

# **Final National report from The Netherlands**

## **Crime Prevention Carousel**

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# 1 Introduction - Description of the site

## 1.1 The Bijlmermeer

Perhaps internationally the most famous neighbourhood of The Netherlands. Famous for its spatial concept of 'functional town'. Famous, or better notorious, for its safety problems. And famous for the comprehensive renewal now carried out.

The total area covers 2,210 hectares and with that it's the largest city district of Amsterdam.



Source: Paul van Soomeren, Dream, nightmare and awakening, September 1995.



The original Bijlmermeer

For this project for the Crime Prevention Carousel we selected two small parts of it, in which we can study the physical renewal from start to the end: some buildings were renovated 10 years ago, in some the work is in progress and some still wait for the final plan.





The two parts of the site in the north area D and F, south area H

But physical renewal is just one part of the entire story. The example of the Bijlmermeer shows, that a comprehensive approach, in which physical renewal is combined with socio-economic renewal and management renewal, can be the only way to save a neighbourhood from downfall.

## 1.2 Description of the research area

The research area consists of the characteristic high-rise in the D, F and H neighbourhood.



Honeycomb shaped apartment blocks in a green setting: D-area



D-area: the concierge room for the time being (left) and work in progress (right)



F-area - Florijn: the new entrance (left) and (on the other side of the building) high rise combined with low rise



H-area: after renewal

The research area contains the following blocks of apartments:

- Hakfort
- Huigenbos
- Hogevecht
- Haag en Veld
- Hofgeest
- Hoogoord
- Florijn (old high rise with new low rise)
- Daalwijk
- Dennenrode
- Develstein

The public space surrounding these buildings belongs to the research area as well.

The area is mostly residential area, but here and there you find offices (commercial and non-commercial) and facilities such as a day care centre.

### **1.3 Social fysical context of The Bijlmermeer**

In December 1966 the foundation stone was laid for the Bijlmermeer. It was meant to be the 'functional town' for the future. Living, working, traffic and recreation were separated. This was according to the concept of Le Corbusier, developed during the Congrès Internationaux d'Architecture Moderne (CIAM) in 1928. In this theory, which was widely spread under modernist planners, the solution of the housing problem for large industrial cities had to be sought in the fields of space, light and green. After the second world war the theory of the modernists was widely set in to make a fresh start in the fifties and sixties of the last century.

This new part of the city of Amsterdam consisted mostly of high-rise blocks in honeycomb pattern. In between the block were large green spaces with bicycle and pedestrian routes. A separate structure was made for the car routes: roads above ground level, leading to multi-storey car parks made finally a very functional new town where it would be pleasant to live. The blocks would have had the appearance of a vertical village.

But sadly, the first signs of deterioration were apparent in the 1970s. Shortly after people moved in the first flats

When the Bijlmermeer wasn't even finished yet, in Holland urbanisation started. This meant that low-rise houses were built in smaller towns around the big cities. The Bijlmermeer consisted mainly of high-rise dwellings, which were meant for middle-class families. They however chose to move to the low-rise areas and the demand for the higher blocks decreased rapidly. Most new residents in the Bijlmermeer were people living alone, families without children and single-parent families. Many came from the former Dutch colonies Surinam and the Antilles: in 1975 Surinam became independent and not everybody was trustfully with the new government of Desi Bouterse. At the same time the unemployment was high and there were many drugs problems and other social problems related to poverty. The levels of social and physical maintenance were too low for this high-rise area with a pretty problematic population. The number of vacant dwellings increased (15% in 1983 and 25% in 1985) and the residents turnover was very high (25%).



Unsafety, pollution and financial problems for the housing associations were the result. The Bijlmermeer<sup>1</sup> ended up in a negative spiral and got a very bad reputation.

#### *What went wrong?*

The original plan for the Bijlmermeer has been changed during the planning process, due to financial difficulties. This turned out to be the starting point for social problems, starting from physical conditions.

For instance:

- The number of dwellings on each elevator was increased from about 50 to about 100 (which turned into anonymous environments).
- The inner streets didn't come on ground level, but on the first floor. Instead on ground level storerooms were made, which caused an anonymous and closed facade.
- The inner streets didn't gain the intended quality because dwellings were made on the sunny side (to gain more rent), which left the inner streets in the shade.
- The shopping centres and other functions came many years later than the first residents and the number and quality level of the shops decreased because of less financial basis. The spaces under the levelled roads and parking decks degenerated without the functions.
- It wasn't possible to give every building its own maintenance worker.

### **1.4 Method of research in The Netherlands**

When the Karuzela project was still in a quotation phase, DSP-groep made clear to the other participants that their role would be optimal when linking the social, criminal, spatial and physical aspects from all the sites and all the ideas for the sites. Because of the status of DSP-groep (a private commercial office instead of university or institution like the other partners in the AGIS-project) the contribution had to be filled in, from the beginning on, in a different way.

So DSP-groep:

- made the format for the site visit reports;
  - visited the five sites and wrote from the point of CPTED reports on all sites;
  - prepared a visit to the Netherlands for the other partners;
  - interviewed several people (see below) for the Dutch project and searched the literature;
  - prepared two workshops, in which the Karuzela partners exchanged experiences with all kinds of measures (Budapest, Berlin). Starting with a list of measures that were taken in all countries, every partner answered two questions:
    - Was that measure taken in your country?
    - If not: would that measure be a good or a bad idea for your country?
- The results of these workshops are presented in the main report.

So DSP-groep focused on the exchange of knowledge and experiences between the partners.

Foot-note 1 Not all flats were as bad: for instance the east part of Haag en Veld stayed pretty good, due to better maintenance by the owner.

For the Dutch part of the project we chose a method that took less time. The data on the research area in Amsterdam were collected in several site visits (in 2005 and 2006) and by analysing many documents. Much has been written on the Bijlmermeer. To gain specific information during the summer of 2006 we interviewed a varied group of people: experts out of their profession and experts out of experience as a resident. Because of the special position DSP-groep did not perform a quantitative analysis on a resident-survey.

#### *Interviewed persons*

##### Group 1

- Mr. Woudenberg, city district Amsterdam Zuidoost, project manager;
- Mr. Verbiest, project manager housing Association Delte Forte;
- Mr. de Gelder, project manager housing association Delte Forte
- Ms. van Duin, director of social management and residents affairs Housing Association Rochdale;

##### Group 2

- Mr. Sluiskes, city district Amsterdam Zuidoost, director of neighbourhood coordination;
- Ms. Roosendaal, city district Amsterdam Zuidoost, neighbourhood coordinator;
- Ms. Wassenaar, city district Amsterdam Zuidoost, coordinator integral neighbourhood management D,F,H area;
- Ms. Blommestijn, policeman of the beat (D and F area);

##### Group 3

- Mr. Jonker, resident of Florijn;
- Ms. Jonker, resident of Florijn;
- Mr. Viel, resident of new low-rise in F-area, former resident of Florijn and torn down flat Fleerde;
- Mr. Visser, resident of Haag en Veld.

In the next chapters, the outcome of the interviews, the desk research and the site visits is summarised.

## 2 Answering the questionnaire

### Introduction

All countries used the same questionnaire for the interviews. These questions we used as a guideline to order the information on the research area.

### 2.1 Aims

In 1992 the financial problems of New Amsterdam, the housing corporation, were enormous and that was the direct reason to start the big-scale renewal.

The main aims of the renewal were (and still are):

- to make the Housing Association (Patrimonium/Nieuw Amsterdam) financially healthy;
- to improve the residential and living environment in Bijlmermeer. Prevention of crime definitely was an important part of that.

The path to reach those aims consists of:

- to improve the position of the Bijlmermeer on the housing market, by offering differentiated dwellings and areas;
- to keep socio-economic strong residents within the area;
- to strengthen the socio-economic position of the residents;
- to make the Bijlmermeer attractive for the 'average' Amsterdam residents;
- to strengthen the social structure, by decreasing the number of removals and to create a climate in which residents feel responsible for each other and their environment;
- to guarantee intensive maintenance.

### 2.2 Structure and Process

#### *Organisations*

The problematic situation and the need for renewal caused important organisational changes.

The entire renewal is carried out under the responsibility of the city of Amsterdam, Southeast City District and the housing association. In 1984 the housing associations owning the blocks of flats merged into the New Amsterdam housing association. Nowadays it is called Rochdale.

In 1992 the 'Bijlmermeer Renewal' project bureau was installed by the three parties. This organisation is responsible for the physical renewal. It also takes care of the connection with socio-economic renewal and lays the foundations for the management renewal.

Police and city district already worked together before the renewal. However the renewal did make an important change in the co-operation between police, city district and Rochdale. Rochdale's primary concern was still the blocks of flats, but since the renewal they think about the public space as well. This co-operation is special, compared to elsewhere in the city. The three parties (city district, police and housing association) formed for instance neighbourhood-safety-bases.

Other important organisations are the state and the Central Fund for Housing, because of their big financial contribution tot the project.

#### *Changing process*

Important to note, relating the planning of the renewal is, that the plan for the renewal changed several times during the process.

In the 1980s the first renewal plan was made for the Bijlmermeer area. It contained mostly physical measures<sup>2</sup> and was successful, but new problems arose, relating to drugs, unemployment, rise of the number of serious crimes and the Dutch government cutting back on expenses.

The plan of 1992 was stronger and more comprehensive. The physical renewal was more drastic, containing much demolition and the socio-economic renewal and the management renewal came into view.

In 1999 the renewal was evaluated and that lead to the conclusion that an even stronger renewal was necessary in a larger part of the Bijlmermeer: more demolition and building of dwellings, company spaces and facilities. The evaluation also showed that the emphasis was still too much on the physical side. To strengthen the management and socio-economic renewal 29,5 million Euro was granted by the city of Amsterdam and Centraal Fonds Volkshuisvesting (Central Fund for Housing) to the Southeast City District and the housing association. They started the program 'Schoon, Heel en Veilig' (clean, whole and safe). Within these program every year a new plan is made, taking into account the outcomes of the yearly evaluation. Within this program, there are two types of projects:

- to respond quickly to problems, keeping the maintenance at an acceptable level;
- to tackle problems at the source, to improve maintenance on the structural level.

That money has been very important for safety and liveability in the area, according to our respondents. For instance: when the police wanted to tackle a specific problem, the city district could join in, thanks to their extra budget.

### **2.3 Changes in perception**

#### *The general living satisfaction in the area*

In the areas where the renewal is completed the general living satisfaction has clearly risen. In the D-area, where demolition and renewal still have to take place, the situation is still bad.

#### *The socio-demographic structure in the area*

The socio-demographic structure of the area hasn't changed much on the cultural level. People from Suriname still are the biggest group in the Bijlmermeer and beside that there still is a great variety of other nationalities.

On the financial level there might be a change. The area has become more houses for people with higher income.

Foot-note 2 Renovation of flats, large dwellings were split in smaller units, more elevators were made, in public space gardens were made for residents, etcetera.

#### *The residents-turnover (fluctuation) in the area*

Because of the renewal many residents had to move. Some went to dwellings nearby, others moved elsewhere. Figures on moving are clouded by these obligatory removals.

Before the renewal about 25 or 30% of the dwellings was empty. That number is decreased, but the link to the renewal is uncertain. Probably the scarcity on the dwelling market is a factor as well.

There is a sign that former residents, who moved out of the Bijlmermeer in the past to Lelystad, Almere and Purmerend (satellite cities of Amsterdam), are returning to the Bijlmermeer.

#### *The crime-rate in the area*

According to the residents the safety problems in general got less. Nuisance caused by drugs continues though. The city district stressed, that especially the problem of young unemployed, hanging around in the public area, increased.

#### *Insecurity-feelings in the area*

According to the residents less people feel unsafe in the public space or in the blocks of flats.

#### *The most relevant groups of offenders in the area (e.g. youths, immigrants)*

Drug users and dealers and homeless people are still present, but they are not the most important group of concern anymore. They became more visible, due to the renewal, though: they were chased out of the blocks of flats. The most important group of people causing problems nowadays are the young unemployed. They used to meet in the corridors on the first floor before, just like the drugs offenders and homeless, but because of the amovation of the inner-streets/corridors they now meet in public space. The large groups (of sometimes sixty youngsters) cause feelings of insecurity to people passing by. This problem is much bigger than in other parts of the city.

## **2.4 Security and crime reduction**

Before the renewal, the most important safety problems were, according to the respondents:

- feelings of unsafety in public space, in blocks of flats, in parkings and in the corridors between parkings and blocks of flats;
- robbery in public space;
- robbery in the inner-streets of the blocks of flats (because the blocks were accessible to everybody and the inner-streets had bad sightlines due to many columns);
- many residential burglaries (accessibility blocks of flats);
- from the eighties: nuisance of drugs (dealing and use), specially in parkings;
- braking into storerooms;
- illegal use of storerooms by homeless (with dangerous cooking-gear);
- car burglary in parkings;
- a lot of hidden crime as well, f.i. illegal prostitution, catering, taxi-driving.

The renewal focuses on three subjects:

- physical renewal;
- socio-economic renewal;
- management renewal.



In the renewal, the following measures have been taken and are being taken.

## 1 Physical renewal

### a) Measures in public space:

- Renewal of public space.
- More parking in public space.

### b) *Measures to the blocks of flats:*

- Some blocks were demolished, to make space for low-rise.
- Part of the parkings were demolished.
- The remaining parkings were detached from the blocks of flats.
- Most of the remaining parkings were closed, just accessible for residents.
- Some blocks were partly demolished: for instance Florijn lost its middle part and now contains two separate buildings.
- New porter's lodges were made.
- The accessibility of the blocks of flats was improved by locks on the entrances.
- Blocks were split in several compartments. Every part is now only accessible for those specific residents.
- Some blocks got an extra elevator.
- Inner-streets were removed, including most collective spaces.
- Storerooms were changed into dwellings or offices.

### c) *Measures in the dwellings:*

- New bathroom, kitchen and toilet.
- Each dwelling his own heating system.
- Double glazing.
- Part of the dwellings are sold.

### d) *Temporary measures*

In parts where the final renewal still has to wait, temporary measures were (and are) taken and are now seen as very valuable. For instance:

- extra playgrounds;
- demolition of dry-walks;
- blocks of flats were closed (locks on the entrances);
- entrances were moved to the ground floor;
- inner streets were compartmented;
- new intercom in the blocks of flats.

## 2 Socio-economic renewal

For instance:

- education and training (youth and adults)
- new buildings for cultural, recreational and educational use
- leisure activities for youth
- work experience projects
- subsidised employment
- stimulation of starting entrepreneurs (for instance cheap business space)
- stimulation of taking part in cultural and social life
- new business spaces
- empowerment of social groups, especially women and foreigners.
- lower dwelling-rents;
- free parking in the multi-storey car parks

- for the homeless and junks: combination of welfare<sup>3</sup> and repression<sup>4</sup>
- people having to move are visited for their rehousing are offered help in finding training and work as well
- care for dope addicts by a combination of repression (supervision, enforcement) and care (working projects)

### 3 Management renewal

#### a) Measures in public space:

- Bushes were cut, to give better overview.
- Better maintenance of public space: daily if necessary.
- Surveillance projects and neighbourhood watch.
- Better lighting.

#### b) Measures to the blocks of flats:

- The waste system was moved from the blocks to public space.
- Hostesses visit residents in renovated flats to inform them about litter collection (the right way to present litter) and how they themselves can contribute to clean neighbourhood. These hostesses live in the Bijlmermeer and are specially trained for their job.
- A special team checks dwellings and firms who are suspected of developing illegal activities.

A special initiative can be found in the flat called Gerenstein. It is outside our research area, but too interesting not to mention it.  
A group of 60 tenants, supporters from the Bijlmer as a concept from the first moment on, have bought a part of the Bijlmer flat Gerenstein that was supposed to be demolished. Together with some architects they take care of an endangered spatial type of dwellings.

#### c) Temporary measures

In parts where the final renewal still has to wait, temporary measures were (and are) taken to keep the area on an acceptable level of quality. These measures are now seen as very valuable. For instance:

- Painting tunnels white.
- Multi-storey car parks were closed (only accessible to residents) as much as possible.
- Cameras in blocks of flats to be demolished (where most residents moved out already), in corridors between parkings and blocks and in public parking garages.
- The storeroom corridors and the storerooms themselves were cleaned.
- Surveillance by public and private security personnel in and around the blocks not yet demolished; they chase away drug users and –dealers and homeless people who still come into the blocks of flats.
- Public space and the semi-public spaces in the blocks of flats are cleaned more often. In the D-area for instance (partly to be demolished) the public space is cleaned daily because of heavy littering.
- The public space was made more transparent.
- The housing association started a project to make residents respond faster in case of a complaint.
- A special team of the housing association and the police visits dwellings if they are suspected to be used illegally (sublet, drug houses, enterprises in dwellings).

Foot-note 3 For instance shelters, workforce projects, spaces for drug use.

Foot-note 4 For instance the chasing around and flat-ban (not allowed in that flat for a certain time).

### *Remaining problems*

The situation is improving, but not all problems are solved. Drug users and dealers cause a lot of nuisance and specially the problem of young unemployed hanging around in the public area is a big concern.

## **2.5 Design and Crime**

Physical renewal is just a part of the solution. That is common knowledge nowadays. In the Bijlmermeer the renewal consists not only of physical measures, but has measures on maintenance and social-economical renewal as well.

The social renewal started later than the physical renewal and still is the weakest part of the renewal. According to the residents spoken to the social measures still aren't good enough. Weak residents don't get the support they need to and problems like drug nuisance or criminal activities don't disappear just by physical measures. Residents feel the welfare work, the city counsel and the housing association are too weak.

Residents are not satisfied with the social renewal, but it definitely has great attention of the city district. They evaluated the renewal in 2000 and that resulted in extra attention to maintenance (clean and whole). In 2003/2004 the situation of drug nuisance was mapped and a program of welfare and repression was put into action. Respondents of the city district also noted, that when a problematic family moves, the welfare-measures have to move with them.

The owner of the apartment buildings (Rochdale) attends better to residents who cause nuisance and have to move: they look closely at the residents and to the new dwelling they are assigned to. They watch closely that problematic families aren't concentrated, as they were in the past. Big cheap dwellings aren't concentrated anymore. Rochdale visits all residents to stress the rules and residents are visited after moving as well, to show the company cares about their building.

## **2.6 Individual Participation**

All respondents have an important role in the renewal. The professionals try to make improvements, according to their function. The professionals want the residents to be involved and some residents are very active, though participation is difficult to organise.

## **2.7 Participation of Police**

Ms Blommestijn is policeman of the beat for the D and F-area. Policeman having a specific area is common in Holland. She works in this area from before the renewal and knows it very well. The police tasks are no different from other parts of the city. In that aspect the renewal didn't change anything.

According to the residents the police are a very strong participant.

## **2.8 Participation of residents**

In the renewal of the Bijlmermeer, residents not only participate, they even started it. In the 1970s the city and central government were woken by campaigning residents. Residents started the physical renewal and pointed out the social problems in the area.

Around 2000, when the renewal was evaluated, an inquiry among residents was used. The outcome was an important factor into a new course. The decision between demolition and renewal of buildings is partly based on the results of a big enquiry among residents.

In the program of 'Schoon, Heel en Veilig' (clean, whole and safe), residents participate in different ways. The program is evaluated yearly and for that residents are asked about current problems and possible solutions. The yearly programs and reports are discussed in residents platforms.

For the entire Bijlmermeer, there is an umbrella organisation: 'Bijlmer Bewoners Beraad' (Bijlmer Residents Council). Every complex can have its own council.

In Florijn and Haag en Veld there are strong residents councils and they were heavily involved in the renewal. They were consulted about all plans and got the chance to give their opinion. Not all their suggestions could be realised, but residents are satisfied with their participation.

But: many residents gave up on participation, according to the resident-respondents, mainly because of the bureaucracy of the city district. The city district should arouse enthusiasm under residents and should make sure they have a steady organisation. Too many changes in employees had caused a lot of frustration under residents in the past.

Residents miss a structural consultation with residents and all kind of professionals, working on safety and liveability.

Apart from the active participation, residents are informed in various ways, such as neighbourhood-meetings and newspapers in three languages.

## **2.9 Acceptance**

Residents feel the renewal is clearly a step forward, though it has clear disadvantages as well (for example social structures disrupted). The social measures are not enough, according to the residents (see other questions).

## **2.10 Success and Costs**

The renewal is still going on, but the results until now are encouraging. The general situation is improving.

According to the respondents, the following measures were especially successful:

- entrances of the blocks of flats moved to the ground floor level (instead of on +1);
- entrances of the parkings moved to the ground floor level (instead of the connection to the blocks);

- limited number of routes through the public space to the entrances (more concentrated)
- clear house numbers on the blocks of flats (so the police/ambulance etc. know where they are needed);
- compartmenting of apartment blocks;
- non-defensive looking measures on the facade of the blocks to prevent residents to throw stuff down;
- the catalogue of different solutions for the blocks, to give every flat its own appearance;
- chain approach to junkies and homeless (combination of welfare and repression).

## 2.11 Lessons learned during the renewal

On a larger scale the project in the Bijlmermeer teaches us many things.

- For instance, that plans sometimes have to change. It happened at the start of the Bijlmermeer and it happens again during the renewal. First the D-area was meant to be renewed. After a while high-rise turned out to be less popular on the market, so due to marketing prognoses, part of the blocks have to be demolished anyway.  
Some residents who had moved to the D-area from buildings that had to be demolished, have to move again. This causes a lot of discomfort.
- Another important lesson is that crime can come to an area, unexpected. When the Bijlmermeer was built, crime rose rapidly and the area wasn't prepared for that. This teaches us, that crime prevention is necessary during the planning process, even in areas that seem to have no problems at all.
- We must recommend the comprehensive approach as well. Just physical renewal didn't do the trick: renewal of management and socio-economic renewal turned out to be crucial as well.

On a smaller scale, the respondents gave us the following lessons.

- The owner of the building should keep a high quality level: intensive maintenance. Experience in the past made clear that buildings with better maintenance didn't deteriorate as much as others. Other factors must have been relevant as well (such as the financial situation of the residents), but according to the resident-respondents maintenance was an important factor.
- Every one or two buildings have their own maintenance-manager. According to the residents his role is too small: it should be more than small repairs. And residents want more maintenance of the buildings.
- But even then, people always will be the ones causing the problems: they litter the place. For instance in Florijn every Saturday morning the elevator is a big mess.
- The area still misses other functions, besides dwellings. There are some shops and offices, but residents want a 'café around the corner' and collective spaces where they can meet and have clubs. "A block of flats is a vertical neighbourhood"<sup>5</sup>.

Foot-note 5 An important message for Budapest: keep the small scale functions in the plinth.



- The renewal didn't enlarge social cohesion clearly: social structures are even disrupted by the renewal. Clubs and other social activities stopped because the collective spaces were removed. People lost contact with their neighbours, due to the obligatory moving. Some people with lower incomes had to move to a dwelling outside the neighbourhood, because there weren't enough cheap houses left.
- In the H-area gardens at the foot of the blocks of flats were given to the residents as gardens. Most residents in this area turned out not to have a garden-culture though. Many gardens are poorly maintained.
- A subject causing much discussion in Holland is the mixing of rental and owner-occupied property. In the past in the research area the mixing was very drastic: next to a rental house there could be a privately owned house. Nowadays in Hakfort en Huigenbos houses are still sold that way. There are too many examples in which the rental and buying were too different to live next to each other. The combination can lead to open hostility: in Florijn people residents at higher floor drop litter into the gardens makes it worse: people can't sit in their gardens safely. The respondents working in the redevelopment (city district and Rochdale) don't want that kind of mixing in the D-area anymore.
- Another lesson learned from the selling of houses until now is, that most tenants in the Bijlmermeer can't buy their own house.

## **2.12 Displacement**

The problematic groups of drug offenders / homeless people and of the young unemployed are more visible nowadays, because the problem came out of the blocks to public space.

Homeless people and junks are 'chased around' as part of the policy with a mix of welfare and repression. The result of the chasing around is that they move to the weak spots of the area, for instance parkings or blocks of flats which are still accessible.

## **2.13 Costs**

The costs of maintenance of the blocks of flats is higher nowadays than before the renewal. Most residents are more careful with their buildings (less breaking or littering), but not all of them. Rochdale invests a lot to gain a high quality level and apart from that: some materials uses are more expensive to clean or repair (for instance more glass).

## **2.14 Outlook**

In the research area, the biggest physical thing to be done is the renewal of the D-area. The plan isn't clear yet, but probably part of the area will be demolished, while the other part will be renewed.

In the mean while, the maintenance and the work on the socio-economic renewal continues. The liveability project 'Schoon, Heel, Veilig' (clean, whole and safe) will go on for a few years.

## 3 Site visit reports

### 3.1 Introduction

On May 24 2005 all participants visited the sites in the Bijlmermeer. The following people accompanied us on our cycling tour or prepared a lecture for us.

- Mr. Arjan Brokkaar (director of Projectbureau Bijlmer vernieuwing);
- Mr. Zeger Woudenberg (project manager from Projectbureau Bijlmer vernieuwing, responsible for the F-neighbourhood);
- Mr. Vincent Verbiest, manager Urban Renewal from housing corporation Delta Forte, responsible for the H-neighbourhood;
- Mr. Randy Green, housekeeper from housing corporation Rochdale (Florijn);
- Mark Rietveld (DSP-groep), co-writer of Bijlmer Monitor.

Afterwards every country filled in a site visit report. Four questions were answered on the research area:

- What stroke you most in the area?
- What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?
- What advise would you give to the visited project?
- Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?

The entire site visit reports can be found in appendix 1. In this chapter we give the relevant differences and similarities.

### 3.2 What stroke you most in the area?

#### *Physical*

Three themes were mentioned both by the German (G) and by the British participant (UK).

- They both praised the mix of functions in the neighbourhood: both the mixing of rent and private ownership and the mixing of high-rise and smaller family houses.
- They both think that more variety gives better chances for social cohesion that on its turn will reduce anonymity.
- Both countries have very big expectations from bringing living down to the ground floor and reducing the amount of anonymous boxes.

Germany and Hungary both mention the fact that using camera's (CCTV) is not as defensive as in Bristol, so Amsterdam has a more sensible exposure to CCTV-cameras.

Revaluation of the entire district by integration into the surrounding (football-stadium, long-distance station) is a good way to bring in lifelines in a mono-functional area.

Poland, the UK and Germany mention the big scale of the buildings. The breaking up and diversifying of especially the ground floor of the estate are approved of.

### *Social*

Hungary: the big, long-term plan for the Bijlmermeer, the big investments by the government and the power the government has to change the area. This is in big contrast to the Hungarian situation, in which the government doesn't have much money or influence. The big efforts made in the Bijlmermeer to improve life of the residents were praised by Poland, Hungary and Germany. Poland ends his comment with an interesting comparison to the project in Bristol. In Bristol most residents are indigenous, were as the Bijlmermeer is known for his enormous ethnic variety. The problems in both areas are similar, though. This raises the (old) question, whether problems of such housing projects are really from factors related to ethnicity or rather from economic situation.

### **3.3 What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?**

According to the German representative the German and Dutch approach (social and physical measures) are quite alike. The representative his biggest lesson for Germany (and according to him to all countries) is the good balance between the social and the physical measures<sup>6</sup>.

There are a lot of specific aspects to learn from. First some physical aspects:

- Creating transparency at entrances from multifamily-dwellings and their surroundings (there are no dark and unsafe places) (HU).
- Variety in identity of entrances (colours, signs etc.) is an easy way to get identity and attractiveness into the area where residents meet the public space. Tearing down whole apartment-blocks and replace new low rise blocks will be unthinkable in Budapest. The representatives from Krakow agree with this statement.
- The way of placing the mailboxes and bell boards on the outside of the block. The postman doesn't have to go in the housing complex to deliver post at several floors. In general: the blocks are not open for the public and there is a good line of demarcation between private and public (HU)
- The situation of camera's. They were there, but very inconspicuous. Comparing with Bristol the way of having placed the cameras is much more friendly (HU):
- The proper way to rebuilt flats after demolishing them (HU).
- Having an information centre with scale models etc. to inform the residents what will be changing in their area (HU);

And from the social aspects:

- The Polish representative recognises the sort of problems, connected to the high-rise of the 1960's. Those are comparable in Poland and Holland. The approach to tackle the problems is in both theoretical and practical aspects more advanced in the Dutch approach however, the general situation and economic conditioning are different.
- On the long term Poland thinks that the appearance of foreign residents representing different culture and different customs, although in a relatively distant time perspective, should be taken into consideration. Thinking of it now can prevent a lot of problems.

Foot-note 6 Reflection from Poland (PL), Hungary (HU), Germany(G) and England (UK).

- The goal to organise happenings for residents to get known each other better (HU).
- Communication around promotion of employment (HU).
- Stimulation of participating in cultural and social life for all cultures (HU).
- Empowerment for women, education and training for underprivileged residents (HU).

### 3.4 What advice would you give to the visited project?

- Bringing dwellings on the ground floor has been a good idea, but without a garden in front the residents don't have enough privacy. Advice: give the ground floor accommodation over to community facilities, or provide small front yards with fencing, to keep the public away from the building frontage (UK):  
*Dutch reflection: In the Police Label safe housing its one of the basis-demands to get a garden (2.5-5.00 meter deep). But that's mostly for one-family houses. Multi-family houses seldom have front gardens, because people don't want to invest in plants and flowers in a front garden if they hardly have money to survive.*
- Public space needs more attention. The British experience would suggest that areas of the type shown below are too ill-defined and sprawling, and that people prefer more intimate, 'human-scale' spaces if they are going to use them more than mere 'boulevards' to pass briskly through (UK).



*Dutch reflection:*

*Its still a leading principle in the Dutch approach for designing the public space to keep it as spatial as possible ('less is more'), but under CPTED influences its might be changing f.i. designing public space together with residents (like in projects as 'Streets for living')*

Go on with making area's mono functional. Leisure and a soccer stadium improve the conditions of life in the vicinity and they should be multiplied (P).

*Dutch reflection:*

*We agree. Moreover we are convinced that the combination of physical and*

*social renewal linked with managerial renewal is the solution for a long term sustainable Bijlmermeer.*

### **3.5 Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?**

#### *Physical aspects*

Some of the complexes of housing projects in Poland can be compared by scale to the ones in Bijlmermeer treated as a whole: Ursynów in Warszawa, Zaspą and Przymorze in Gdańsk, Kozanów in Wrocław, Nowa Huta in Kraków.

But so far none of them has been the subject of so far-going rehabilitation projects(PL).

#### *Social*

Because of the different (from the Dutch) social structure they have not been found that arduous and troublesome. The process of changes in the social structure of the Polish neighbourhoods is quite slow. It is neither controlled nor directed, while the present situation is generally found relatively satisfactory, which slows down any possible measures to intervene.

It may be worth mentioning, that comparable Polish housing projects built in the 1960s and 1970s represent usually much lower standard in terms of the quality of buildings, used materials, details regarding small architecture etc. As compared with them standards represented by redeveloped areas such as Bijlmermeer or Hartcliffe (Bristol) present themselves much better. But social cohesion and integration seem to be in worse shape. Does it mean that physical redevelopment itself is never enough to rehabilitate the neighbourhood (how does it relate to the 'broken window theory?'), and that it has to be always accompanied by measures aimed at rehabilitating social component of the area? That is probably the case. In Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe this social element is still in better shape, what makes high rise living projects somewhat better places to live. But this may end soon. Combined with the rapid deterioration of physical substance (low quality of constructions) this may bring in the future disastrous consequences.

In sum, it seems that the Dutch (and British) put substantial efforts in physical components of such living projects, although probably more thought and attention should be paid to purely social aspects. In Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe social component is still in better shape (although we did not learn yet to appreciate it), but may disintegrate with the progress of purely physical deterioration of buildings, accompanied (like in Bijlmermeer) by massive tendency for those belonging to the higher social strata, to move out (PL). .



## 4 Concluding observations

Large scale improvements like tearing down whole blocks and replacing them by smaller scale family houses might be successful in the Netherlands, but in countries like Poland and Hungary, this won't be a solution to problems of crime prevention and reducing social unsafeness. Not in the least because the high rise blocks in many former Eastern block countries are owned by private partners.

But the approach of combining physical and social renewal *and* managerial renewal seems to be the solution for a long term sustainable high-rise area.

## Appendix

## **Appendix 1   Site visit reports**

### **1.1   Site visit report from Germany**

## Format for the visit-report of Amsterdam (1)

by: Tim Lukas, Max Planck Institute

I.) What stroke you most in the area?		
	Situational	Social
	        <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Given the architectural structure the Bijlmermeer is the site which is the most likely to compare with Groepstadt in West-Berlin: It's a typical example for a large housing estate following the principle of "function separation". I was very impressed by the way they tempt to overcome this obsolete separation of functions: From a former "dormitory town" to a partly very successful spatial mixture of living and working (mix of dwellings and bureaus).</li> <li>Revaluation of the entire district by integration into the surrounding (Football-stadium, long-distance station).</li> <li>Sensible exposure to CCTV-cameras (not as aggressive and dominant as in Bristol-Hartcliffe).</li> <li>10% of the old high-rise buildings are demolished and replaced by smaller-scale, low-rise houses. Building smaller units stimulates social cohesion and erodes anonymity.</li> <li>Caretakers are responsible for smaller technical problems, cleanliness and interpretation of the CCTV-records.</li> <li>Very busy and vivid centre with shopping facilities, restaurants etc. The design reminds me of anthroposophical architecture like i.e. the "Goetheanum".</li> <li>Very good public transport: Comfortable Metro connection to Amsterdam city centre.</li> </ul>	<p>On the social level a multifarious set of measures regarding the social sector has been taken in Bijlmermeer. Here is a selection of approaches which I regarded as particularly promising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strengthening the role of women (with particular regard to the multi-ethnic and -religious mixture of the population).</li> <li>Creation of jobs and work. Given the general unemployment rate this seems to be a very ambitious aim. To me it would be a success yet if they'll provide contacts between employers and job-seeking people.</li> <li>Daily care for pupils before and after school (keeping away children and juveniles from the street).</li> <li>Local broadcasting station (TV/Radio). Large housing estates often suffer from a bad image disseminated in the overall media. Providing first-hand information relevant for the district could place an antipole.</li> <li>Activating the residents in order to strengthen the identification with the district and – in the long term – to transfer responsibilities to the occupants.</li> <li>Football-Tournaments to bring people together</li> <li>Renaming the district (<i>Amsterdam Zuidoost</i>) in order to tackle the bad image.</li> <li>Caretakers (one in each bloc) keep contact to the residents → strengthening social cohesion.</li> <li>Language courses for newcomers and foreigners.</li> </ul>

## Format for the visit-report of Amsterdam (2)

by: Tim Lukas, Max Planck Institute, Germany

I.) What stroke you most in the area?		
	<i>Situational</i>	<i>Social</i>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ To me it looks like a very nice idea to pick up the typical Amsterdam-motive of the canals in the Bijlmer as well (maybe it's just because of the low ground-water level?). Anyway, water creates a friendly atmosphere.</li> </ul>	<p>On the social level a multifarious set of measures regarding the social sector has been taken in Bijlmermeer. Here is a selection of approaches which I regarded as particularly promising:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Strengthening the role of women (with particular regard to the multi-ethnic and -religious mixture of the population).</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Revaluation of the ground-floor flats by providing small gardens including small sheds.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Creation of jobs and work. Given the general unemployment rate this seems to be a very ambitious aim. To me it would be a success yet if they'll provide contacts between employers and job-seeking people.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ The interior has been partly embellished on a grand scale (partly with renunciation of living space to let). Use of modern and high-quality materials which on the one hand look very robust and on the other hand strengthen the identification of the residents with their area.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Daily care for pupils before and after school (keeping away children and juveniles from the street).</li> </ul>
		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Local broadcasting station (TV/Radio). Large housing estates often suffer from a bad image disseminated in the overall media. Providing first-hand information relevant for the district could place an anti-pole.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Co-existence of different structural types. High-rise blocks are completed with low-rise flats in the ground floor.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Activating the residents in order to strengthen the identification with the district and – in the long term – to transfer responsibilities to the occupants.</li> </ul>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Lots of green space in the courtyards. This might look problematic from a security point of view, but it's an important precondition for well-being and living satisfaction. Along the paths shrubs and trees are clearly arranged.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Football-Tournaments to bring people together</li> <li>▪ Renaming the district (<i>Amsterdam Zuidoost</i>) in order to tackle the bad image.</li> <li>▪ Caretakers (one in each bloc) keep contact to the residents → strengthening social cohesion.</li> <li>▪ Language courses for newcomers and foreigners.</li> </ul>

## II.) What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?

### *Situational*

- The still unredeveloped buildings look very run-down indeed. Given the way the already rehabilitated houses have been done I'm positive about the future of the Bijlmer. Not only I believe the German way of rehabilitation very similar to the one presented here but also because of the experiences made in the Bijlmer I feel sure that we all can learn from this project. In particular the well-balanced proportion of situational and social measures could set a good example for all the other countries. On the structural level it's the embedding of the area into a diverse set of functions (leisure, work) and the co-existence of different constructional designs (high-rise, low-rise) which I regard as promising.

### *Social*

- I believe in this country we are traditionally on the right path concerning social measures. Several measures similar to the approaches in Bijlmer have been taken. However, there's one approach we don't agree in Germany: Language courses obligatory for foreigners are still subject to discussion.

## III.) What advice would you give to the visited project?

### *Situational*

- As I read, the program lasts until 2007. Given the amount of still unredeveloped buildings the programme should last much longer. There are still lots of work to do.

### *Social*

- Continue on the chosen way!

#### IV.) Can you give references of projects in your own country?

##### *Situational*

- **nti-Graffiti-Mobil** (Pforzheim): Disposal of graffiti-damages by a painter in cooperation with convicted sprayers.
- **Safety improvement** (Stuttgart): Physical measures in order to improve safety at buildings and in the streets by glazed elevators, bright paintwork, better lighting, guidance for pedestrians and cleaning of the environment.
- **“Hot-Spot Bismarckplatz”** (Herbolzheim): A mobile police post at the criminal hot spot “Bismarckplatz” led to a drastic decline of registered offences in public space
- **Rehabilitation programme** (Dortmund): This integrated (physical and social) rehabilitation programme aims at a mixed population structure, social cohesion, well-being and safety in the high-rise estate Dortmund-Clarenberg.

##### *Social*

- **In general:**
  - Crime preventive initiatives in nearly every bigger city (mostly headed by the mayor or vice-mayor: “Kriminalprävention ist Bürger(meister)pflcht”).
  - Regional analyses and surveys directed to residents in many cities (i.e.: Osnabrück, Freiburg, Heidelberg, etc.). Aim: Knowledge on criminal hot-spots and perceptions of residents.
  - Participation of police during the planning process for new housing estates in many cities.
  - Practical check-list developed by the police as a technical aid to account for crime preventive aims in town planning.
- **Courage 2005** (Laatzen): Realisation of events related to crime prevention topics (round table on “domestic violence”, courses on self-assertion for young boys and girls, posters on moral courage). Aim: Strengthening the ability to perceive dangers & problems in the environment, strengthening identification and moral courage.
- **Bus-pilots** (Zeven): Juvenile bus-pilots to guarantee safe transfer of pupils to school as well as ordered circumstances at bus stations.
- **Self-help for elderly people** (Hannover): Courses for elderly people to impart knowledge on protective measures to prevent robbery, burglary and fraud.
- **Sports field** (Hannover): Building a new sports field for children and juveniles.
- **Huts for homeless juveniles** (Gifhorn): Open meeting point for juveniles who dislike official institutions (esp.: Russian resettlers). Aim: Decline of conflicts with neighbours, minimisation of vandalism, integration of resettlers.
- **“Platz da”** (Leonberg): Given the rise of vandalism and graffiti this project puts on graffiti workshops and media-/video-projects. Videos made by the juveniles will be obtainable on DVD.
- **“Augen auf für nebenan”** (Böblingen): TV-spots in local channels during high-risk-months for burglary (spring/autumn).
- **Safety in COOP II** (Stuttgart): New dwellings on an old factory area. Increase of police presence, language courses, bus station for a mobile library bus, youth centre, welfare work, street parties.
- **Neighbours protect neighbours** (Baden-Baden): Invited by the municipality residents are briefed about general and local crime rates and advised on possibilities of prevention. Few months later the participants are visited by the municipality or the police in order to discuss problems and results of the event and to arrange individual appointments of consultation.
- **“Aktion Graffiti”** (Karlsruhe/Ettlingen): On the one hand “free-walls” for legal spraying and on the other hand enlightenment about the consequences of illegal spraying. Workshops in order to sensitise juveniles.
- **Safety and quality of life** (Tuttlingen): Theatre for



elderly people to decrease fear of crime and to provide practical tips for prevention.

- **Handy Collection** (Ettlingen): Collection of mobile phones in order to decrease fear of crime as well as to increase mobility of elderly people and single mothers.
- **Vogelstang-Serviceteam** (Mannheim): The shopping centre is a popular meeting point for juveniles in Mannheims large housing estate "Vogelstang". Given the conflicts between tradesmen, customers and juveniles, juveniles are involved in the everyday life of the shopping mall: They help elderly people carrying their shopping bags, give advice regarding the location of i.e. surgeries, stores, etc. and remove smaller defilements.

All data generated by the data base "PräViS":  
<http://www.kriminalpraevention.de/datenbank.htm>

## 1.2 Site visit report from Hungary

by Szandra Windt, OKRI

	Situational	Social
What stroke you most in the area? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Clean</li> <li>• Painting of buildings</li> <li>• Better lighting</li> <li>• Anti burglary devices for dwellings</li> <li>• Cameras (but not the same way like in Bristol)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• They had ideas, plans for ten years,</li> <li>• Goal: the residents will be satisfied</li> <li>• Immigrants but now there are many new residents from the middle class</li> <li>• Strong community</li> <li>• The local government has power and plans to change</li> </ul>
What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Transparency (there are no dark places)</li> <li>• The way of mailboxes (the postman does not have to go in the house)</li> <li>• Ring bells</li> <li>• Each entrance its own identity (colours, signs etc.)</li> <li>• The way of having cameras: I knew that there were many cameras, but I did not see them, I was noticed that I was being watched, but it was not so shocking as in Bristol.</li> <li>• The way how the rebuilt these flats (to demolish them, and build in another way )</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information centre where you can see what will happen in your neighbour (scale- models etc.)</li> <li>• The goal: the neighbours know each other (parties, football matches)</li> <li>• Promotion of employment (f.i. job creation, subsidised employment)</li> <li>• Stimulation of participation in cultural and social life'</li> <li>• Language courses</li> </ul>
What advise would you give to the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)		
Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?		

**For the specific area: Florijn-area and Develstein**

	<b>Situational</b>	<b>Social</b>
What stroke you most on the site? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Free parking</li> <li>• Clean</li> <li>• Painting of buildings</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The goal: to rise of the quality of the residents lives</li> <li>• Strong local government who wants to do sg. When you will come to Hungary you will see that the local government wants to do sg, but it is not so strong, they do not have so much money, and there is no a common, bigger project about the city- because we were told that there is a big 'Amsterdam project' and its part the 'Bijlmermeer' project. They can work together, they have the same goal- to build a better environment for the residents- and they have enough power to do it.</li> </ul>
What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Every building its own caretaker</li> <li>• The identity of the buildings (colours etc.)</li> <li>• Opened and light places,</li> <li>• Green parks</li> <li>• Mixed: High rise buildings and small, 'family' houses</li> <li>• Cameras (see above)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Information centre in the shopping mall is open to public and well accommodated,</li> <li>• Promotion of employment</li> <li>• Language courses for the immigrants</li> <li>• Education and training for (underprivileged) residents:</li> <li>• Empowerment for women, programmes for women</li> <li>• Care for addicts and homeless</li> <li>• The residents are informed about the changes</li> <li>• The main goal: to help the residents to live in a better neighbourhood, to help them to solve their problems</li> </ul>
What advise would you give to the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)		
Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?		

### 1.3 Site visit report from Poland

*by Krzysztof Krajewski and Janina Czapska with help of Maciej Motak*

**For the entire area: neighbourhoods D, F and H**

	<b>Situational</b>	<b>Social</b>
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<p>What stroke you most in the area? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)</p>	<p>The scale of the entire housing project and of particular buildings is remarkable. The original design idea, from the traffic solutions to the interior design, still draws attention and deserves some care. Another thing to be noticed is the 100% presence of bicycle paths and the amount of facilities of that type of everyday transport (which is still somewhat underrated in Poland).</p>	<p>There is a high percentage of immigrant population in the entire area.</p> <p>There is also quite a high percentage of people having life problems of different type (addiction, lack of job and money, broken families). Both groups of problems partly intermingle, which create a sort of the 'problems' melting pot."</p> <p>The main problem of the huge housing projects like Bijlmermeer is the fact that most of the indigenous Dutch inhabitants seem to be leaving the area or they are willing to leave. This results in the area being inhabited mostly by immigrants of various origin, what leads to creation of some sort of ethnic ghetto. This combined with the fact that many inhabitants engage in various types of deviant behaviour (drug use, alcohol abuse, various forms of crime etc), results in area becoming a hot spot of ethnic and social tensions. Certainly, there is huge difference between places like Bijlmermeer and American ethnic ghettos, where people are usually left alone and no one cares about them and their problems.</p> <p>Huge amount of money and effort put in the redevelopment of the area shows that the Dutch government represents absolutely different attitude and approach. In sum it seems, that as opposed to Bristol, where visited area was populated almost exclusively by indigenous population, in Bijlmermeer substantial proportion of the trouble stems from problems related to immigrants and their integration in western societies, or lack thereof. But this may be also the most striking feature about Bijlmermeer and Hartcliffe: despite differences in population problems remain similar. This leads to the (old) question whether problems of such housing projects result really from factors related to ethnicity or rather from economic situation.</p>
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<p>What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?</p>	<p>Some lessons have already been learnt in an almost parallel way and time i.e. the problems arising from the scale and idea of huge housing projects, which are now inevitable part of the 1960's heritage in both countries. However, the general situation and economic conditioning are different. The Dutch examples show much more advanced approach to the rehabilitation of those areas, both in the theoretical and practical aspects.</p>	<p>The appearance of foreign residents representing different culture and different customs, although in a relatively distant time perspective, should be taken into consideration in Poland. The same goes to the decreasing average status of the residents. In consequence it is important to start already now to think about preventing comparable housing projects in Poland in particular, and in Central and Eastern Europe in general, from becoming concentrations of lower class, poor and underprivileged members of the society, as well as concentrating members of ethnic minorities of the similar socio-economic status (last may constitute a rather remote perspective, but should not be dismissed as a purely theoretical possibility). This means first of all increased effort to rehabilitate comparable housing projects as intensively as possible, to make them more attractive for inhabitants, and to prevent those of higher socio-economic status from leaving them.</p>
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<p>What advise would you give to the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)</p>	<p>The more recent investments in the adjoining areas, such as local railway station extension (including erasing its being the barrier), or football stadium development, seem to improve the conditions of life in the vicinity and they should be continued and multiplied. Of course the scale of those projects goes beyond the local decisions, so they require decisive and financial support in the municipal planning departments and business circles.</p>	<p>It is very difficult to give any advice on the social problems as a very delicate matter. It seems to be a banal advice that all available measures should be taken to continue the selected direction of social rehabilitation of the area. In particular one should think – although it is purely theoretical thought, maybe without any relevance to the Dutch realities – about attracting more Dutch to move to the area to make it more diverse in ethnic terms and to promote more integration between indigenous population and immigrants. This may be considered to constitute on the one side a platitude, on the other to be extremely difficult to implement. Even in societies, like the Dutch one, trying since years to implement tolerance and 'melting pot' strategy in issues regarding to immigrants and ethnic minorities.</p>
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<p>Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?</p>	<p>Some of the complexes of housing projects in Poland can be compared by scale to the ones in Bijlmermeer treated as a whole: Ursynów in Warszawa, Zaspą and Przymorze in Gdańsk, Kozanów in Wrocław, Nowa Huta in Kraków. So far none of them has been the subject of so far-going rehabilitation projects.</p>	<p>The Polish examples mentioned on the left represent also some social problems. Because of the different (from the Dutch) social structure they have not been found that arduous and troublesome. The process of changes in the social structure of the Polish neighbourhoods is quite slow. It is neither controlled nor directed, while the present situation is generally found relatively satisfactory, which slows down any possible measures to intervene. It may be worth mentioning, that comparable Polish housing projects built in the 1960s and 1970s represent usually much lower standard in terms of the quality of buildings, used materials, details regarding small architecture etc. As compared with them standards represented by redeveloped areas such as Bijlmermeer or Hartcliffe present themselves much better. But social cohesion and integration seem to be in worse shape. Does it mean that physical redevelopment itself is never enough to rehabilitate the neighbourhood (how does it relate to the 'broken window theory?'), and that it has to be always accompanied by measures aimed at rehabilitating social component of the area? That is probably the case. In Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe this social element is still in better shape, what makes high rise living projects somewhat better places to live. But I am afraid this may end soon. Combined with the rapid deterioration of physical substance (low quality of constructions) this may bring in the future disastrous consequences. In sum, it seems that the Dutch (and British) put substantial efforts in physical components of such living projects, although probably more thought and attention should be paid to purely social aspects. In Poland and other countries of Central and Eastern Europe social component is still in better shape (although we did not learn yet to appreciate it), but may disintegrate with the progress of purely physical dete-</p>
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**For the specific area: Florijn-area and Develstein**

	<b>Situational</b>	<b>Social</b>
What stroke you most on the site? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)	The quality of architectural design is remarkable, especially the elements of small architecture and architectural details, their forms and materials, the convenient and residents-friendly solutions, the colour design.	What was quite surprising was the situation and disappointment of the new residents who bought the newly-built row houses between the high-rise buildings without the precise orientation in the local specific whereabouts. On the other side the local centre that was visited is an active place, well-organized and well-maintained. It serves numerous residents every day.
What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?	Some of the ideas and solutions applied in the visited area can be introduced in the Polish comparable neighbourhoods, such as proper design of ground floors and especially visibility and accessibility of entrances to the buildings. In general, the very existence and increasing role of the external company, such as DSP-groep, advising the investors and planners, should also be recommended.	The participation of the local residents in the decisions concerning their neighbourhoods, which is necessary for the good results of the rehabilitation project, can be highly improved via well-maintained local centres.
What advise would you give to the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)	From the architectural point of view it is nearly impossible to provide any advice because of the perfect quality of the work done and planned, both in practical and formal. Despite some minor doubts, since the general decisions have already been taken, they should be continued and completed.	Same as above (for the entire area).
Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?	In the area of Prądnik Czerwony in Kraków, the Polish-selected research area in the AGIS project, some measures have been taken by the local cooperative, although so far they are limited when compared to those in the visited Dutch area (partial cutting trees, improved lighting).	Actually, the social situation in the overwhelming majority of comparable housing projects in Poland is highly different from that one in The Netherlands. There is a different type of social diversification: people from all social classes and statuses live in the same areas, while there are nearly no immigrants. Despite the first signs of depreciation of the large housing projects and some evaluations prepared, few efforts could be actually introduced.



## 1.4 Site visit report from the UK

*by Henry Shaftoe, UWE*



(Fortification still in evidence on one of the original blocks)

This was my third visit to Bijlmermeer in twelve years, so I have the benefit of being able to observe significant changes over that time.

Overall, considerable progress has been made, but there are some outstanding concerns and potential problems as well.

## Strengths

The breaking up and diversifying of the estate appears to have been a good move, with more variety and 'human scale'.

The connection to adjacent retail, leisure and commercial facilities must have huge potential benefits for the residents. No longer does Bijlmermeer feel like an isolated housing enclave on the margins of the city and presumably there are vastly improved work and social prospects for the residents.

## Weaknesses

It was alarming to see that new tower blocks were part of the redevelopment plan. Even having only 4 apartments per landing does not necessarily (from the British experience - eg: Hartcliffe) create safe and successful residential units and (in my opinion) no residential block should be more than 6 storeys high (so that residents can walk up if the elevators fail).

It has been a good idea to bring the 'active' parts of the existing blocks down to the ground floor (when previously they were just storage areas or clear air), but providing additional apartments with no buffer zone between their front windows and the public realm is not a good idea. In desperation many residents have had to put full length translucent curtains across their windows to give them some privacy.



It's probably better to give the ground floor accommodation over to community facilities, or otherwise to provide small front yards with fencing, to keep the public away from the building frontage.

Possibly the most unsatisfactory aspect of the new Bijlmermeer is the treatment of the new open space:



The British experience would suggest that areas of the type shown above are too ill-defined and sprawling, and that people prefer more intimate, 'human-scale' spaces if they are going to use them more than mere 'boulevards' to pass briskly through.

## 1.5 Site visit report from the Netherlands

For the entire area: *neighbourhoods D, F and H*

	Situational	Social
What stroke you most in the area? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)	<p>The choice to renovate buildings like the large octagons in Bijlmermeer found all over the area. It looks so easy to tear down the blocks and put low rise back.</p> <p>The attitude from the community and the housing corporations very positive and stroke and affected me.</p> <p>The water and green area is much more attractive than it was before. Open and attractive.</p>	<p>The way people meet &amp; greet in the streets (Florijn) is much more positive than it was before. This is due to having housekeepers in the block (like Mr Green from Florijn) and the quality of public space (designed for meeting each other)</p>

What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?	<p>Big scale demolition can be an important measure, but not without social measures (for residents moving out and staying).</p> <p>Buildings who won't be renewed in a short time can have big advantage of temporary measures.</p> <p>Private parking under a deck with dwellings around can make a nice parking (daylight, social eyes from the dwellings and residents to the parking and vice versa.</p> <p>It must be possible to change plans if needed.</p> <p>Uniform design of fences around gardens would look better.</p> <p>Windows too close to the public space are blinded by their residents (no social control).</p>	Social measures are not to be forgotten during renewal.
What advise would you give tot the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)	- Give all dwellings at ground level a front and back garden. Make sure the edges of gardens are clear and uniform.	
Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?		

**For the specific area: Florijn-area and Develstein**

	<b>Situational</b>	<b>Social</b>
What stroke you most on the site? (answer anything you want, positive or negative remarks, perhaps about the problems, measures taken, attitude of people spoken to, etc.)	Florijn still has a very large building, although it's good the building is clustered in smaller compartments.	The housekeeper has/can have a positive influence on the area and the residents.

<p>What lessons can your country learn from the visited project?</p>	<p>Low rise can make an enclosed block with high rise and de low rise can make the height of the high rise look less high.</p> <p>A relatively simple measure (balconies of glass and metal) can have great effect (more 'air' in the building and attractiveness)</p> <p>Don't be afraid of drastic measures: the Florijn flat perhaps should have made smaller than it is now.</p>	
<p>What advise would you give to the visited project? (as specific as you can, e.g. to which person or organisation your advise is relevant)</p>	<p>Make individual houses more recognisable when situated in a large building (e.g. by colours of walls or balconies).</p> <p>Make sure houses and offices on ground level have some private space outside: without that curtains are closed very soon. This was visible in the first floor of Florijn. The low rise a bit further did have private space outside and had more social eyes (less blinded windows).</p> <p>The bent floors of Florijn could have been out of sight with the glass of the balcony a bit further down.</p> <p>Let adjacent areas connect to each other. Now the Florijn Noord II building doesn't fit to the dwellings at his foot.</p> <p>Find other locations for the boxes and use that space as flexible space for developments in the future (changing use of the space, depending on the demand at that time).</p> <p>More daylight can be brought into the large high rise buildings by demolishing dwellings and make those into roof gardens.</p>	

Can you give references (good or bad examples) of projects in your own country?		
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## Appendix 2 Literature

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