each other better – in this case by external associations where neighbours gather, like hockey clubs – leads to an increased feeling of togetherness. Crucial in this is a physical place of meeting outside the street, namely a hockey club where spectators meet along the court, see each other in the canteen or form a team and train and play against other teams.

The obtained data entail plenty of instances how schools, sport clubs and other influence and shape the street life. This again stresses the importance of exogenous factors in the street's social life.

We now return to the decors of social interaction, the streets themselves. Let's see how Blommersdijkselaan comply with this. Jeanine works from home one day a week. That one day in the week, her hall transforms into a pick-up point of neighbours' parcels who weren't able to receive their package themselves. Then, her neighbours pass by Jeanine's place. Or Jeanine texts her neighbours asking them to pick up their lot. The practicality of receiving neighbours going and getting entails a social aspect of recognising your neighbours, greeting, handing over or some chatter.

Goffman (2019 [1959]) speaks about the facade being part of the performance in which an individual – consciously or unconsciously – determines how the situation is defined. Entourage, as element of the facade, delivers the physical aspects of the place of social interaction. Importantly, the entourage keeps it place, meaning the performance of picking up a parcel is over when Jeanine closes her door and the neighbour continues his way. There are instances, when the entourage is moving with the performer. Goffman mentions funeral or royal processions as examples. Now, in the same Blommersdijkselaan, where I spoke with Naomi, I learned that walking the dog involves mobile aspects of an entourage as well. After all, the dog's owner accompanies this animal on the owner's way. What is more relevant, the dog invites neighbours and others to start a talk with Naomi. Most of the times, the dog's looks are starters for social interaction, resulting in 'starter questions', as Naomi names them. Neighbours ask her for example if she already meet him or her, aiming at other neighbours.

The above described instances, the social aspects of people getting their package and having conversations while walking the dog, are manifestations of a social being together. Ultimately, this might results in recognising and trust. Therefore, the public familiarity improves, which is a uniting force.

7.3 Personal

These moments of involvement in social interaction and its evolvement are by all means depending on personal characteristics. Thoroughly examined by psychologists, for now a sociological lens with special attention to place is used in this research. The recent study of Volker, Tulin and Lancee (2019) demonstrates the importance of personal characteristics and how it relates to social capital. The authors chose to aim at social capital which provides people new jobs and other resources for example (instrumental), and social capital people can deploy when looking for emotional support (expressive). People who are more extravert, have greater expressive and instrumental social capital. Also, people who are keen to experience new things, score better on instrumental social capital.

As the researchers cannot make conclusions on the basis of causality, they can demonstrate personal characteristics to be one of the factors determining the value of social capital. With these findings in mind, we again take a look at what the interviewees shared about the contact with neighbours. For example, Noah and Harrie, the young couple from the Berkelselaan. Harrie tells:

Yes. Actually the only people we really know at the moment is the landlord. And he lives upstairs. And we have nothing but interaction regarding paying the rent.

Whereas Noah explains...

Yes, we are not that extrovert. We don't start to chat with someone we don't know. Not without, yes, I don't know what it is.

As we have seen before, associations, family and friends remote from the street of living are accounting a vast share of free time. Noah and Harrie are no exception to that. They spend their time at the local sailing association they joined a short time ago. This association and other plans limits their opportunities for convivial based in the street:

H: Yes, or we come home late, or we leave very early. Yes, there's always something...

N: Often, we plan something different in the weekends.

H: In that sense, we're not the most integrated people of the street.

From the above quote, we learn how Noah and Harrie reflect on their role in the street. They perceive themselves as deviant from others, namely those who are more integrated in the street. We can learn more about this issue by exploring how they see their neighbours.

Although Noah and Harrie seem not to be most apparent people of the Berkelselaan, their presence, their greetings and smiles to neighbours is enough to be recognised. Harrie tells how that unfolded:

Well, once we sat, we were having a drink. In a cafe nearby. And then, some older women, all from this street, came there to have a drink as well. They recognised us, and introduced themselves. And it was funny, because they recognised us. But that's actually the only time someone approached us. Like, hey, welcome to our street. And otherwise it's just a normal greeting.

Weltevrede et al. (2018) found out that most of 'new' residents in three Rotterdam neighbourhoods can't find the time to take an active role in the street or neighbourhood because of work, family and studies. These occupations already take too much free time of people's schedule. Interestingly, Putnam (2000) has found that the nowadays career lives are not significantly leading people to become less active in community. Rather, there is a general development of people (men and women, college-educated or else) spending less time in community roles. Noah and Harrie, and also Nienke and Naomi, young people recently moved to the upcoming neighbourhoods of Rotterdam, haven't mentioned time issues are hindering to do something in the street. The conversation I had with Noah and Harrie even made the couple to consider their role in the street more than they already did. Moreover, our conversation triggered a feeling in them to make use of the plaza and to see what will happen then.

Time issues or the right personal character to obtain lots of social capital, eventually there is some intrinsic motivation needed to open up, to start ties with neighbours and to maintain them. Marieke, for example, openly admits not to be eager towards tight relationships with neighbours.

No, you know, if you become too close you take a loathing towards each other. And then you can frustrate more, and I think it's fine. I am not the type of really often, the first people are leaving, at the corner. They want to make ties knit, hanging with each other at night. That doesn't work here, maybe for someone. But not like with everyone.

I used some probing to find out more about this. Marieke just told me that pavement life at Donarpad is very limited, so I asked for confirmation.

M: No, but that's fine to me.

J: Why do you feel it like that?

M: Well, it makes it more tumultuous. And then you would expect to do something with that. But, you won't see me there sitting outside.

Let's see how Mark's opinion consents with Marieke's:

I think it is nice like this, I mean; it always gives you the feeling of commitment if you do a lot with each other. At certain moment, those become obligations, and I don't like that. (...) And I think the rest [people of the street] doesn't want that too. Maybe if you talk to them, you hear a different voice.

Both respondents don't like the feeling of obligation to be active in the street. That's what, in their eyes, is the prospect if you get increasingly involved in the neighbourhood. Their anxiety to loose personal freedom (indeed: maintaining the street or neighbourhood ties take time and effort) as such became literally a 'fear factor'.

Add to this, Marieke hates the talk of her neighbours when they encounter each other. Marieke imitates her neighbours: "How much did you earned with your house?", followed by "No, I abhor that. Totally other preferences here".

We see how above interviewees don't see a vivid street community as first priority. Something which completely fits the time, in which individualisation is a recurrent theme in all fields of society. Anna agrees:

But, I don't want to drink coffee every day or to catch up with my neighbours. That doesn't fit these days, to be honest. Now it's more individualistic, isn't it?

Sometimes it seems to be an easy matter of people not liking each other. Often, this has to do with other norms and values, different lives. When that's the case, a variety of different opinions on how life should be in the street exist next to each other. One possible strategy is to try to convince your view is best. Does this imply Dream streets are witnessing a 'battle of the public space'? Or can we find a peaceful co-existence in these streets? Identifying with your best neighbours strengthens the feeling of 'we' against 'them'. This effect has a bonding outcome and might, in worst instance cause groups to oppose each other. We don't intend to distinguish specific groups in Dream streets, we present some individual perspectives on how people get along, also with respect to the streetscape.

The Beatrijsstraat, where Piet, Wessel and many others reside, is known for a mixed group of people. Who gets the best of the bargain when it comes to themes like street transformation? Wessel takes advantage of his position living there all his life: "Well, of course I know them, but we know how it works here". Wessel talks about some neighbours, the people that all of a sudden shows up outside when the *Zomerparadijs* activities took place. Normally they are not present on the streets, according to Wessel. Wessel and his neighbour Miranda start to complain when these neighbours are discussed. Miranda doesn't want to get to know them, and protests about one of 'those'. This new neighbour is criticised because of his assertive performances directly after he moved into his residence. He wanted to put his mark on the street by removing bicycles. Wessel and his neighbour both didn't accepted this. For Miranda, they could do no more wrong than they already did:

"Well, that's inherent to such people and I don't like that. That's not how I want it", at which she aims at his acts.

The understanding of the Beatrijsstraat street life was greatly provoked by Wessel interacting with Piet and Miranda at the moment of interviewing. Does Wessel continuously fulfils his neutral role as neighbourhood concierge? We already saw how Wessel Miranda's side, who clearly is no fan of "that type of people". That's not all, at the moment I approached Wessel he was in conversation with Piet. When Piet left, Wessel soon started to touch upon the new dwellers in the street:

There are some new people, that's another generation. It might sound weird, but it makes me wonder: are those all autistic people? (...) Yes, sometimes I have this feeling. Because they come here to live, they don't even shake hands or introduce themselves. They close their doors at night and that's it. Early in the morning they both leave to go to work and that's what I call an autistic attitude. Back in the days they specifically linked this behaviour to yups [young urban professionals].

While his new upper neighbours, a young couple, *did* visit Wessel to introduce and shake hands, Wessel apprehends this practice as nothing but normal. On the other hand, Wessel doesn't makes the first step to new people to start the interaction. Likewise, Piet advises his new neighbours:

That's what I am expecting. Even it may look hard, just make clear who you are.

Here we see how another set of norms and values of the new resident are in conflict with those of Wessel and Piet. This implies that the expectations of Piet and Wessel are not met. In worst case, this leads to a alienation in which neighbours don't recognise each other. As a result, the borders of what's normal are exceeded, a so called 'moral breakdown' (Zigon, 2007). This negatively affects the public familiarity. Not knowing each other makes it hard to imagine what to expect of your neighbours. Equally, Blokland's (2017) argues trust is high when we consider situations as 'normal'. With high trust, our feeling of belonging to a community, or feel at home is higher.

Where many people mingle and greet each other on the streets, the public familiarity is strengthened by repeated interactions (Kleinhans & Bolt, 2010). This automatically brings us to the narratives regarding togetherness happening on the streets. Before that, one note need to be made about use of the street. New people show up on the street not often and infrequently, the interviews tell us. Or they choose to show up electively, at those moment that suits their intentions best. Naomi, Noah and Harrie, Anna and Nienke, all can be seen as a 'new generation' people in Dream streets. All of them came after a Dream street event took place so they are sharing just parts of the street's narrative. However, they acknowledged to be open to convivial activities accessible to all other neighbours, like the

Christmas drink at Blommersdijkselaan or neighbourhood diner at Katendrecht. The absence of initiators or eventual cancellation of events in that sense hinders new people and the original residents to meet each other. The importance of these activities is stressed when we realise how much the above respondents value to have a private garden. According to the interviews and this desire, these respondents prefer to stay in their gardens instead of using the street and its facilities. Even if the street amenities and furniture are renewed, inviting and nice-looking as to be found in Berkelselaan, Noah and Harrie haven't made the step to make use of this. To Nienke, the street side of the Blommersdijkselaan is not attractive as it is a distracting place. In her garden, she appreciates the rest without disturbing elements.

7.4 Preconditions

Above we have presented how jointly actions in street maintenance or renovation can unite people, at least while the process evolves. Though, the efforts of neighbours in starting up activities is crucial. The absence of driving forces means opportunities for people to mingle are missed. Simultaneously, several personal characteristics can foster social interaction. But, personal characteristics in itself is no explanation why people have bonds or don't. People of which you don't know what to expect, for example because they are not recognised, can easily become the 'other'.

Some of the people I spoke, shared their insights about what is important when it comes to belonging, community or vivid neighbour relations. The outcomes of these distilled 'prerequisites' are not measured, rather the respondents' valuation is taken into account.

Although many middle class Rotterdammers consciously chose to live in a mixed neighbourhood, the so called diversity seekers still cluster with their equals and thereby act with shells around their eyes when they are confronted with people deviating too much from their own set of values and norms. In principle, surrounding yourself with like-minded people is one ingredient in a street to have good relationships. Joep, Lisa's husband, is one of the respondents to confirm this. He likes Freijapad and the surrounding streets at the south side from the park;

Because, there live people with some similar, how should I say. Many people with their own business, and many people are member of the same sport association where we play. The children are all together at the hockey club.

Playing hockey as sports, having your own business, those are characteristics that mostly fit people with a blue lifestyle. To rehearse, the blue lifestyle entails people who are strongly focussed on competition and progression, obtaining control over their individual life. Most of these people are well performing when it comes to career life or socio-cultural vitality (Wolters et al., 2007). Having an own business and joining a hockey club, traditionally the sport of the higher middle class and upper class, perfectly suits a blue lifestyle. That's the like of Lisa and Joep. As this greatly determines their enjoyable living here, they even made the decision to renovate their house to create more space. This eventually perpetuates their settlement in the street and neighbourhood.

Babette, from Kettingstraat, sees that she shares the street with people whom haven't certain expectations of their neighbours. The professions of people are mostly in the creative sector, like artists, photographers, authors or moviemakers. This brings along a similar mentality, thanks to the social and educational background people have. People don't have rigid ideas they impose on each other, says Babette. In short: the cultural basis is similar. The characteristics described is alike a red and yellow lifestyle. The red lifestyle consists of individualistic people and open to new experiences, whereby self-development is central. The yellow lifestyle differs in the sense that these people are looking for harmony between their family, neighbours, career life. Also these people are very open to the society (Wolters et al., 2007).

Vicky and Elim see a different prerequisite to bring people together. The completion of Dream street Berkelselaan as culmination of togetherness, has a long history. The relationships of neighbours are long-lived. Years ago, the people of the Berkelselaan even initiated to nominate a mayor of the street. The initiatives and vivid street life are maintained and the street mayor is embodiment of a street culture that is even institutionalised. Years later, a special commission replaced the street mayor and got occupied with the Dream street initiative. The strong sense of togetherness is perfectly embodied by Elims words:

It already was good [social cohesion in the street], so it's not like a dramatically transformation at once [by completion of Dream street] nor it turned 180 degrees the other way.

So, when there is a certain basis of togetherness, this can be expanded to more intense neighbourhood relations and as best a Dream street. Elim even sees this as a precondition to scale up in neighbourhood events. Upper stresses the importance of driving forces in the street. We already saw that Meike and Sander halted the organisation of the social drink with Christmas. After several trials of mobilising other neighbours to organise this, which failed, the activity couldn't make it this year. Similar happened in Donarpad, where the initiator passed away, which meant the end of several street activities.

Anna, living in Donarpad, seriously gets concerned about the maintenance of the greenery in the street which was added with Dream street interventions. The long summer of 2018, hot and dry, had its physical impacts. Anna witnessed how the greenery dilapidated through failing cooperation of neighbours to take care. As a lady with roots in the rural region *Achterhoek*, this hurts her. Simply said: someone who stands up and takes the lead, distributes tasks and is straight to the point, is essential in maintaining and building social structures as well as physical features in a street.

7.5 Street narratives

This section is deployed to find out what can be said about the street life in general according to the respondents. Does that make any difference when you have recently been moved to the street? Is the influx of new people influencing how people describe their street and its energy?

Most of the dwellers I was in conversation with, greatly appreciated the motto: live and let live. Concretely, this entails a living together in which neighbours can approach each other in case they are in need, they want some assistance or have a specific material need. Contact on practical base is the prime way of contact among neighbours in most streets, but in every studied streets several people desired contact on convivial base. Both were present, but it's good to realise that not everyone has the same access to both. As seen before, practical contact is closely related to the so called amicable attitude. By having decent knowledge of your neighbours, co-residents having a close connection to you and taking part in social media networks on Facebook or Whatsapp, the 'safety net' provides becomes greatly available.

However, acquiring your social needs with your neighbours can be harsh, I learned. What Vicky, Elim and Piet have in common, is their perception of how they, together with their neighbours, create a belonging not accessible to everyone.

E: The house owners, and the house owners having children living here for longer time, yes that's the hard core.

V: And still.

E: Yes, indeed.

The absence of new neighbours at street events, like parties and barbecues, is what struck Vicky, Elim and Piet. This made them to reflect on themselves and their close neighbours. Piet explains:

P: (...) Maybe we put off other people or so, them thinking like: oh such hard core neighbours.

J: Who would put off who?

P: Well, new people...

J: To engage with the hard core eh...

P: Yes, maybe, maybe. But indeed those events were open to everybody. And they always posted invitations like 'something's coming'. And you can participate voluntarily. Sometimes I'm not feeling it, but there's enough activity.

Similarly, Elim is looking for reasons why the new people are not there. Also in the Berkelselaan, invitations are delivered to all. "Well, we really don't perceive ourselves as closed. It's exactly the opposite, we are very open", is what Elim states. However, Elim keeps thinking how things could be different, more accessible. The new design of the Dream street might remove a threshold, how Elim sees it:

So, who knows this living room [Dream street plaza] simplifies or so [the contact with the hard core neighbours]. I don't know. We will see.

Strikingly, Noah and Harrie from the same Berkelselaan, have their thoughts about the existence of a hard core gathering of neighbours.

H: Because you have the feeling when moving in, there already exists a family. People know each other already. But probably, that's not the case heh.

J: Does it feel hard to get access to them?

H: Well, that's how it feels to us maybe, but in reality it might be different haha.

Interestingly, Harrie speaks about a family instead of a *hard core*, which sounds more soft. On the one hand, a family could represent thoughtfulness and affection. It might even be that the boundaries for exclusion are less strong than a *hard core* would suggest. On the other hand, a family can be a social organisation where the ties are very close. Though, according to Christa from the Berkelselaan there is no such a thing as selectively belonging to the family or *hard core* club of neighbours:

Yes, everybody is part of the club, but you are not obliged to be in the club. You get it?

We continue on Dream streets events and their lay-outs. Nienke was orienting to rent a house at the Blommersdijkselaan. This finally became her new home in Rotterdam. With the moving dweller, she spoke about what life in the street is like. She told it's a really nice neighbourhood. The neighbours contact each other intensively, sometimes activities are organised, is what Nienke heard.

"Well, that sounds good to me. Better than conflicts and so on".

I mentioned the Blommersdijkselaan is one of the Dream streets of Rotterdam. Nienke responded:

"Yes, the moving dweller already said: this street is nominated as the best street of the Netherlands, or Rotterdam, or the best street of something. I knew that, and thought: that's nice and says a lot about this neighbourhood, how nice it is and how safe I would feel here. But no more than that, no. I didn't know more about it. (...) if this is the most nice street of Rotterdam or not, it didn't influence my choices".

How Nienke now acts in a Dream street, best street of the Netherlands or whatever; she has contact with her neighbours and she witnesses her neighbours are on speaking terms. Sometimes Nienke overhears complete conversations over the hedges of their back gardens, which she likes.

We simply cannot go by the daily practices as they can determine an overall feeling of 'home' in the street. As a result, people might act like they feel at home. Rehearsing Jeanine's 'pick-up point' in the Blommersdijkselaan and texting her neighbours to remind them their package arrived, is just one practice in the street. In the interview, Jeanine realises this is unique for an urban street in a city like Rotterdam. Instead, Jeanine expects in many streets people are not that well connected to each other as she does with her neighbours. Another example of a daily practice embodying the social togetherness is described by Naomi. The Blommersdijkselaan is a place where people greet each other, compared to the adjacent but busy Bergweg, tells Naomi.

Greeting as a mean of interaction is a manifestation of taking others into account. This can be seen as a fluid encounter, without any intention of having social interaction. Though, Blokland describes "they do include an orientation to the other, and in that respect they can still be seen as social ties" (2017: 71).

Different than fluid encounters, we also find relationships in which people share a lot together. Durable engagements, as Blokland names them, are characterised by a gathering of people thanks to an institution or activity. The relationship people develop is not depending on the interaction these people have (2017). Let's see how Kim's durable engagement with one of her neighbours illustrates a narrative about social life in Kettingstraat.

"Back in the days, someone lived here always acting like it's hallelujah in here. And I thought, this is totally not true. Because we are real people, so we have troubles as well. When I came to live here, I experienced that as very intimidating (...). I didn't understand that, because I felt other things. (...). Well, some were not happy with each other at all".

This makes Kim to name Kettingstraat a "real street". By this, she means that all aspects of life come together here. With this statement, she distances herself of the 'hallelujah' atmosphere, as one of her former neighbours used to describe the street. That means, we cannot assume contact based on 'conviviality' is always leading to an atmosphere of conviviality. We should see conviviality as a broad term which includes high commitment to neighbours, the street and being active or willing to be active in social activities with neighbours like a social drink.



Figure 18: A social drink in the Blommersdijkselaan. Taken from the Facebook community Blommersdijkselaan.

Chapter 8 Understanding Dream streets: Atmosphere and its generators

In Chapter eight, we are diving into descriptions of the street and specifically in aspects which determine the entourage. We make use of Goffman's assumptions in researching this. Elements of decoration constitute the façade, as claimed by Goffman (2019 [1959]). Goffman notes that typical attributes bring ambiance in the theatre, like furnishing, upholstery and the spatial design. We consider this theatre as the place where performances of social interaction in real life occur. Since we are looking for the ambiance, we make use of Böhme's works about atmosphere. He states that atmospheres entail what is experienced in "bodily presence in relation to persons and things or in spaces" (1993: 119). A space can be experienced consciously because of the atmosphere, is what Böhme demonstrates (2006).

Böhme put his finger on the sore spot, on how architects became stage builders who are eager to bring the audience in a desired *befindlichkeit* or mood. Böhme (2006) distinguishes three types of characteristics of how space experience can be described. These are useful to grasp respondents' descriptions of atmosphere.

The first group of experiences regards to movement. We can think of geometrical shapes and constructions. They convey a feeling of openness or demarcation.

Secondly, synthetical characteristics require multiple senses to perceive a space. We could think of a warm colour like soft orange, whereby visible cognition triggers a feeling of cosiness.

The third category of sensing are social characteristics. An example is conviviality (*gezelligheid*), which is produced by multiple senses working together and this concept is culturally embedded. Böhme (2006) also mentions elements with a specific symbolic meaning can be sphere generators. He mentions porphyry as an example, a stone type with a royal atmosphere.

Our next step in researching how the atmosphere is perceived by Dream street residents is to look for descriptions of the street. In doing so, we don't limit ourselves to see the street as isolated object. By taking into account the direct surroundings, we learn most about the street itself. Also, the specific objects in the street highlighted by residents are analysed more deeply. After that, we learn how residents are active in creating sphere generators in the street. Then, we zoom out again to see how the surrounding environment influences social life in a Dream street. Finally, we make some remarks about human interests in atmosphere building.

8.1 Describing atmosphere

Goffman discusses the space of the façade, and thereby specifically how the performer tries to convince his audience he follows certain guides when acting. Acting and staying in visual or auditive touch with neighbours without having necessarily contact with this audience, that's how *decorum* is described (2019 [1959]). The decorum, which implies the 'guide' for someone to behave in that specific situation. Behaviour in a decorum could follow the rule one should act respectful towards the entourage and space. Though, acting respectfully could be rather inspired making a positive presentation to the audience. Interestingly, Böhme's key point is that atmospheres can be generated (2014). He continues by stating that scenographers succeed in creating the atmosphere, ranging in all fields from the Olympic Games to exhibitions. The stage-managing then is occupied with 'the How of representation' (Böhme, 2014, p. 95). How would a self-created atmosphere in Dream streets foster the people to act according to the decorum? Respondents' insights and descriptions of the site will help to find us out. The first task is to present how people think about their place of living.

Immersing yourself in a big city like Rotterdam, could one expect life to happen as classical theorists like Tönnies (1887) argued? The rural is idealised as a social togetherness featured by mutual recognition and strong ties. The urban, conversely, is known for its anonymity, cold relationships which aim to pursuit efficacy. Blokland (2017) demonstrates there's enough theoretical base to go beyond this outdated division. The urban daily practices seem to be more relevant, since that's how the street's symbols and experiences come about. Those symbols and experiences are reflected in the street narratives. Thus, we look closer to these narratives.

Many times, I heard how the citizens described their street as 'village'. Explicitly, they gave a geographical context of 'their village', i.e. the neighbourhood or Rotterdam. On the one hand, the people of the Dream streets are urban people, derive their personal identity from being a Rotterdammer. Being a Rotterdammer suggests a cosmopolitan way of life as facing super diversity and amenities the city offers. On the other hand, Dream street life experience resonates a classical presentation of the village life, in which neighbourliness dominates. Several of the respondents, who are born and raised in a village themselves, confirm to have a similar feeling right now in an urban context. That specific feeling consists of people taking care for each other, recognise their neighbours and knowing what to expect from each other.

In the same spirit, some as 'urban inherent' aspects are said not to prevail in the Dream street. Lisa mentions that her neighbours know each other, since they find equals around and moved in at the same moment their neighbours did. In that light, Wessel talks about a convivial togetherness on the pavement, the nonexistence of theft in the street and the rest to be found here. Moreover, Wessel administers a Facebook page which tells the historical story of the street, thereby creating consciousness of the street's narrative. In short, these examples blur the clear-cut and classical distinction of urban and rural life. And, by doing so, they distinguish their Dream street as unique in Rotterdam. The above described social, *village-like* characteristics (like in a classical rural site) aren't existing in other streets in Rotterdam according to the respondents. The following quotes express the 'uniqueness' of Dream streets in a metropolis like Rotterdam.

Kyra explains the distinctive appearance of Kettingstraat in Rotterdam underlining the bonds with neighbours:

I think this is really extraordinary for Rotterdam, even in general really extraordinary. I lived at more places, and lived in old houses and so on. But like this, I never experienced it like this. Having such good relationships with each other.

Returning to Lisa, she is feeling gratified with the village-like characteristics in Freijapad. Simultaneously she has a cosmopolitan stance in raising her children: "I choose consciously to live in the city. Also for my children, to grow up in the city providing the real life". Moreover, Rotterdam offers its people the true life, according to Lisa: "I cannot find that in one small settlement, and that doesn't suits us, I think", by which she sharpens the dichotomy of urban and rural life.

The village-like aspects of social life are mentioned as contributing to a positive experience of life in the street. The many children to be found in Dream streets, their parents and adults benefit of a living in a Dream streets. Filip, who has no children, highlights children in the Kettingstraat have the greatest freedom in an urban environment compared to children living in a village. Equally, Vicky who is a mother of three, talks about the village-like aspects to be found for her and her children:

That time, there were many children. It was very fun and safe to let the children play outside in a big city like Rotterdam.

These village-like traits are strengthened by referring to other places of Rotterdam, where these attributes are to a lesser extent available. Often, the state of the public space, buildings and greenery elsewhere are perceived as less attractive by the Dream street dwellers.

Sometimes, making one step out of the street already means entering a different atmosphere. Wessel describes how crossing the Graaf Florisstraat, which is just at the opposite, already feels like a different world with lots of mess on the streets. Wessel believes this is caused by dwellers of mainly social housing.

In similar fashion, Sivfi describes how an outsider, a team member of his football club from North-Brabant sees this:

(...) There was one team mate, studying here, and he always came to me by foot. We together drove to Brabant. And he said: it's so weird; you come from the tram stop Middellandstraat, then you go there and there what makes myself thinking: okay... this could become dangerous. Then they cross the street, Graaf Florisstraat, it's a complete different world so to say. So, it's all very dense.

These examples demonstrate how respondents constantly think about their street while taking the surroundings into account. This relational way of thinking creates better knowhow of their current living place. Also, this thinking reinforces the appreciation of the street. This feeling of appreciation gets stronger when others confirm their own narratives about the street, resulting in more satisfaction of living there. Lisa and Joep's narrative for example, which is underlined by new neighbours:

And these people, they are coming new from Kralingen. And the man said: well... they would never do that in Kralingen, having dinner with the neighbours. That's amazing.

Other descriptions of the street let the residents beyond doubt of the uniqueness of their place. Examples like "it's an oasis in the ghetto/city" (heard in Kettingstraat, Blommersdijkselaan) or "The golden triangle" aiming at the top-notch quality houses and the lane sceneries of the Beatrijsstraat, Beukelsdijk and Graaf Florisstraat, they have in common these people incorporate the surrounding environment in their views, applying a relational perspective. Although the label "golden triangle" entails a great valuation suggesting these streets express grandeur, royalty or haughty, we can still distinguish differences among these streets. Veerle in this case, compares the street events

organised in the Graaf Florisstraat and the Beatrijsstraat. With a group of residents of Beatrijsstraat, she visited one event in the Graaf Florisstraat. Her experiences:

Like, I don't know. It was a sort of concert and then we all had something like... It was more like a festival instead of a street event. That's what it looked like (...)

I don't know how to describe, the events in this street [Beatrijsstraat]. I like that it's a bit last-minute attitude, where we had to arrange energy plugs, the soup almost burned on a hot plate and those things. (...) It feels more informal in here and it's mostly about conviviality and there [at Graaf Florisstraat] conviviality lacked. It was all very nice arranged, perfectly organised but there were no neighbours who approached us like: Hey, you of the Beatrijsstraat. Welcome at the party. That's what we missed, that feeling of amicability.

This example demonstrates how physical proximity is no determinant for equality in life style. Veerle's sees life in Beatrijsstraat more 'settled, spontaneous, down-to-earth' (*burgerlijk*), whereas these aspects weren't experienced in Graaf Florisstraat. It is like a different decorum. Even though we speak about a street event, they could symbolise how much the stages in these two streets differ from each other.

The above quotes are presented because of their orientation on the surroundings. Two more quotes of Beatrijsstraat residents relate merely to specific characteristics of the street and its people.

This was the carrier-bike neighbourhood. It was because of the D66 people.

(...) But not too soft, it's GroenLinks. Think about green, and college-educated people. But it's not... look, over there people are living who have never heard of politics. That's what I really like. So, the diversity of people is good to me.

In both sentences, a political party is mentioned. First one noted is D66, a party of progressive liberals with green intentions, whereas GroenLinks represents a left-wing party embracing ambitious environmental objectives. These indications are valuable to present an image of the street. Also, the terms *carrier-bikes* and *green, college-educated people* and *people who have never heard of politics* require some more attention.

In the following section, we will continue on decomposing these and other statements which tell us a lot about the atmosphere experienced.

8.2 Generators of atmosphere

As we have seen, the expressions of senses as a result of being in a particular space, can be indicators of sphere (Böhme, 2006). In simple words, our mood comes from sphere (Böhme, 2006). What factors are at the root of this mood, the feeling of being somewhere which colours our other feelings? We have seen how the people of Dream streets verbally represent the atmosphere in their street. Some of them explained how their Dream street feels extraordinary. It is an attribute which could evoke feelings of being privileged. What factors bring about such moods are examined here.

A variety of representations have already been mentioned. Though, a sphere can be generated. In the Freijapad, for example. The adjusted street design, thanks to the Dream street budget, became more lambent, is how Lisa sees it. In this way, new, larger frames around trees were constructed giving the trees more air than the previous ones. Former paved space was transformed into green space. The rocks, functioning as physical car barriers, became a place to hang for children. Now, people walking through Katendrecht could take a break here by making use of the picnic benches. "There is more life than ever, because before there was nothing at all", is what Lisa remarks about street life after the implementation of Dream street adjustments.

In this light, we could say the Dream street interventions contributed to a more child friendly street. Lisa, a mother of two, acknowledges the fact the children are more close to home when playing, namely in the street instead of the park at the opposite. It brings more ease when it comes to surveillance. Lisa cheers this situation, whereas Mark likes the availability of a park with football field at the opposite of the street. Hence, the children are not playing in front of his house.

Anna, who also likes to live in an urban environment, appreciates the serenity she finds in Katendrecht. In the two years she lives there, she got used to the silence of the Donarpad. However, the attributes of Donarpad, especially

the chess field and the life-size pieces, attract the loudest children of the neighbourhood, says Anna. Playing children even distort her peaceful Sundays as she experienced it like that. Although not spoken out, Anna seems to be frustrated about that. And that's not all, the design with rocks used as roadblocks, distorted the delivery of her new furniture. At that moment, it upsets Anna and I still notice some frustration about this issue. Although Anna welcomes the renewed street, this doesn't take away the feeling of ambiguity resulting from the alterations. The disturbance by playing children and the affairs around her furniture delivery give the impressions Anna feels limited in her personal mobility and freedom.

The respondents' views are leading in this research. However, my personal observation add some interesting insights in atmosphere in Freijapad and Donarpad. We find picnic benches funded by Dream street budget. That does not imply the street residents are the only users. I approached two older women from the 'old Katendrecht' who took a break in their walk at the picnic table. Though, the ladies expressed mistrust about my intentions. To me, these picnic benches are symbolising a vivid neighbourhood life, where people gather, dwellers regularly sit together to play cards, to have dinner or to enjoy a social drink. However, the only two people I have seen using these benches were the two older women from 'old Katendrecht'. Anna, of the Donarpad sees how the picnic benches remain unused:

It's an illusion new neighbours will use them. That is how it is. (...) I don't expect people to use them more than twee weeks of 365 days of the year. (...). I pass everyday there, and I've never seen someone. (...) Really, never.

In this quote, Anna stresses new neighbours. By this, she aims at people like her who moved in after the Dream street adjustments were implemented. What these people have in common is that they had no say in the street design as it is today, whereas some people who contributed in the Dream street design already moved to other streets. The natural course of residents coming and leaving creates different shared histories and in that sense strengthens symbolic boundaries.

In this respect, the adjustments in the street seem to meet both the social interests and the practical interests, but the actual usage of this street furniture lags behind. This leaves the Donarpad with a state of the art decor for social interaction, where the audience seems to reside behind their front doors.

Another example of a mismatch between sphere generators and usage or perception is to be found in Kettingstraat. I noticed the people made unique, coloured lamp shades to soften the lightning provided by the streetlamps. The modification of these lamps can be seen as an adaptation to influence the synesthetic experience of space, the softening of light in this case. Soft light contributes to a friendly atmosphere, without sharp edges. In reality, the lamp shades' condition is not that representative as it used to be (see Figure 19). The blue, brown and yellow colours are faded by sunshine, suggesting these items are outdated. Moreover, several of them have rips. Kim tells:

I would like to cut of these ugly frills. (...) Haha, yes. They are like used underwear. (...) Yes, they are ugly, but over there they are not bothered by the light.

Considering these design interventions, we can perceive Kettingstraat as a street in which the rural atmosphere seems to be a guiding principle. Kyra, who lived on a farm in the Italian Dolomites, hopes to re-migrate to the mountains, far away from the city. The rest and green environment found there is what makes her feel most comfortable. Meanwhile, Kyra cooperates with her neighbour Kim to create an environment which closely approaches the real rural layout. Two ingredients deployed to achieve this urban – but rural – outlook are animals and greenery.



Figure 19: Custom made public lightning decorations at Kettingstraat

Kim, from that perspective, desires the street design to be more green with square meters dedicated to grow vegetables and herbs. She likes to harvest self-grown food for herself and children, motivated by 'because it's possible'. Kyra credits the calmness in the street to the present greenery. Her desire to add more animals, like a pig or a donkey to the street life, contributes to a less urban-like experience of the street. More flowers, more insects and a better passing sunlight thanks to smaller greenery like grass and bushes are factors that, according to Kyra, could give a happy feeling so people will muster at the street.

One should be aware how objects contribute to a less urban-like environment, but even more to how these are perceived by the citizens of the street. Also, we cannot neglect on the role of structural street aspects already present like the building style or the road's structure. These sphere generators primarily suggest a movement caused by architectural forms, as Böhme (2014) argues. Again, these features give the street a less-urban like environment and atmosphere. The Beatrijnsstraat feels peaceful thanks to the four entries it encompass, Piet tells. There are two turns at the Graaf Florisstraat, and the Frank van Borselenstraat and Persijnstraat are ways out. "So, in a way, that's what gives air". Likewise, Noah and Harrie appreciate the "air" or feeling of a spacious street:

Almost one month ago, we viewed one house. It was quite a nice house, but if you looked outside, you almost directly watched others interior. And yes, it feels like, it is very closed. So, that feels oppressive, at least to me.

How small the space between the opposite row of houses might be, trees substantially provide the feeling of room, Harrie explains. Also, the trees of the Blommersdijkselaan give a warm feeling of the street, says Noah. Interestingly, this synesthetic attribute of the street is interpretable in different ways. Meike and Sander for instance believe the trees create a cool atmosphere in the street to escape the warm interiors, especially during summer.

We already saw how the rocks of the Donarpad caused uproar since it not only blocks vans but also obstructs deliveries by carriers or emergency services. But, there's more, is what I learn of Marieke's sentiments towards these rocks. Marieke believes public greenery is one element affecting the atmosphere, though the stones are an eye's sore. Marieke expresses her disgust as she thinks these rocks fit "a trend". Moreover, Marieke is critical of the current developments and plans in Katendrecht. She tells more and more visitors have discovered Katendrecht's attractions like the Fenix warehouse or *De Nacht van Katendrecht*. Marieke expects Katendrecht to become decent, aiming at the influx of people who are less alternative. These yups (young urban professionals) are characterised by Marieke as people who kick over the traces only once and who live a predictable life. This contradicts Marieke's alternative view, as she's a big fan of variety of design. She especially appreciates the 'Do it yourself-houses' (kluswoningen) in Katendrecht, as they all differ from each other. This development makes Marieke to romanticise Katendrecht when it was the home of the bohemian people:

Yes, those were all experimental artists and many architects who built their own dream house here. The plots were free to plan.

These bohemian characteristics of experimental, alternative and creative people was frequently noted. Piet said the Beatrijsstraat used to be home to creative people, something which is slowly changing now. The dwellers of the Kettingstraat, who are on similar level of thinking according to Babette, live together in an atmosphere of freedom, as said by Kim. Their professions are mostly in the creative sector. As seen before, for some respondents it makes sense to refer such an experienced atmosphere to political parties (D66, GroenLink) and their target public. The lifestyle colours could help in grasping an atmosphere as well. The yellow and red life style seems to be most applying to the creative citizens habiting the Dream streets. Their outgoing *modus vivendi* seems to be more present in Dream streets. As some of the respondents bring forward that they desire their street to be more neat or organised, their statements are later nuanced by themselves. They don't really like it to be that predictable. Thus, they contribute to a streetscape by which creative people prosper most.

That said, we can now take a look at the motives and ideas of initiators of Dream streets, or to put it in different words: people building the atmosphere.

8.3 Building the atmosphere

This section is aiming to analyse how the actors in the street are responsible in making the atmosphere. The streetscape, which has undergone changes and structural transformations by means of Dream street, is in some way mirroring urban trends, in which residents become responsible for their street. Prompted by the municipality of Rotterdam, initiators of Dream streets work out new designs in a way they expect their street to become more liveable. We have seen, these adjustments have their implications in creating conditions for mingling but also in building a more attractive street. In that light, how are the initiating residents responsible for leaving their mark on how the streetscape looks like?

The organisational process of a Dream street consists of different phases and participation sessions organised for and with the people of the street. In all streets, the neighbours had the possibility to join in these sessions to have their say. Though, the initiators are explorers in a process the most powerful actors in determining the final outlook of the street. Lisa, founder of Dream street in Katendrecht, tells about this:

Of course we have influence, in the sense that our ideas are the starting point of the three proposals we made. We had to start somewhere, and to that [proposals] additions were made (...).

Making ideas is just one part of the process. The drafts are to be presented in a setting which could be designated as what Goffman names the backstage. Evenings are arranged by the organisational team. At those sessions, someone's house transforms into a design studio and neighbourhood centre where the initiators discuss about the plans. In fact, we could say these spaces become workspace. The people leading this workspace, the organising team, has the most powerful position in negotiating. Despite neighbours disagreeing with each other about the plans; it's up to the initiators to seize the aspects which unites people's opinions to foster the process. At these moments, the initiating forces have a decisive role, as shown by Vicky in the Berkelselaan:

And, when people are not responsive, then it's also game-over. (...) Yes, you have to take decisions. You are not going to negotiate endlessly, right?

From Nora of the Berkelselaan, we learn how the chosen strategy of an experimental trial period works as conflict-sensitive way. By doing so, the neighbours were given time to get used to another design. Ultimately, this step-by-step method led to the most radical adjustment in the street, which comes as a surprising outcome of laborious participation sessions.

We have discussed how the Dream street adjustments, be it in the form of an event, an experiment or structural alterations colour the atmosphere of a street. Dream street and its spatial implications are one thing, already existing social manners – sometimes for many years – are another thing. In that light, we can think of the students in the Beatrijsstraat. Their inhabitation has not gone unnoticed by the spoken dwellers. Although not all, some of them embody the student-like behaviour which is associated with public nuisance. Their *modus vivendi* is not by all appreciated as it touches the liveability of the street. Parking bicycles on the pavements follows the simple desire and habit of people parking their vehicle as close as possible to home. For the students, this is no exception. The roomy houses of the Beatrijsstraat are ideally for multiple occupation (one house and its facilities like bathroom, kitchen are

shared by three or more people). As a result, the number of bicycles increases. Veerle's words are addressed to their own 'decor building' and evokes negative sentiments:

But it's indeed something that gives a mess [the presence of students]. If you want to be a student, go and be that student in the student neighbourhood. That's all.

Allinson (2006) argued students can provoke feelings of animosity when established residents realise they become the minority social group. Though, from the interview and the following quote, we cannot deduce Veerle as being part of a minority group. However, she is aware and afraid for her neighbourhood to get *studentified*.

That is, we are all little afraid that many houses would be occupied [for multiple occupation]. I have to admit, it's all not that bad. There haven't become more [transformation of houses into student housing]. The houses which are multiple occupied have been like that, but indeed, when one house is for sale I don't hope they become student houses.

The students in the Beatrijsstraat create their own stage. When they are at the place, they make use of the picnic benches to eat pizza or drink a beer, is what Wessel recognises. Even if they are not present, that specific place is designated by the students. The gathering of their bicycles or *Swap* bikes, the – among student – very popular lease bicycles are the material symbols representing the presence of students in the street. As well as students have their own contributions to the stage, other groups in Beatrijsstraat also contribute to the streetscape. These residents placed self-made wooden decorations and furniture on the street, which is another type of material symbolism.



Figure 20: Bicycles, car parking, greenery and picnic at Beatrijsstraat.

And, not to forget the self-created terrace of the "lads" at the beginning of the street. The atmosphere I felt around this gathering of men and women felt like 'working-class'. They drink their self-brought soft drinks and beer cans, roll and smoke their cigarettes, eat ice cream or fruit. Loud screaming to neighbours at the other side of the street is no exception. Also they bake hamburgers at the pavement. The people hanging and chatting around this spot clearly feel comfortable and not restricted. My presence didn't withheld some of them to roll and smoke joints publicly, in front of their houses, even when surrounded by children. Would that imply that they don't care about others, for example how my stance is towards using drugs? Goffman argues people performing are often not conscious they are indeed playing a role. Simultaneously, their behaviour might suit their own decorum. In their own performance, I experienced the hospitality and openness towards others, as I felt completely welcome.

Above examples portray the multiplicity of a street and its users, of whom all contribute to the stage of the street. Beatrijsstraat for instance, cannot be perceived as one entity. In the one part of the street, people scream out of their windows, where at the other side of the street the windows get closed when people are speaking on the street. I witnessed how the people manifesting themselves. They feel comfortable enough to change the physical outlooks of

the street. In other words, the public space of the street is claimed by different groups or teams, to use Goffman's terminology.

8.4 Performing inside and outside

Goffman distinguishes a decor, the backstage spaces and outer world (2019 [1959]). Latter is centred in this section, since I noticed the outer world makes sense during several interviews. Goffman argues these outer worlds are always present in the sense that people can fulfil multiple roles simultaneously. Put simply: someone participating in the street game might be intended as acting for another audience outside the street. Some of the interviewees mentioned their main preference to live in the specific Dream street is the neighbourhood wherein it's situated. The bustling districts have a big variety of amenities, housing and are located close to Rotterdam's city centre. Also, the people inhabiting these neighbourhoods have different backgrounds, many of them having ancestors of migrants. Also, people on social facilities live there but also people running their own business or in higher executive positions. These aspects might be interesting for them to the outer world, i.e. their friends, colleagues and family living in more 'dull' and unilateral places. Especially in terms of population and building styles, a diverse neighbourhood is interesting. A life and home in one of these 'upcoming' neighbourhoods of Rotterdam equals a fine taste, open-minded and progressive attitude and style. Being critical about acquaintances and their lives in more 'predictable' neighbourhoods or VINEX neighbourhoods is one method to distinguish oneself from the 'mainstream'. By now we leave it to discuss the relevance of the outer world in someone's role in the street.

I would like to further specify how stages outside Dream street contribute to one's performance. Prime performances in the street for example are the acts during participation sessions for Dream streets, manifestations of life on the pavement and claims of the physical space in the street. To residents, these moments are opportunities for portraying the best 'self'. It is interesting to see how not only the own streetscape i.e. the Dream street provides room for decors and stages, but also surroundings are chosen for performances. Let's take *Kaappark* as an example. This park, which is a physical transitional soft border area between the 'old' and 'new' Katendrecht, has a football field. There were rumours of the football field to be replaced by an artificial football field. This intervention should prevent the areas around the goals to be trampled. Marieke, who is a big fan of the organic development of Katendrecht, sees this modification as one of the symptoms of the trajectory Katendrecht follows. This path, characterised by a changing population, big inflows of capital and the loss of the small-scale and alternative facilities, makes Marieke feel sceptical about Katendrecht. Marieke got engaged in actions to retaining the grass football field. A vote against artificial grass is simultaneously an act of resistance against this development in Katendrecht.

Another instance of how the neighbourhood provides social settings to perform oneself is consuming behaviour. Jeanine classifies herself as someone who likes the raw aspects of the neighbourhood since her moving into Oude Noorden 30 years ago. At that time, she studied at the art academy and lived in squatted houses and never felt the motivation to leave the neighbourhood. However, when she became a mother of two, there was urge to leave the neighbourhood because of problems related to drugs in the streets. Four and half years ago, she returned to the Oude Noorden, to live in the Blommersdijkselaan. After these years of absence, she recovered her bonds with this specific neighbourhood. One example:

I try to buy as much as possible locally, because I think you should always promote local entrepreneurship. So, I don't visit Kruidvat anymore, but I go to the drugstore at the Benthuizerstraat. I buy my tooth paste there, and no, that's not buying 1, getting 2, but to me it's about that personal touch and it is, you know the shops here. And that's why it's fun in the weekends, I always make a trip. (...) That's the feeling of a village to me, so to say.

Reality is, new residents have different interests in the neighbourhood as the above described. For them, the living aspect is key in the motivation to move to a Dream street. Hence, most of them are very limited or not involved in place making. In the documentary 'Crème de la Crooswijk', produced and published by Dutch populist channel PowNed, the people of working-class district *Crooswijk* were interviewed about the physical and social transformation of their neighbourhood. The newcomers, mostly college-educated, are illustrated as people who displace the original *Crooswijker* and the amenities of the neighbourhood. An example is the neighbourhood centre, where the original *Crooswijker* people play bingo. This research and the documentary can't demonstrate any correlation between a changing composition and the closure of local amenities. However, from the findings in this study, we see how newcomers don't think and act like the other people. Harrie and Noah for example, when they sit outside they go to the Singel, the street perpendicular to the Berkelselaan. They prefer the presence of water there, something which

isn't in the Berkelselaan. When I asked them about the other young couples of the street, they had no idea where they recreate.

8.5 Reflecting on atmosphere building

We started this chapter by asking ourselves how an atmosphere is generated and how this serves the performance of the people in the street. In that light, we examined how people become aware of the atmosphere they are situated in.

In this final section, we critically discuss the role individuals have in building the atmosphere. We do this by accounting for the personal characteristics of the interviewees. We have seen how Dream streets are created wherein interventions are taken to subdue urban drawbacks, like the danger of passing cars in a small street. Most of the respondents agreed upon implemented alterations moving towards a more 'village-like' living space. A place, and the atmosphere as well, is made by everyday life. In the case of two English neighbourhoods, Benson and Jackson (2012) demonstrate even actions intended to prevent change is a way of place making through action. However, the everyday practices of the respondents in Dream streets resonate Massey's (2006) statements that one's relationship with a place is both messy and ambiguous. On the one hand, we see how interviewees appreciate the rough aspects of the city. For instance, Lisa likes the atmosphere of the other Katendrecht people, which makes Lisa a 'diversity-seeker'. Though, she is not partaking in their gatherings in the café for instance. Appreciation for the other people and their manifestations happens from a safe distance. Simultaneously, Dream street initiatives and the selective contact with 'people like us' are in essence not contributing to her wish to be seen as one of the 'Katendrechtters'.

This exemplifies how living in Katendrecht then can be a reaffirmation of place-based identity, as Benson and Jackson (2012) recognize in their case study. I wonder how a 'performative sense of belonging' relates to a Dream street initiative. In my observations and interviews, I learned how many streets have a vivid community life. That might have to do with the people I spoke and their similar narratives and viewpoints. Nevertheless, my experiences of Dream streets illustrate how a Dream street seems to be no more than an 'up-scale' street event and opportunity to maintain the values and atmosphere of the street. Given that, we can see a Dream street as continuation of existing structures.

In the Beatrijsstraat for instance, where people have years of experience in maintaining and planting greenery. They did this even before the Dream street initiative funded and stimulated the extension of public greenery. For some of the street, Dream street was an opportunity to be seized with both hands, surrounded with media attention and filled with proud feelings. However, the Dream street was a shift away from the day-to-day acts of Wessel, Miranda, Pedro, Piet and Veerle and Sivfi in street maintenance. To them and other respondents from Dream streets, the initiative was useful, united people in some sense, but did not drastically change their view to the street, attitudes nor togetherness. Even without a Dream street, they would have continued their everyday acts by which they make the street and keep it tidy. Since these acts exist without the attention of media (as was the case with Dream street initiatives), we consider these acts not to be in line with what Benson and Jackson recognized among middle-class residents giving symbolic meaning to their neighbourhood which is seen as a "self-investment through which they generate a particular habitus that means that they can live in Peckham. This habitus, as we demonstrate elsewhere, forms the basis of intra-class distinction" (2012, p. 14).

Moreover, many respondents acknowledged to feel uncomfortable about receiving a grant to make interventions in their street, something which might (although in smaller scale) have happened without a Dream street grant as well. They take the adjacent neighbourhood in consideration, where people often live in poor circumstances concerning safety and well-being. Specifically this uneven distribution of resources triggered their uncomfortable feeling. To me, this stresses that Benson and Jackson's statement about symbolic meaning giving to a neighbourhood and self-investment is not applicable to most of the interviewees. Their efforts to perform as a 'Katendrechtter', 'Middellander' or whatsoever to an outer audience is not retrieved among most interviewees. Likewise, for most respondents we don't notice their acts and attitudes of placemaking to construct an intra-class distinction, as Benson and Jackson propose (2012).

Chapter 9 Conclusion

In this chapter, we get back to the sub questions by formulating their answers step by step. This enables us to answer the main research question.

The first sub question of this study is: How do people look towards living with difference in their street? Researching this issue concentrates on people's perception of life styles that differs from the personal *modus vivendi*. In doing so, we are curious how people behave with respect to symbolic boundaries or a 'we' vs 'them' perspective adopted. People see differences and perceiving this might strengthen symbolic boundaries. Also in this study, we found this to happen. One particular case is the neighbourhood Katendrecht, where the erection of a new neighbourhood at the south of the park attracted people. We assume these people to deviate from the other people on Katendrecht. Katendrecht, originally a neighbourhood of workers, migrants and prostitutes, now became home to (upper) middle-class people. This movement, now around nine to ten years ago, still has its impact. A series of incidents and small criminalities of youngsters against the new residents of Katendrecht doesn't affected them enough to leave this place.

These examples are often mentioned by the interviewees, diversity is for some related with life styles that deviate too much from the personal life. When that's the case, respondents talk about undesired behaviour of the 'other'. Interestingly, respondents from Katendrecht have acknowledged they want to be seen as inherent to the neighbourhood. With that, they like to be seen as part of the Katendrecht which, till then, belonged to the 'old Katendrecht'. In other neighbourhoods with Dream streets, we see how residents do not appreciate how some new neighbours tend to change the street's outlook with their imaginations. Here, the spoken respondents believe a principle of 'first come, first serve' should be maintained when it comes to the street design. Other respondents mentioned they expect new neighbours to introduce themselves, something not always happens. Although the personal characteristics of these new neighbours are not specifically referred to, we assume these people to be from (upper) middle-class as the rising prices in housing excludes lower incomes. In other words, Dream streets are situated in gentrifying neighbourhoods.

Given the context of gentrifying neighbourhoods, we see how Dream streets are surrounded with diversity in streets and people. Even in some Dream streets themselves, there's a big diversity of people. According to Dutch tradition, there is a vast share of social housing in cities. In line with that, streets can be home to people with varying household incomes. For some new neighbours, the diversity of people is an interesting aspect. They like it as it better corresponds with real life according to them. On the other hand, we see how many respondents get along with equals. In that sense, we see how many respondents in Dream street comply with what Duyvendak and Boonstra (n.d.) argue as: "everyone is selective affective".

How for example living with people with other norms and values has impact on the liveability, is what the second sub question is about. Here, we examine their perceptions of liveability. One obvious objective for neighbours is to keep the street ordered, tidy and clean. For all respondents, this seems to be precondition for having a nice living. In line with that, violating this 'law' evokes frustrated reactions. Several of the interviewees are active individuals in maintaining the street, the outlook of the street is a big concern to them. Their efforts are highly appreciated by other street members, for some even leading to 'personal titles' as neighbourhood concierge or prizes.

A Dream street is an event in which the people of a street close off their street temporary for motorised vehicles and use the free space to meet, eat or organise activities. After that, we often see how the people of the street look for structural alterations in street design to create a more comfortable living environment. In that respect, a Dream street is an intervention in liveability. In Katendrecht, some of the dwellers and especially their children suffered of vans driving through their street. According to the initiator, life returned on the streets after this street adjustment.

Some features which are acquired thanks to Dream street interventions help to enhance the enjoyable living in the street. Several features which are highly appreciated by the residents is the presence of greenery, low traffic, silence and children playing on the streets. Latter is a much discussed feature, as some prefer to watch children playing instead of a view upon parked cars. But, too many screaming children is perceived as infringement on the appraised serenity. Also the parking places is a topic which caused many discussions. Whereas some want no more cars at all, others consent with the transformation of just a few parking spots. An experimental approach in which parking places are gradually transformed, as happened in Berkelselaan, seems to most favourable in order to convince sceptical neighbours.

Although the Dream street implementations help to make the street more comfortable, new residents don't seem to realise their street has been under construction (or is still planning to be transformed). Nor the fact their living place as a Dream street motivated them to move to that specific place. A private garden, the upcoming vibe of the neighbourhood and its location close to the city centre were valued highly in their motivation.

The third sub question is concerned with Dream street residents and how they socially manifest themselves. Moreover, we look how they reflect on that. We can understand contact with neighbours in different ways. One of the respondents believes that good neighbour connections are needed to approach each other in order to limit nuisance or undesired behaviour. From the conversations I had, I learned how people are positive about good neighbour relations. This is in accordance with the findings of Weltevrede et al. (2018), in which they studied several neighbourhoods in Rotterdam.

As a general finding, most of the respondents are satisfied with the contact they experience with neighbours now. And, if they would like to intensify or expand their contacts, they would have looked for that themselves, is what two residents of different Dream streets told me. We see how the people have a peaceful co-existence in their streets. This is partly due to two sorts of contact. People interact with each other on a convivial base, what entails neighbours behave like friends and their activities are in line with that. They visit each other on birthday parties or go together on holidays. Also, there is contact based on practicalities. We understand this as connections between neighbours in which they have something to offer to each other. Amicability plays an important role in this, as neighbours maintain social relationships and to make use of services of neighbours. However, amicability is implicit a kind attitude towards neighbours, without actually experiencing the emotions that belong to friends or family (Duyvendak & Wekker, 2015).

Most of the residents acknowledged they are fine with superficial contact. In fact, they see tight links with neighbours as an infringement on personal freedom, as they come with obligations.

Those who share their lives with their neighbours, live for many years in the Dream street and have a shared history in the street.

Interestingly, the new residents in Dream streets all agreed in their desire to participate in social activities in the street. This is an enrichment to our understanding of new residents, since narratives about them are rather negative and anti-social. But, I didn't heard what the strategies are of these people apart from these activities in meeting their neighbours.

The complexity of social life restricts us to make final statements what factors bring people closer. Though, the experiences from Dream streets can (partly) explain how people unite or separate from each other. A specific design which allows children to play on the streets could help to bring parents together. One main factor for people to make bonds, is equality. Respondents better get along with each other, if you know what to expect from him or her. Also, working together on the street design (a Dream street as prime example) enables people to enjoy the street more and progression in the process makes people closer. In this, we also recognise how 'positive accumulation' of togetherness is needed to implement a Dream street. All of the streets are characterized by close connections among neighbours even before the Dream street event.

Factors which negatively affect the connections are for example membership of other schools or sport clubs than those which are 'off-street' meeting places of neighbours every week. Same goes for deviating life styles, which even leads people not to encounter. When that's the case, performativity on the street is an useful event to get used to others. After all, recognising neighbours or small talk contributes to a higher public familiarity, which people make to feel better at home. Another dissociating factor is how the existing communities in the street present themselves towards new people. I heard how long-term residents asked themselves if the expressions they make are rejecting new comers. They speak of a hard core they are part of, but also claim to be open to anyone and welcoming new people.

The last sub question is about the atmosphere what people become aware of. Often, the residents of Dream street presented their living environment as a 'village'. However, the urban aspect is not to be underestimated. There are several aspects which makes a Dream street to feel urban as well as rural. Some of the respondents explained the atmosphere of their Dream street was "Groenlinksy" or a former 'D66 carrier bike neighbourhood'. These political parties, positioned in the centre and left part of the political spectrum, are very popular in the cities. Also, the Dream streets are situated in diverse neighbourhoods and therefore are very popular at the moment. In the past, these places were the homes of bohemian people like artists, is what I often heard. In general, Dream streets people have a life style that gets close to the yellow and red life style.

What feels rural in the Dream street, is how people interact with each other. People look after each other and take care for their and other's belongings. Also the child friendliness, children playing safely outside in a big city like Rotterdam, is linked to a 'village-like' life. By interventions, triggered by a Dream street, the people of the street actively work to maintain and to enhance these rural aspects in the street. However, several neighbours have a long history in placemaking, even without a Dream street initiative, and therefore have played a big role in creating these special features.

The above demonstrates how a classical duality of urban and rural is blurring, thanks to a Dream street. The life in the streets, conversely, is following the trends. We see the majority of respondents, who like the diversity nearby, keep the diversity at a safe distance. They prefer to gaze upon other life styles from the own atmosphere. Though, a living in a diverse neighbourhood is for some a reaction towards contemporaries living in VINEX neighbourhoods, where everything in life is predictable and not exciting.

Now we have discussed the four sub questions, we can answer the main research question. How do Dream street residents socially manifest themselves in the neighbourhood and how do they reflect on that? We have seen how people of Dream streets really appreciate public greenery and other 'village-like' aspects. Moreover, efforts for carless streets evokes lots of discussion. In these streets, a peaceful co-existence is typical. Simultaneously, a Dream street is a confirmation or continuation of several sociological topics. Still, people tend to grow closer with people with a similar base than the people which deviate too much. In some occasions, they seem to strengthen the symbolic boundaries. We found them especially active among long-term residents when they talk about new people in the street. The connections these people built in the past, are strong enough to initiate a Dream street and to implement the event. They seem to be precondition to achieve an event or a structural alteration in street design. One possible drawback in this, is that some of the new neighbours are not willing to participate. Where some driving forces run out of energy to organise something for the street, a new generation is not filling this gap.

Chapter 10 Discussion and recommendations

Doing extensive research in the field, processing the acquired data and presenting the main findings of the research are the cornerstones of decent research. This chapter reflects on the 'doing' of research. Also, a suggestion for further research is given. In the second paragraph of this chapter, a recommendation for practice is provided.

10.1 Discussion

This study, which attempted to portray how the street life in a Rotterdam-based Dream street is understood by its residents, is conducted from a phenomenological perspective. That entails the study's intent is to create an understanding of a phenomenon in its own terms. Data which tells how the respondents feel and experience has been obtained. A neutral stance in the research cycle and avoiding value-laden terms like 'gentrification' fit a 'bracketing out' strategy. I even chose in some occasions not to introduce myself as a trainee of the municipality of Rotterdam, as some people have a difficult relationship with or a bad image of the municipality. Then, I consciously presented myself as a researcher from Nijmegen.

These practices are all normal usage in phenomenological research and enhances the validity and truthfulness, according to Groenewald (2004). Though, a phenomenology as a qualitative study is not applicable to be generalised. Moreover, the approach of choosing six different streets on the one hand was useful to acquire insights with different contexts, i.e. they are situated in five different neighbourhoods. It is very interesting in that respect, since Rotterdam's neighbourhoods seem to be isolated places. On the other hand, this limited my number of interviews to three or four per street. I realise in a small street like Kettingstraat (four interviews performed), these interviews give better insights in the everyday practices than in the Beatrijsstraat (three interviews performed), a street housing more than hundred people.

During the research cycle, I sometimes questioned my actions to be right according to the phenomenological tradition. I had no experience with phenomenology till then and found many commonalities with narrative research. However, narrative research is limited to a few respondents. Also, I learned how research methods are not like black and white. There's overlap with narrative research for example, though the chosen approach yielded 19 interviews. The richness of data, and my personal objective to present the findings vividly, led me to work with ideal types. But, the ideal types and the findings are selective in what data is used and what not. It was hard to decide what data is chosen to build the argument, but in doing so I stuck to the distinguished themes.

One method how the research could be improved, is to mingle on the streets in evenings and not during holiday season as I did for most of the time. Picking the best moment enables the researcher to encounter most potential interview partners. This would have improved the variety of interviewees, as I met mostly white, middle-age and long-term residents owning a house. That's not all, during the evenings, when people returned from their work, the researcher can get the best image of how street life occurs.

Realising how the research could have been improved, we like to mention how this study opens up new directions for further research. The selection of respondents unintentionally overlooked people living in social housing, with a non-western background or of older age. Processes like place making or place maintenance can be 'selective and can be exclusionary of other residents who do not have the symbolic power to make their imaginaries of place dominant' (Blokland in Benson & Jackson, 2012, p. 8). To tackle this uneven distribution of 'say', the Dream street event with focus group I planned (but unfortunately had to cancel) could give interesting insights in how people with different backgrounds think about their street. A problem-solved approach could be applied in which different interests have to meet each other.

Another suggestion for further research would be to explore how a Dream street event and process inspires people of surrounding streets to do interventions in their living environment. Expressions like 'an oasis in the ghetto' justifies, in my opinion, to examine if there are any 'spread effects' occurring in the surrounding streets due to a Dream street.

10.2 Recommendation

During the conversations and in analysing the interviews, I understood the intensity of creating a Dream street. It is a long taking process which the initiators and the habitants have to endure. To implement a Dream street, the organisers have devoted lots of their time over years. The cooperation with the municipality of Rotterdam, a slow moving operation according to the initiators, took place in order to achieve a result. Some of the organisers are looking back and tell to be fed up with launching new initiatives or further cooperation with the municipality.

Meanwhile, the Dream streets are confronted with an inflow of residents with another life style and fewer interest in the soul of the street. Moreover, they are to a lesser extent willing to participate in the Dream street and its physical attributes, as found in the interviews. Also Weltevrede et al. (2018) and Putnam (2000) demonstrate how the willingness of devoting oneself for keeping the 'soul' alive diminishes.

Realising a Dream street is something that is achieved, but will live on by its people. During the long and hot summer of 2018, the symptoms of dwindled deployability became a painful truth as the greenery missed decent maintenance resulting in dehydration of the self-created street vegetation of Dream streets Katendrecht. Ultimately, some people of adjacent streets took initiative in hydrating the greenery.

This illustrates one possible but conceivable scenario to happen to other Dream streets, because of leaving driving forces of participation and initiatives, a refreshment of inhabitants which insufficiently meets the organisational demands of a Dream streets. Another example could be found in the Blommersdijkselaan, where active street members in 2017 decided not to organise the annual social drink. They hoped someone else in the street would take over this initiative, something which didn't happen. The importance of such events should not be underestimated, as it provides a convivial opportunity for meeting new people in the street. When new people of the street are not recognised – and don't put efforts themselves in meeting neighbours – estrangement could be a result. Put differently; the symbolic boundaries between long-term residents and new residents could be strengthened as a consequence of fewer public familiarity. Possibly, this leads to a stronger 'we' opposing 'them' attitude.

Streets will always be constituted by a variety of residents, thanks to the presence of social housing in many streets in Rotterdam, the presence of private property and tenants in streets. Also attitudes concerning a street soul differ among all of these people. It's something we cannot affect by policies, we are simply not equal to each other. The same goes for more people to a lesser extent devoted to put effort in an organised community life in the street. Reality is, the municipality of Rotterdam (as every municipality in the Netherlands), hands over responsibilities to the citizens. Because of the industrial-related activities concentrated around the harbours, Rotterdam has a relatively big share of lower educated people. Generally, more people of this group rely socially and economically on social facilities than college educated people. One active resident of the Blommersdijkselaan, born and raised in a village, hopes his neighbours will act more like they do in a village. That means, not directly approaching the municipality when there is a need. Ideally, neighbours could fill this gap. However, for higher class newcomers it's strongly depending on the neighbourhood to be active in the neighbourhood (Van Stokkom and Toenders, 2010).

The new role of governmental institutions requires its people to make efforts. In this sense, it's crucial people are mentally investing in the neighbourhood, to create consciousness of what problems and narratives exist in the neighbourhood. Taking part in this discourse of neighbourhood leads to a potential base for informal public service, as demonstrated by Van Stokkom and Toenders (2010). Following the (not published) research of Le Clerq in 2018, in which he interviewed 28 *Stadmakers* (city developers) engaged with communal initiatives in the neighbourhood, we suggest the municipality of Rotterdam to focus on consciousness of the soul of the street. That might sound somewhat abstract, but one striking example of the street culture is the adjustment of the street to make it more liveable or safe. In that light, the street furniture is telling a story. The investments made by the long term population of the street could be told as an introduction to newcomers in the street. Such a 'Story of the Street' could be embodied in a book, a film, an interactive tour or a quiz. The objective of those means is to explain what is done in the street before, how people are doing in the street and what people are planning to do. This, with the intention to mobilise people to join in keeping the street alive, or at least to make people aware of what is done before, could possibly result in a participating role of newcomers even outside the street. Also, to make clear how street life is in one place, the plates (see Figure 21) which appoints people to the desired *modus vivendi* in their street will become redundant and contributes to a liveable street.



Figure 21: Rules of conduct at Boomgaardsstraat in Rotterdam (Kuit, 2016).

We have seen how the features of many Dream streets bring a village-life to mind, but also meets the urban aspects and amenities Rotterdam has. This special combination demonstrates these places are lived by people consciously contemplating their direct environment. The observable and non-observable symbols of the street tell the narrative and the norms as they regulate life in a Dream street. Entering a Dream street therefore deviates from entering another street, the atmosphere is human-made making street plates no more needed (see Figure 21).

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Appendix

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- Invitation Dream street event p. 82
- Time table Dream street event p. 83
- Workshop Dream street event p. 87

Interview guide

Starten met eigen introductie

- Naam, wonend in ..., werkend in Rotterdam voor de gemeente, onderzoek voor afstuderen
- Waarom we met elkaar hier zitten vandaag → interesse in persoonlijke ervaringen
- Welke waarde dit gesprek heeft voor de interviewee
- Inhoud van het gesprek
- Opnemen toestemming vragen om zaken terug te luisteren of verduidelijking, geanonimiseerd

Introductionary questions:

1. Kunt u zich voorstellen?
Naam, leeftijd, opleiding, werkzaamheid, woonsituatie, gezinssamenstelling
2. Waar woont u?
3. Hoe lang woont u hier?
4. (waar heeft u hiervoor gewoond?) (Waarom bent u verhuisd naar hier?)

Key questions:

1. Hoe tevreden bent u met het wonen in deze straat? [houd het kort, toelichting komt]
2. Welke impressie maakt deze straat op u? (gebouwen, huizen, openbare ruimte, groen)
 - a. Vindt u het uiterlijk van de straat een visitekaartje voor de buurt?

Vraag 3-7 over ervaren en gewenste leefbaarheid in gespreksvorm met elkaar vermengen

3. Wat vindt u fijn aan de straat en wat minder fijn?
 - a. Hoe gaat u om met de positieve en minder positieve aspecten van het wonen hier?
4. Vindt u dit een gezellige straat?
 - a. Wat maakt de straat gezellig?
 - b. Welke rol spelen (verschillende) van uw buurtgenoten hierin?
 - c. Hoe stelt in uw ogen de ideale buur zich op?
5. Voelt u zich thuis in de straat? → wat zou dat gevoel kunnen verbeteren?
6. Sociale veiligheid: Hebt u het gevoel overal te kunnen gaan en staan en daar uzelf te zijn? (komt dat door gedrag van anderen en/of door minder fijne plekken?)
7. Sociaal: In hoeverre herkent u uw buurtgenoten? Zou u ze beter willen leren kennen of vaker willen tegenkomen/spreken/activiteiten ondernemen?

Vraag 8 over aanpassingen doen teneinde de straat te verbeteren

Hoe zou de buurt veranderd kunnen worden zodat u zich hier meer op uw gemak voelt?

- a. Heeft de Droomstraat er aan bijgedragen dat u zich prettiger voelt in uw directe omgeving?
- b. Welke ideeën heeft u samen met uw burens uitgewerkt/uitgevoerd; en zijn er nog nieuwe ideeën ontstaan?
- c. Waar zou de Droomstraat nog aangevuld kunnen worden, hoe bent u daar op gekomen?

Vraag 9, 10 over de buurt in perspectief

9. Ondanks de aanpassing gedaan in de buurt, zijn er nog andere buurten die u prettiger vindt om te wonen?

10. Welke gevoelens van trots zou u toekennen aan uw buurt? [interessant te vergelijken met vraag nummer 1 en opsommend van leefbaarheidsaspecten].

Vraag 11 opsommend en reflecterend

11. Ziet u zichzelf hier over 5 jaar nog wonen? Hoe verwacht u dat het leven zich dan afspeelt hier in sociaal en fysiek opzicht?

Uitnodiging



Datum
Woensdag 22 augustus

Tijd
Inloop 19.15
19.30 – 21.30

Voorlopige Locatie
Luchtpark 'De Hofbogen'
(voormalig station Hofplein)

Denk mee over uw eigen straat

Overheden werken anders, namelijk meer in samenwerking met bewoners. Bewoners van Rotterdam dragen steeds meer verantwoordelijkheid voor hun eigen leefomgeving. Bijvoorbeeld door zelf het groen te verzorgen in hun buurt of het uiterlijk en veiligheid van de straat te bepalen en aan te passen.

Mijn naam is Jurjen van Weerdenburg en ik ben stagiair bij de Gemeente Rotterdam (masterstudie Sociale Geografie - Radboud Universiteit Nijmegen). In mijn project richt ik mij op de verschillende ervaringen van bewoners in de buitenruimte van Droomstraten.

Afgelopen tijd heb ik vele bewoners gesproken over hoe zij aankijken tegen hun straat en daar ook aan bijdragen. Echter, niet iedereen heeft zijn verhaal kunnen delen. Jullie ervaringen in de Droomstraat kan dienen als inspiratie en voorbeeld voor meer Rotterdammers. Ook dragen jullie bevindingen en aanbevelingen bij aan de beantwoording van collegevragen over de woonbeleving van de buurt.

Iedereen is welkom mee te praten!

Programma

We zullen in twee rondes discussiëren over wat voor jou de straat prettig of juist minder fijn maakt. Het eerste deel richt zich op uw eigen Droomstraat, daarna zullen we aan de slag gaan met verschillende ruimtelijke thema's. Om 21.30 uur sluiten we het programma af met een hapje en een drankje.

Welkom

Graag uw komst aanmelden via j.vanweerdenburg@rotterdam.nl zodat we rekening kunnen houden met de organisatie en de catering. Wilt u hierbij uw naam, aantal personen en uw woonadres vermelden? Ook uw vragen of opmerkingen kunt u bij ons via dit mailadres alvast kwijt.

Graag tot de 22^e augustus!

Met vriendelijke groet,

Jurjen

Draaiboek Droomstratevenement

Woensdag 23 augustus 19.30-21.15

Inloop 19.15, borrel na 21.15 uur

Locatie: nnb

Facilitators:

Ton Legerstee

Jurjen van Weerdenburg

CONTACTLIJST

| NAAM | MOBIEL | TAAK | ORGANISATIE |
|------------------------------|------------|--|--------------------|
| (?) Jan van der Wolde | | | Gemeente Rotterdam |
| (?) John Verkerke, tuincoach | | | |
| Sfeerdame ???? | | | Gemeente Rotterdam |
| Cameraman Kattenogen | | | |
| SPREKERS | MOBIEL | TAAK | BENODIGD |
| Ton Legerstee | 0651281583 | Presenteren, time-keeping, notuleren, verwelkomen, gespreksleider | Laptop, beamer |
| Jurjen van Weerdenburg | 0642965652 | Presenteren, time-keeping, notuleren, verwelkomen, gespreksleider, eindverantwoordelijke | laptop, beamer |
| LEVERANCIERS | CONTACT | LEVERT | BENODIGD |
| | | Catering, koffie/thee, water, fris, bier en wijn | |
| | | Tent/overkapping | |
| | | Stoelen (40) en tafels (4) | |
| BEWONERS DROOMSTRATEN | CONTACT | AANSPREEKPUNT | BENODIGD |
| Kettingstraat | | | - |
| Freijapad + Donarpad | | | - |
| Berkelselaan | | | - |
| 3 Straatjes | | | - |
| Blommersdijkselaan | | | - |

DETAILPROGRAMMA 23 AUGUSTUS 2018

| Tijdstip: | Omschrijving acties: | Opmerking: | Wie? |
|---|---|---|---------------|
| 14.00- 16.00 | Aankomst en opbouw tent/overkapping Klaarzetten stoelen rondom 5 tafels Presentielijst klaarleggen Welkomstekens ophangen Pen, papier, stiften, afbeeldingen voor workshop klaarleggen Naamstickers vooraan leggen | | Jurjen |
| 16.15 | Check of alles aanwezig is | | Jurjen |
| 16.30- 18.00 | Pauze, avondeten, laatste dingen doorspreken | | Jurjen en Ton |
| 18.30- 18.45 | Bezorging koffie, thee, water, kopjes, glazen Presenteren koffie, thee, water op een tafel | | Jurjen |
| v.a. 19.00 | Klaarstaan als verwelcoming bij entree tent | | Jurjen en Ton |
| 19.15 | Inloop en gasten wijzen naar de juiste tafel | Mensen wijzen op de presentielijst, persoonlijk welkom heten. Mensen vragen hun naam op de stickers te schrijven en deze op te plakken. Bewonerstafels ingedeeld per straat. Klaar hebben van indeling op thema voor de 2^{de} ronde | Jurjen en Ton |
| 19.30 | Start programma – Welkomstpraatje, voorstellen en programma voor de avond uitleggen. Vragen of men voor zichzelf een aanpassing bedenkt en opschrijft hoe de straat voor hem/haar comfortabeler wordt. Dit laten dichtvouwen → komen we op het einde op terug | | Ton |
| 19.35- 19.45 | Uitleg over het doel van de avond, spelregels uitleggen, vragen om toestemming opname, instructies geven over de eerste ronde 'Droom lekker verder' | Geef aan hoe lang de eerste ronde duurt | Jurjen |
| 19.45- 19.50 | Opstartfase eerste ronde | Rondlopen en onduidelijkheden wegnemen door vragen te beantwoorden | Jurjen en Ton |

| | | | |
|-------------|--|---|---|
| 19.50-20.10 | Eerste ronde 'Droom lekker verder' | Proberen zoveel mogelijk op te vangen van de tafeldiscussies. Bij vragen/onduidelijkheden tegenvragen stellen zodat men aan het denken raakt en mogelijk meer discussie oproept. | Jurjen, Ton, cameraman en 'extra paar ogen' |
| 20.10-20.25 | Afronden van eerste ronde door per groep te vragen wat er bij hen naar voren is gekomen. De rest luistert toe, elke tafel komt aan bod. | Zelf ook punten noemen wanneer de bewoners daar zelf niet mee komen, daar vervolgens reactie op vragen van de bewoners. Vragen stellen van de andere tafels mag altijd! | Jurjen, Ton |
| 20.25-20.40 | Geen pauze!!!! Je krijgt ze bijna niet terug aan tafel [Wel of niet? ivm borrel na afloop] Pauzeren – vertellen wanneer we weer starten | Snel de drankjes klaarzetten, bewust niet tijdens de eerste ronde/terugkoppeling om mensen niet af te leiden | Jurjen, Ton |
| 20.25-20.30 | Uitloop terugkoppeling eerste ronde, benoemen grotere thema's | | |
| 20.30-20.35 | Aan de hand van de grotere thema's worden er nieuwe groepen gemaakt, mix hierbij tussen bewoners vanuit verschillende straten. Bewoners dienen zich zelf ergens aan te sluiten, eigen keuzes. | Indeling tafels op thema klaar maken | Jurjen en Ton |
| 20.35-20.40 | Uitleg tweede ronde, 'Mixer en Fixen'. | Nadruk op gebruik van afbeeldingen, a1 papier, pen, potlood, ontwerpen | Jurjen en Ton |
| 20.40-21.10 | Tweede ronde, 'Mixer en fixen', discussies oproepen over aanpak straatproblematiek en oplossingen aandragen. Vertellen hoe lang voor dit onderdeel staat. | Nadruk op gebruik van afbeeldingen, a1 papier, pen, potlood, ontwerpen. Bij onduidelijkheden tegenvragen stellen om discussies op te roepen. Proberen zoveel mogelijk op te vangen. | Jurjen, Ton, cameraman, 'extra paar ogen'. |
| 21.10-21.20 | Samenvatten tweede ronde 'mixer en fixen', welke problemen zijn er en hoe zijn deze aangepakt. Hoe hebben jullie dit probleem 'aangepakt'? Zijn jullie tot een oplossing gekomen? Vraag dit de groepjes te vertellen aan de rest van de mensen. | Zelf punten te noemen die zijn opgevangen maar niet zijn genoemd naar de rest van de groep. | Jurjen, Ton |
| 21.20-21.30 | Uitloop van de tweede ronde, mensen vragen hun dichtgevouwen papier met de gewenste aanpassing voor hun straat te openen. Na te denken, en reacties te vragen of ze dit nog steeds als dé oplossing vinden. Vragen om overige vragen/opmerkingen. Benoemen hoe de bewoners met deze info vervolgens verder zouden kunnen → de straat zelf mooier/beter te maken. | Mensen die weinig aan het woord zijn geweest juist nu te laten spreken. | Jurjen en Ton |

| | | | |
|--------------------|---|---|--------|
| 21.30- | Uitloop en afrondende, bedAnnande woorden. Mensen doorverwijzen naar drankjes en hapjes die klaarstaan. | | Jurjen |
| 21.30-21.40 | Verzamelen gemaakte tekeningen, krabbels, schetsen, aantekeningen etc. | | Jurjen |
| 21.30-22.00 | Borrel, napraten | Blijf scherp op de verhalen, probeer deze na afloop te documenteren. Is data! | Allen |
| 22.00-22.15 | Opruimen glazen, drankjes | | Jurjen |
| 22.30 | Ophaaldienst catering, tafels en stoelen | | |
| 8.30 | Ophaaldienst tent | | Jurjen |

MATERIALELIJST

| Materialen | Opmerkingen |
|---|-------------|
| Draaiboek (4 keer) | |
| A4-Papier, pen, A0 papier, stiften | |
| Plakkertjes om namen op te schrijven | |
| Presentielijst | |
| Flip-over bord Tafels en stoelen tent | |

De Workshop

START: Op laten schrijven wanneer hij/zij de burgemeester van de straat is en kan bepalen wat de eerste ingreep zal worden om de straat voor hem/haar comfortabeler/beter te maken. Dit dichtvouwen, en daarna? Dat komt op het einde weer terug, in het kader van dromen!

Tafelindeling voor 1^e deel per straat: Freijapad & Donarpad, 3 Straatjes, Blommersdijkselaan, Kettingstraat, Berkelselaan.

Deel 1 Droom lekker verder.

Groepsindeling: bewoners van één van de Droomstraten allen bij elkaar brengen.

Deel grote vellen papier en drie foto's afgedrukt op A4 van de straat uit aan de groepjes. Op de vellen papier kunnen ze ontwerpen maken van hun straat. De afbeeldingen tonen enkele plekken waar verscheidene ideeën over inrichting kunnen bestaan. Ze krijgen verschillende opdrachten om over te discussiëren:

1. Vraag ze wat voor hen persoonlijk de noodzaak was om een Droomstraat te organiseren
2. Hoe de Droomstraat heeft geleid tot een aanpassing/verbetering van deze pijnpunten
3. Wat er op dit moment anders kan om de straat meer naar hun zin te maken.

Dit levert (hopelijk) verschillende antwoorden op, discussie wordt aangemoedigd.

Plenair:

Vervolgens verteld één persoon, gebruikmakend van tekeningen/afbeeldingen kort aan de rest van de groepen wat er bij hen uit is gekomen, of vat samen wat er is besproken tijdens dit gesprek.

Deel 2 Mixen en Fixen

Uit de 'straatpresentaties' moet een beeld naar voren komen van verschillende thema's die aandacht behoeven van de bewoners. Thema's als fietsen, parkeren, groen, sociaal, meubilair... Dit soort thema's komen aan het licht doordat bewoners hiernaar refereren met bijvoorbeeld ergernis aan verloedering, bewondering voor schoonheid, nood tot aanpassing. **Heel goed. Ik zou de thema's wel van te voren bepalen en voor jezelf als leidraad gebruiken. Wordt er eentje niet genoemd dan kan jij of ik een suggestie doen.**

Dit leidt ertoe dat er nieuwe groepen en tafelindeling worden gemaakt naar thema (**top !**). Gevraagd wordt wat men de grootste uitdaging lijkt, waarmee ze zichzelf indelen bij een *interest group*. Deze club richt zich op dat specifieke probleem in één straat. Het kan dus voorkomen dat een bewoner uit de Kettingstraat meedenkt over het fietsprobleem in de Beatrijsstraat. Of dat een bewoner van het Freijapad zich roert in de discussie van het pleintje aan de Blommersdijkselaan. Er wordt

gediscussieerd over aanpassingen/verbeteringen aangaande hun thema, interest. Hoe zou de projectgroep 'meubilair' de leefbaarheid vergroten in de Berkelselaan, om een voorbeeld te noemen. Het gaat er hierbij **niet** om een compromis te vormen, belangrijk is dat verschillende mensen hun eigen kijk/mening op een bepaald probleem loslaten. De presentatie gedaan door de bewoners van elke Droomstraat fungeert als achtergrondkennis benodigd om deze kwestie aan te gaan.

Ook dit plenair terugkoppelen. Wat heeft deze exercitie opgeleverd.

Reflecterend

Open de enveloppen/dichtgevouwen wensen, en vraag of bewoners of ze dit nog steeds als belangrijk achten in hun ideale straat. Wellicht heeft de sessie verandering gebracht in hun ideeën, of juist bevestigd van de noodzaak/behoefte aan dat ene. (Heel leuk idee)