



WAGENINGENUR

For quality of life

wetenschapswinkel



Een Nieuwe Koekelt

Kloppend groen hart van Ede

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Summary

In the nineties of the twentieth century the use of allotments declined. As a consequence, local government in the community of Ede hesitated to ensure long-term rent of the allotment complex the Koekelt. Ten years later the situation has changed and the local government now proposes a long term rent, but under the condition that two soccer fields are realised within the boundaries of the allotment complex.

In the past fifteen years the Koekelt initiated and extended a successful cooperation with different public organisations. This valuable experience urged VAT-Ede, administrator for all allotment complexes in Ede, to use the current discussion to explore the possibilities for an open and multifunctional allotment complex in a park setting. For this exploration VAT-Ede asked support from the Science Shop of Wageningen University and Research Centre (WUR). This report is a reflection of this exploration.

Allotments are increasingly associated with a healthy lifestyle and a strong sense of social community. They form a meeting place within the multicultural society. In its most recent environmental policy the national government emphasises the benefits and relevance of these gardens². Still the Netherlands, in contrary of Germany and the UK, doesn't have specific laws for allotments.

The local government of Ede acknowledges that the Peppelensteeg-area lacks a functional structure. It is in a way a typical city edge area. The Koekelt, as one of the user groups of the Peppelensteeg-area, itself has in fact already gone multifunctional. Although different cooperating individuals and organizations use the designated area the terrain itself is only accessible for its members.

The concept of a multifunctional allotment complex in a park setting offers great opportunities for ecology, conservation of historical physical structures, education, city recreation and social integration of minority groups in the multicultural society.

This exploration shows that to be successful it is essential to widen the search area for integrating functions beyond the present allotment complex boundaries. With this report the VAT-Ede gardeners declare to be willing to contribute actively to a new multifunctional allotment complex in a park setting: The New Koekelt, a green hart for Ede. The expected city expansion, the present ecological, cultural and social values in the area are of sufficient importance to the local government of Ede to take this offer seriously.

Developing a specified policy for allotments should be an important point of interest for the local government of Ede. It can offer clarity in terms off legal security for the status of the area. Specific policy concerning allotments can also help the local government to define what kind of development is to be approved of or not. Because specific policy is still very rare in the Netherlands local government of Ede can differentiate itself, and become a leading party.

For further exploration of the possibilities three questions will need to be answered:

- What specific desires do residents of Veldhuizen have and what possibilities for cooperation can be identified?
- How to stimulate the involvement of users from Dutch and non-Dutch origine.
- How can cooperation with the local government of Ede be shaped. Elements for discussion are: design, use, execution and management.

The result of this investigation is a broadly supported vision concerning the future of the Koekelt. Both this vision and the supporting report provide a helping hand from the gardeners of VAT-Ede to the local government of Ede. Both offer a perspective for cooperation between gardeners and local government to turn the Peppelensteeggebied into a green engine for the municipality of Ede.

2 Website Ministry of VROM: <http://www.vrom.nl/pagina.html?id=34213&term=volkstuinten>