



# RANDWIJKSE WAARDEN IN HETEREN

## From citizen initiative to local paradise



grondstof voor ontwikkeling

# Dekker

**UEPG SUSTAINABLE DEVELOPMENT AWARDS 2019**

LOCAL COMMUNITY PARTNERSHIP



## INTRODUCTION



*"Together we stand! Cooperation between entrepreneurs, local community and municipality leading to development of economical, ecological and social values at the Randwijkse Waarden".*

**Bas Colen –**  
**Policy Officer Green and Landscape - Municipality Overbetuwe**

The Dekker Groep is tenaciously competing for the Sustainable Development Award in the category "Local Community Partnership" with the project "Randwijkse Waarden" in Heteren. Very special about this collaboration with the community is the fact that the initiative did not originate from Dekker but that the idea arose within the community itself. They found the proper partner in Dekker to jointly ensure a genuine enrichment for human beings and nature in the back garden of the village: the Randwijkse Waarden.

We will show how this collaboration came about and in which way the project will be experienced by Dekker, the residents and all partners involved, well beyond the time of Dekker's delivery. The focus of the 100-year-old family company fully lies on the execution of projects in which we are able to realise our values. These values – attention, simplicity, openness and human dimension – are the compass with which all employees of Dekker navigate. The purpose of our projects is to:

- » Enhance the living environment in close involvement with the (local) community
- » Contribute to the creation of nature capital and increased natural values such as, for example, biodiversity and flood risk management
- » Promote nature experience and recreation for the well-being

Dekker is not making things easy for themselves, the bar is raised really high: In order to not only leave the world behind more beautiful with our projects, the responsibility is broadened by means of strict, self-imposed requirements in terms of CO<sub>2</sub>, climate and environment. All this has resulted in Heteren in a successful collaboration between community and company. Together we achieve a more beautiful world with room for all desires and humans, flora and fauna.

Will you join us exploring?

## HISTORY

**140 BC** The Romans were the first to assess the potential of the location of today's Heteren as to its value and settled near the river Rhine.

**1834** The church along the dike collapses, the strong church tower with its 140 cm thick walls remains standing and the characterising landmark of Heteren is born. The tower is popularly and affectionally called "de Peperbus" (the peppermill).

**1960** A bridge is constructed near Heteren to connect the highway A50. In order to obtain raw materials for the bridge, sand is extracted locally which was usual back then. The residents give the pit arising as a result the nickname "Plas van Wijck"

**2011** After years of sketching, researching, discussing, developing and making plans together, the masterplan for the Randwijkse Waarden is introduced. All stakeholders, residents and parties involved enthusiastically sign the plan to commence the realisation phase!

**2019** Heteren has grown into a tight community with more than 5000 residents in the course of time. Dekker works hard to realise all facilities incorporated in the plan. Long before the sand extraction is completed, the residents of Heteren will be able to fully enjoy the reborn surroundings.

**1232** We see the first mention of "insula de Heteren" in 1232. "Insula" probably refers to "island" as construction took place on higher grounds in the river area.

**1944** The Germans blew up the Drielsedijk during operation "Fall Storch" which also resulted in the flooding of Heteren. The village then became the stage for relentless fighting between the Germans and the allied forces.

**2005** The passionate village council starts developing the ambition of making "the front garden of Heteren" more attractive for humans and nature. The Dekker Groep appears to be a committed partner to elaborate this plan

**2023** The Randwijkse Waarden are completed, the puddle is peaceful, the trees have meanwhile rooted properly and several animals have found their home. The village and its residents now have the front garden they dreamt about for so long, nature is a place for recreation and enjoyment.

2005



# Dreaming about a more beautiful “front garden” for the village

2005

The idea for the project was conceived in the heads of residents who used to secretly swim in the bare sand extraction well the “Plas van Wijck” as a child. This was the inheritance of the bridge near the village and was situated right in the middle of the monotonous agricultural landscape. In the early days of the new millennium, the swimmers, adults now, start dreaming about a more beautiful “front garden” for the village. They want the puddle and its surroundings to get a more beautiful appearance and more natural destination and they have the desire for it to become a place where the residents of Heteren are able to spend some time and relax. Well-organised in the village council, the residents start an investigation in 2005 and quickly discover they will be needing a partner in order to realise any changes. This partner is found in Dekker. Sand extraction will become the financial engine to convert the dream into reality. Dekker

guarantees a solid realisation and the entire project will not cost the community one euro. Heteren enters into a new, thriving phase in the history of the village!

Together with the competent authorities and the village council, the stakeholders are searched for and approached. A very extensive and diversified focus group is established and, thanks to the input of all of these parties and persons involved, together we came to the following social objectives to give shape to the project:

- » Enhancing the topographical quality;
- » Increasing the nature values;
- » Improving the recreational possibilities;
- » Expanding the riverbed for peak discharges;
- » Realising a high-quality finish of the Plas van Wijck;
- » Safeguarding the interests of companies and residents.

The phase of making an inventory of the dreams and desires now starts and also the phase of combining these, numerous investigations, reality checks and compromises. The bond between Dekker and the village council is tight and a fantastic plan is eventually finalised in 2011 that can be signed enthusiastically by the village council, the municipality and Dekker.

Stakeholders:

- » Village council in Heteren
- » Equestrian centre Fruithof, residents and landowners
- » The Historical Circle
- » Foundation Overbetuwe Green Natural
- » The Gelderland Federation for Environment
- » The Bird Working Group Wageningen
- » Municipality Overbetuwe
- » Wienerberger
- » Brickyard Randwijk
- » Agricultural organisation LTO
- » Dekker Groep



*“New nature in the Randwijkse Waarden with sandy shores for long-legged waders and steep walls for sand-martins and kingfishers; I am looking forward to watching redshanks, golden plovers, avocets and all those other beautiful birds from the viewing point.”*

**Rinus van der Molen – wetland guard bird protection**

## THE AREA


















Before



After

Metres of hiking path: 1900  
 Metres of natural paths: 2000  
 Metres of equestrian trail: 2400  
 Metres of beach: 250 + island  
 Viewing points: 2  
 Accessible fishing spots: 2  
 Slope for small boats: 1  
 Boat ramp: 1  
 Passing port: 10 boats  
 Dog field: 7500m<sup>2</sup>  
 Kite field: 18.500 m<sup>2</sup>  
 Natural ice-skating rink  
 Surf and canoe shore: 200 metres



- |  |   |  |  |   |
|--|---|--|--|---|
|  Stilt birds shore      |  Viewing points          |  Beach                    |  Dog park             |  Boat ramp             |
|  Meadow birds grassland |  Accessible fishing dock |  Natural ice-skating rink |  Surf and canoe shore |  Slope for small boats |
|  Hiking path            |  Swimming shore          |  Kite field               |  Equestrian trail     |  Daytime boat dock     |

# We are able to start building a more beautiful environment



*"A great project and good cooperation with the firm Dekker, making the project also accessibly for people with a disability."*  
**Lia van der Kaa – Foundation for Disabled People Overbetuwe**

All the research and consultations have resulted in a plan in which all interests and desires can be served:

### Recreation:

**Hiking:** The entire area is provided with semi-paved paths with a natural finish. In addition, natural footpaths will be installed for those who rather feel the grass below their feet! The choice is made for extensive recreation, the area has to become the back garden of Heteren, leaving enough space and tranquillity for nature.

**Dogs:** A separate, fenced field will be constructed where dog owners are allowed to let their dogs run freely.

**Swimming:** Facilities are of course established for swimming and playing. A shallow part of water will be provided for children to enter the water safely and this part will even contain an island for them to wade to. The swimming part has a mild inclination and will be larded with an ample beach for bathers of all ages to enjoy the sunshine.

**Equestrian trail:** The active equestrian centre is located directly behind the dike on the eastern side of the project. An equestrian trail is designed in consultation that passes through the entire project and will partially run along the

river and along the dike. The equestrian centre will manage the access of the trail.

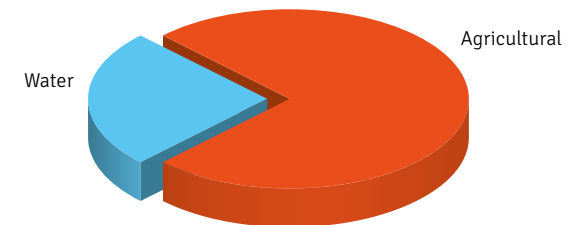
**Fishing:** Two fishing piers will be realised: one along the river and one in a southern corner of the puddle. Both will also be fully accessible to persons with a disability. In the future, the management will be the co-responsibility of the local fishing club.

**Ice-skating/kiting:** The southern part along the dike has an ample field, extremely suitable for kiting. A part of the field can be flooded with water by means of a dam closure in the summer quay enabling the occurrence of a natural ice-skating rink in the winter.

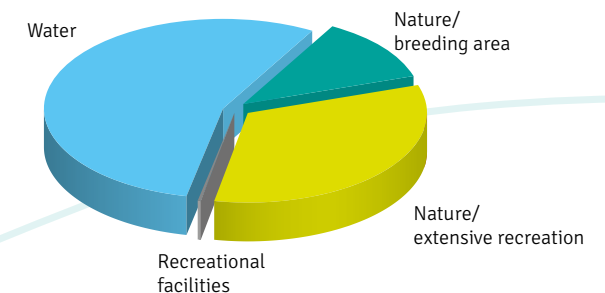
**Boating:** A slope for small boats will be constructed in the middle of the puddle, allowing the children to enter the shallow water safely with their boats and rafts. The eastern corner has a boat ramp leading to the river Rhine. This will be replaced by a boat ramp leading to the cribs and is moreover provided with a pier in order to make the launch in the water safer and more comfortable. A passing port with pier will also be constructed in the new puddle that can be used by tourists in boats to berth and pay a visit to the Randwijkse Waarden and Heteren.

**Canoe shore:** A piece of coast with grass will be constructed east of the beach. A green, shallow shore will be realised here, ideal for water sports such as surfing, canoeing and stand-up-paddling.

Historical use of land – Randwijkse Waarden



Use of land after the realisation – Randwijkse Waarden





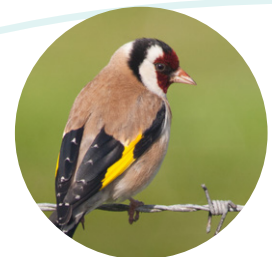
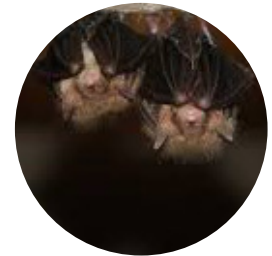
## NATURE

# FUTURE NATURE 2030

In consultation with Foundation Overbetuwe Green Natural, the Gelderland Federation for Environment and the Bird Working Group Wageningen, we created a habitat, including high water flight point, in which not only the already existing flora and fauna is able to flourish. We also facilitate the return of several species, such as: the crucian carp, the small loach, the buzzard, the snipe, the yellow wagtail, the fox and the beaver.

The scope does not end at the borders of the project area. The construction of the Randwijkse Waarden also ensures the realisation of the very first part of the ecological connecting zone towards to newly to be developed nature area surrounding Lexkesveer.

A celebration for nature and a feast for the eyes of the visitors.





## SOCIALLY INVOLVED

# SOCIAL IMPACT 2030

Before, during and after the realisation of the Randwijkse Waarden, Dekker continues to be closely involved in the community. The lines are short and friendly. The residents of Heteren and the people of Dekker know where to find one another; not just for the fun stuff, but we also support each other in times of need. For example, Dekker immediately showed up with the manpower and equipment needed when a sewage outlet was mistakenly closed in 2017 during work activities, resulting in flooding. Dekker was able to aspirate the leaked water immediately, so the contractor could quickly fix his mistake.



*"The spontaneous input of the Dekker Groep has given the flashback an extra dimension which has made The Island 2018 a unique experience."*

**Bauke Huisman -  
Coordinator The Island**





## SOCIALLY INVOLVED

Our involvement did not end with the planning, also in daily life and in the future we often and gladly collaborate with the village of Heteren and its residents.



### Education

Our Head of Production, Frank Visser, is a welcome guest at the primary school in Heteren where he regularly explains the work we do and the improvement it has on nature and the surroundings.



### Visits

For a year, our sand classification installation was open every Wednesday for hundreds of visitors from the village. Everyone was welcome for a tour of the impressive “sand factory”.



### Disabled People

Dekker has close ties with the Foundation for Disabled People Overbetuwe, ensuring everyone is able to enjoy the project.



### Ferry

Dekker was the co-initiator of reactivating the operation of the old pedestrian/cyclist ferry situated in the outskirts of the area.



### WW II

Harsh battles took place in Heteren and especially in the project area during the Second World War. The great

initiative “The Island” is an event supported by Dekker where military memory camps are constructed in our project area. In addition to the visitors from the village, it includes a special project for students to raise awareness for the effects of the war.



### HeteRun

To help realise a healthy village, Dekker annually sponsors the local HeteRun during which hundred of residents are obviously running through the stunning floodplains.



### Open Day

A large Open Day was organised in 2017 together with many organisations in the village. Everyone attending was presented with a detailed explanation about the future of the area and the working method, and there were tours, boat trips, nature walks and large machinery to admire and to climb onto.



### Future

Once the project is completed, Dekker will not close the doors behind them. Together with the Geldersch Landschap

en Kasteelen (Gelderland Landscape and Castles - GLK), they will be responsible for the management in the future in which local farmers will be involved and deployed.



### Ambacht Spoort

We also look further ahead in the community as we are involved in the initiative “Ambacht Spoort”. The aim is to realise a housing/working facility in Heteren for 12 people with a disability who will find a warm home and honest artisanal daytime activities in the welcoming village.



### Waste

The necessary facilities have been implemented for the enthusiastic team of “Heel Heteren Happy” so they and their volunteers have the proper means to keep the floodplains free from waste throughout the year.



### Ambitions

Dekker supports the village in its ambitions. Both in its participation in the village renewal award 2015 and the Gelderland award for Spatial Quality 2018, we contributed in spirit, material and support.



*“The Dekker Groep, socially involved, innovative, transparent, focused on collaboration, sponsor of the HeteRun, a running and hiking event in Heteren.”*  
**Martin Knip - Organiser HeteRun**



## FINALLY

**W**e are proud of the Randwijkse Waarden! Together with the village, we create a piece of the Netherlands the way it should be: thoughtful, honest, beautiful and pure, with space for everyone, human beings, animals and green. As Dekker, being a family company, takes the responsibility for the world we leave behind very seriously, we continue the spirit of the Randwijkse Waarden.

We are leaders in greening: Our aim – which seemed almost impossible – to realise 80% CO<sub>2</sub> reduction prior to 2020 is extremely close. Where possible we already work with green shore power instead of diesel generators, and a considerable part of our vehicle fleet will consist of hydrogen cars in the foreseeable future (in addition to the already present electrical fleet).

We have worked really hard to obtain the Concrete Sustainability Council certificates. We have also signed the Business Agreement for Nature Capital with full conviction. We feel the ambition and the enthusiasm throughout the company to be even more sustainable and to contribute to a more beautiful world for ourselves, but especially for our children

All the above is embodied in the project the Randwijkse Waarden, a project for which we actually have to thank the community, the committed residents of Heteren. Together with them, we are moving towards an extremely successful project and a more beautiful world!



**Dekker Groep**

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