

EPUB

Less loopholes, less slipping through the net.

Get busy with caring
neighbourhoods



SAAMO

Less loopholes, less slipping through the net

The project 'Caring neighbourhoods: 'less loopholes, less slipping through the net' was finalized in a three-year timeframe in four rural municipalities in Flanders. This publication provides you with all knowledge and materials developed by SAAMO during this process. Local government is the starting point for its expertise, yet the fuel for a caring neighbourhood may just as well be a civil society organisation, citizen's initiative or health care institution. So don't stop reading if you're not an alderman of Welfare or not working within a municipal context. Do not expect an academic report either, but rather a case study which is presented to you in a clear fashion. We are convinced that, when you have read it, you will feel more the need to go out to caring neighbourhoods.

“The warmth of the project reflects the warmth of the municipality. It has to be our focus to keep the warmth during the process.”

Caring neighbourhoods can strengthen the neighbourhood connexion and narrow the gap between professional social services. A caring neighbourhood, as a beacon in our changing society.

Start with immersing yourself in the vision of caring neighbourhoods. Read about its context, challenges, how to strike the right balance and to get ready for the future. Embrace the challenge, because from a lighthouse you have a magnificent view: a caring neighbourhood as perspective for the neighbourhood of tomorrow.

Adhering to a strong local social policy is the starting point. Read about the approach and explore the link between caring neighbourhoods and said strong local social policy. With 8 building stones you set the course for caring neighbourhoods. The 3 starting points, 3 principles and 3 roles of the frame of reference are buoys that can help you with that.

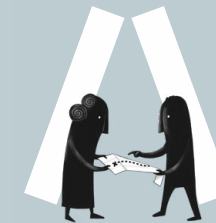
Moor to the last dock, the practise: 20 tools, developed and tested in the 4 pilot municipalities. Get inspired by the various downloads. They are anchors to gather ideas and methods which are easy to apply. Now then, everyone on board and cast off! You're in for a captivating journey, promise.



Vision

Read about its context, challenges, how to strike the right balance and to get ready for the future.

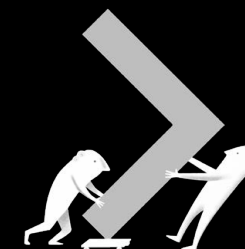
05 ▶



Approach

Explore the link between caring neighbourhoods and the strong local social policy. Discover the 8 building stones and the 3 fundamentals of the frame of reference.

10 ▶



Practise

Familiarize with the 20 practise-based tools that will guide you along in developing caring neighbourhoods in your municipality.

26 ▶

Caring neighbourhoods in your municipality

Each municipality knows its social difficulties such as poverty and loneliness. How do you tackle those difficulties? How do you do that in a goal-oriented and feasible way? What if on top of that there are large differences between the different neighbourhoods in your municipality?

The merging of municipalities have led to centralization and upscaling. Services and facilities left the villages and relocated in the centre of a larger municipality. For a lot of people that led to a greater distance between them and services and facilities. Nowadays municipalities want to change that. For residents in a socially vulnerable position especially, customization and close proximity to public service assistance and services are of the utmost importance. Caring neighbourhoods may contribute significantly to obtaining that.

A caring neighbourhood is a place where people feel at home and live comfortably, where they can meet each other, look out for each other and close proximity to public service assistance and services make for a warm living environment.

CARING NEIGHBOURHOODS IN THE WHOLE OF FLANDERS

In 2021 Wouter Beke, Flemish minister of Welfare, launched a project subsidy for Caring neighbourhoods in Flanders and Brussels.

Local governments and care and welfare organisations are challenged to coordinate their social policy to neighbourhood level and bringing it close to residents. Beke's call was answered enthusiastically with no less than 152 project submissions. 133 of which will receive financial aid and substantive coaching by the Flemish government in the course of two years (2022-2024). SAAMO is involved in about twenty case files.

THIS IS SAAMO

Community workers of SAAMO bring vulnerable people together and work together with them to come to concrete solutions. They do this with innovative project work and committed community work. They create models, encourage improvements in policy and legislation and build public awareness. Partnerships with governments, civil society and private players are crucial in obtaining that.

Why SAAMO

SAAMO knows the target group and has expertise in outreaching and participative work, community work, under-protection, community building and setting up partnerships.

Convinced?

This publication will provide you with all the knowledge and materials developed by SAAMO over the past years. Get inspired to initiate the development of caring neighbourhoods in your municipality as well. Good luck!

The result of team play

The project 'Caring neighbourhoods: less loopholes, less slipping through the net', a collective initiative of SAAMO Limburg and SAAMO West Flanders, ran from September 2018 until December 2021. It was a process oriented on practise and policy development and grafted onto field work, innovation and reflection. The experience acquired during this is reflected in this publication.

EXPERIMENTING

We experimented with practises in the pilot municipalities Pelt and Hamont-Achel (Limburg), Moorslede and Deerlijk (West Flanders). These four rural municipalities made space, time and resources available. Together we searched for an approach which guarantees that caring neighbourhoods are also catering to the needs of residents in a vulnerable position and to hidden poverty in rural and small-town areas.

Other municipalities could participate in the provincial 'exchange tables'.

MAGNIFYING GLASS

The research group Vonk3 of the Thomas More College monitored the project throughout its duration. Meanwhile a scientific reflection group studied the insights and questions relating to the frame of reference (the 8 building stones).

The AFCM monitored the project and gave direction from the local authorities' vantage point.

CERA, The Doctor Daniël De Coninck Fund and Porticus provided financial support.

INSIDE KNOWLEDGE

Former projects and initiatives of SAAMO laid down the foundation. Read more? Download these SAAMO publications.

- ▶ [Everyone protected: proactive action against under-protection on a local level \(2014\)](#)
- ▶ [Community restaurants on the menu \(2014\)](#)
- ▶ [Schedule care networks \(2015\)](#)
- ▶ [The STEK: strong move for social protection \(2023\)](#)

Vision

Caring neighbourhoods can be a beacon in our changing society. Explore, pick a clear direction and keep everyone on board. Embrace the challenge, because from a lighthouse you have a magnificent view: a caring neighbourhood as perspective for the neighbourhood of tomorrow.



06 ▶ A changing context

07 ▶ A challenging task

08 ▶ A right balance

09 ▶ A perspective

A changing context

Society is constantly evolving. The same goes for the neighbourhood's social life. These changes effect the relationship between neighbours and how they coexist.

Increasing diversity

An increase in diversity is a given in any neighbourhood. There's an aging group with chronic health problems. Person following budgets result in more handicapped people living at home or in the neighbourhood. There are residents with a migration background, one-parent families, housing for specific target groups and so much more.

Less opportunities to meet

Parish hall meetings are a thing of the past. Places to meet each other spontaneously, like the baker, the corner store, the shoemaker, the pub, the post or the bank. We do our daily shopping in the supermarket down the block. We spend our spare time now at the gym or the community centre in the next central municipality.

Higher thresholds

The increase in individualism has a dire effect on society. Thresholds between neighbours seem higher. This leads to loneliness and shyness to ask or act. In a rule people are willing to help their neighbours, but don't want to impose. Mutual help between neighbours doesn't always happen spontaneously.

Larger distance to social services

Public image of the OCMW (Social Service Department in a town), centralization, digitalisation, meetings by appointment ... This only increases the distance to social services and reduces the knowledge surrounding the provision of services.

Realisation of rights is under pressure

Services are islands with a specialized provision. This results in a fragmentation in care and assistance services. The mutual knowledge is limited and complicates specific referrals. This puts pressure on the realisation of rights.

“You can't help everyone, but everyone can help anyone, this is the reflex you want to see with the general public.”



NEED FOR DETERMINATION

A challenging task

A changing society challenges us to strengthen the connexion between neighbourhoods. Connexion between residents themselves, but also with social services and policy. The caring neighbourhood can offer a solution.

The concept 'caring neighbourhood' has become a household name in the care and welfare world in a relatively short period of time. In recent years a number of leading publications have been published which have inspired SAAMO to get involved with caring neighbourhoods.

- **Community-oriented care. The active caring neighbourhood as model for the future for Flanders and Brussels**
(VVDC and Information centre 'Woonzorg' (residential care) Brussels — 2016)
- **The inspirational memo 'Caring Neighbourhoods'**
(Flemish government, department WVG) — 2018)
- **Get to work with community-oriented care**
(Dany Dewulf & Elke Verlinden - AFCM) — 2019)

Stimulate connexion between neighbours, make sure that people feel at home in their living environment, collaboration between professionals at community level, support people in realising their rights, meeting hidden care needs.

The challenges are huge.

Building a caring neighbourhood demands persistence and stamina. And 'grinta' as the Italians say so powerfully when talking about determination.

“Building caring neighbourhoods is daring to build dreams and persevering in spite of adversary.”



A right balance

The characteristics of a caring neighbourhood are in itself not new. The innovating approach lies in its community-based approach: everyone living in the neighbourhood or who is (professionally) involved, is part of the solution.

What is care?

SAAMO uses the term 'care' in the broader sense of the word, as a collective name for welfare, living and care.

- **Welfare:** This concerns financial support, strengthening people, meeting, preventive health, psychological and physical wellbeing, realising rights, social network and meaning something.
- **Living:** This concerns suitable housing, a quality living environment, mobility, right to housing, healthy housing quality, housing in a safe and familiar environment that is affordable.
- **Care:** This concerns staying healthy, getting better, living with a illness or handicap, care surrounding birth and senior care, home care, nursing, formal and informal care, volunteer care, 'bemoeizorg' (interfering care) and health care facilities.

What is a neighbourhood?

A 'neighbourhood' doesn't have a clear definition and is different in a urban or rural context. SAAMO takes a village, hamlet or borough as a standard for a neighbourhood in a rural municipality. Residents identify with it and it offers sufficient scale to find collaboration and numeral data.

Care and social protection in balance

The caring neighbourhood of tomorrow must take pride in including all residents and in guaranteeing protection for everyone. Less strong competences and a feeble socio-economic position increase the risk of vulnerability of multiple groups in our society. Including all residents in vulnerable positions in what we want to achieve with our caring and inclusive neighbourhoods projects is obvious. It cannot only centre around the chronically ill senior or the neighbour in a wheelchair. The recently recognized asylum seeker and the single mum living below the poverty line are also part of a neighbourhood.

Solidarity and warm meeting opportunities in the neighbourhood are the obvious aims, but taking care of the neighbourhood doesn't only involve warm solidarity in which neighbours help each other with small practical things or just by being there for each other. High expectations regarding neighbourly assistance may not lead to saving on professional care or financial aid. The neighbourhood isn't a safety net for a withdrawing care state, but in fact a reinforcement. It adds something.

Cold solidarity and social security are also important to give people in vulnerable positions a push on the social ladder. They have to be able to realise their rights. On top of which professional involvement, in a certain context, remains paramount to reach and involve those people.

A structural poverty policy is necessary in order for people to participate in daily community life in a quality manner. Affordable housing with an adequate income is a major driving force in this.

A perspective

SAAMO translates the characteristics of a caring neighbourhood in the imagery 'less loopholes, less slipping through the net'. That's the caring neighbourhoods' perspective. The goals 'less loopholes' and 'less slipping through the net' stand on their own, but are also inextricably bound up with each other.

'Less loopholes' provide an acceptable life quality for everyone

- People with care and welfare questions know what kind of assistance and services are available to them and what their possible rights are.
- They know where they can turn to with questions and can count on a good reception.
- They know about (in)formal contact persons in their neighbourhood who assist them in finding the way to affordable care.
- People are addressed pro-actively by asking them about their possible needs.
- Professional care and welfare workers know each other and what they offer so that they can smoothly refer signals of people from the neighbourhood.
- An introductory meeting with a care or welfare organisation starts from a broad look at all life domains.

'Less slipping through the net' makes sure that all people feel at home in their neighbourhood

- People connect with others in the neighbourhood, tailored to each individual needs.
- There are various meeting opportunities where everyone finds its place and gets to know other people.
- The public space is ideal for spontaneous encounters.
- Neighbours with a physical or mental handicap can participate on the basis of their talents and there is space to tell their life stories.
- Good contacts lead to smooth mutual neighbourly assistance and support.

The connexion between the loopholes and the net

Committing to professional proximity and community gatherings makes sure that 'less loopholes' and 'less slipping through the net' fortify each other. You can read this in the adjacent testimonies.

“Miet of the Local Service Centre came to pick me up to go to the community restaurant. My family aid informed Miet that I was too afraid to take that step. During my first visit I already had a friendly encounter with a woman living a few streets down.”



“Every Wednesday morning a couple of the mothers hang around the school gate. We talk about our lives. This way I learnt that the OCMW can help me along with the care for my sick child and by intervening in the school bill.”



Approach

Committing to a strong local social policy is the starting point. With the wheel of 8 building stones you then set course for caring neighbourhoods. 3 starting points, 3 principles and 3 roles form the foundation of the frame of reference. Buoys that help you navigate while realising caring neighbourhoods.

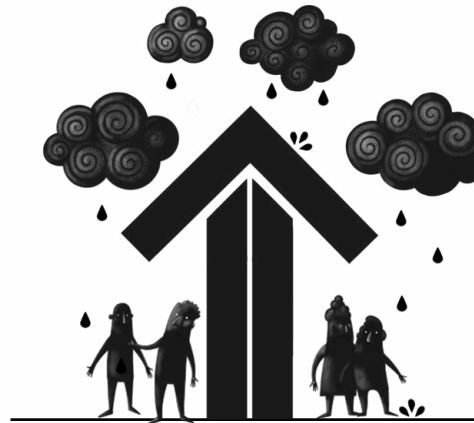
- 11 ▶ Strong local social policy**
- 12 ▶ 8 building stones**
- 23 ▶ 3 starting points**
- 24 ▶ 3 principles**
- 25 ▶ 3 roles**

Strong local social policy

Face poverty structurally is an impossible task for a local government on its own. The most powerful driving forces like the 'groeipakket' (Flemish child benefits), housing and unemployment benefits are instruments of the supralocal level. A local government can take supporting measures to improve the wellbeing of the residents and by doing so making a difference for an individual citizen.

A quality welfare policy is a necessity, especially to include vulnerable residents in an inclusive and caring society. The lines of force of the decree 'Local Social Policy' impose measures on the government to meet those requirements:

- Local Social Policy as part of the long-term planning
- Management of the local assistance and services
- Accessible assistance and services and tackle under-protection
- Socialisation of the social assistance and services



Caring neighbourhoods does meet in part those lines of forces.

Because in a caring neighbourhood:

- Professional help is known and accessible.
- Care and welfare work together, tailored to the needs of the neighbourhood
- Everyone feels at home
- There are meeting opportunities
- Neighbours help each other

Committing to caring neighbourhoods implies therefore committing to an innovative welfare policy.

“Give services the chance to get involved with caring neighbourhoods, without seeing this as a project, but rather as a regular functioning that should be adopted by every municipality.”

GUIDELINES

Frame of reference with 8 building stones

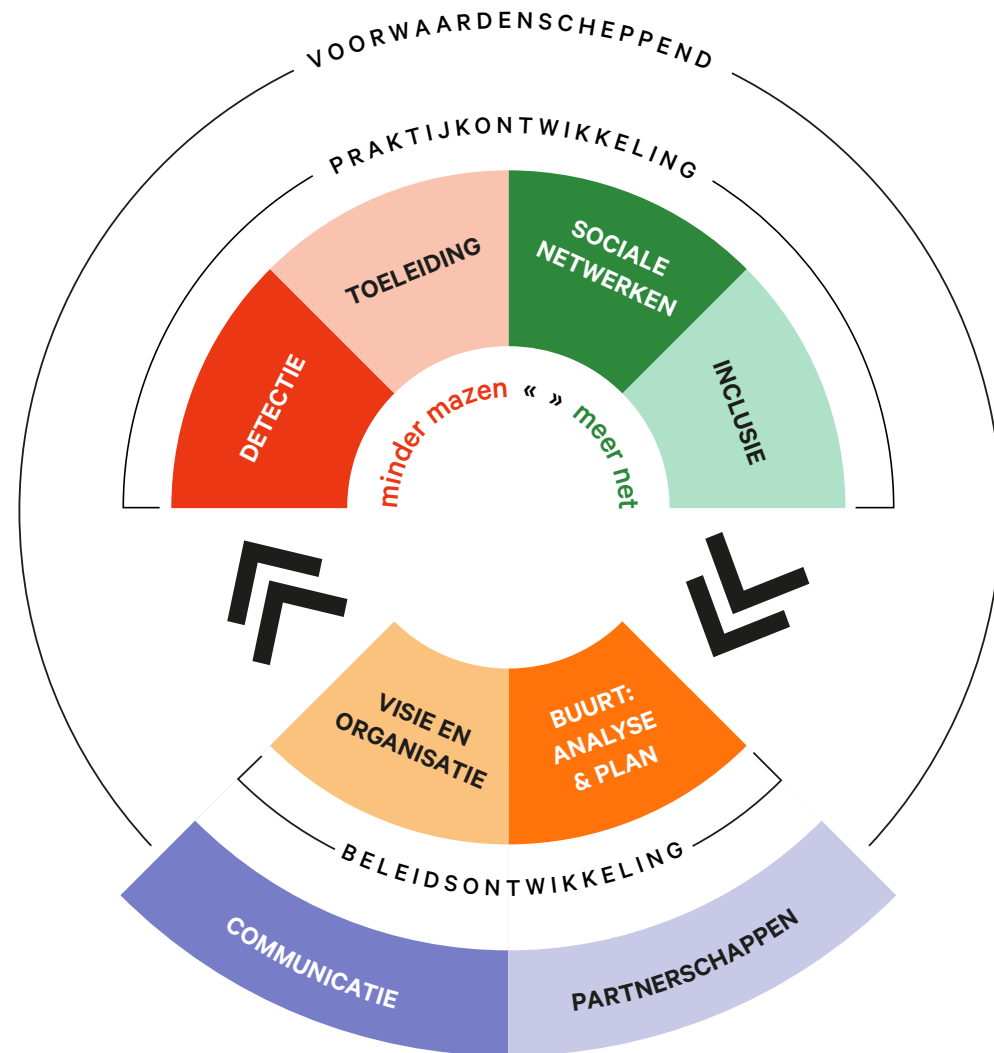
The Association of Flemish Cities and Municipalities (AFCM) created the theoretical organisation model called 'community-oriented care'. This model consists of 8 functions. This inspired SAAMO to develop the frame of reference for caring neighbourhoods. The frame of reference as well counts 8 building stones and is a practical guideline to, from a community-oriented approach, commit to caring neighbourhoods.

Thanks to the help of Vonk3 of the Thomas More College the frame of reference has been gradually become more streamlined. With new names and clearer proportions between the building stones. The result of this process is the frame of reference lying here before you.

Vonk3 provides more scientific monitoring

How does turning the model of the 8 functions of community care management into practice contributes to a more caring neighbourhood? In the research report you read the findings. This includes turning the model into practise in the 4 pilot municipalities (Deerlijk, Moorslede, Pelt and Hamont-Achel), the role of the professional and of local government, the surplus value of working with the frame of reference and recommendations for the practise.

- ▶ [Download the research report \(link with pdf\)](#)
 - ▶ [Read more about the evaluation research](#)
-



3 clusters

Each building stone contributes to a caring neighbourhood, but the building stones don't stand on their own. They are clustered because they relate to each other in a certain way.

There are 3 clusters: practise development, policy development and enabling building stones. Durable results are only obtained by adhering to all building stones. But not everything has to happen all at once. The actions can be done in stages and be divided among partners.

Practise development

The 4 goal-oriented building stones in the cluster 'practise development', namely detection, guidance, social networks and inclusion, are the core of what working on caring neighbourhoods entails. Detection and guidance prevents less people to slip through the welfare net. Social networks and inclusion lead to more connexion between local residents.

The practises falling under these building stones, are unfolded on site. Actions take place in neighbourhoods and close to people.

As stated before the terms 'less loopholes' and 'less slipping through the net' are inextricably bound.

Policy development

The 2 building stones in the cluster 'policy development', namely neighbourhood: analysis & plan and vision & organisation, contribute to a structural and durable way of working. You work on a long-term plan, from below with local residents. You guide and facilitate that participative process from above.

A dynamic cycle

Practise and policy development relate to each other cyclically and are done at the same time. The term 'development' emphasises the process-oriented approach. This frame of reference has therefore no start or end point. Practise and policy development are constantly connected and cannot be separated. They form a dynamic cycle.

Enabling building stones

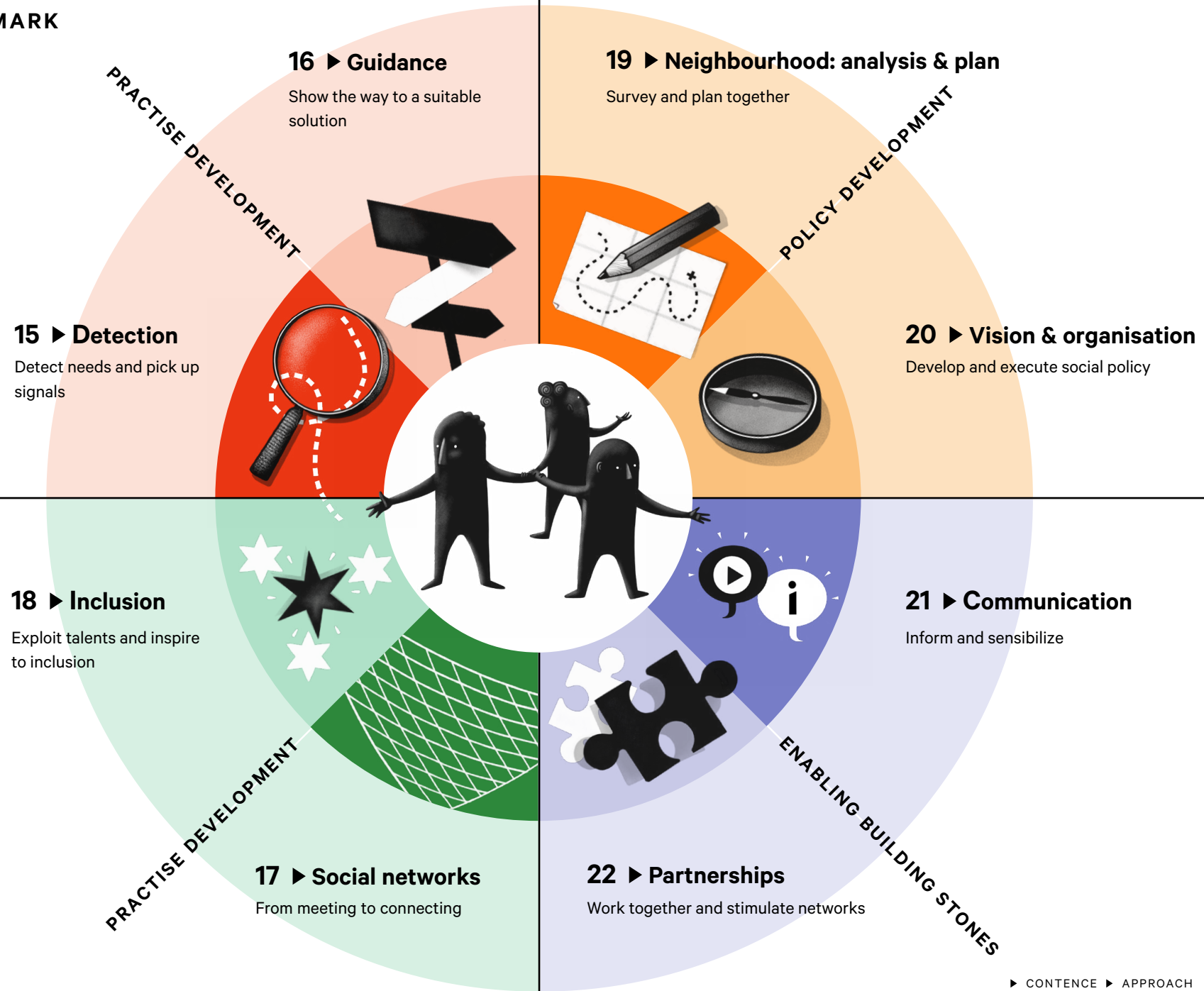
The 2 remaining building stones, communication and partnerships, are necessary to realise the other building stones. They don't stand on their own, but form the basis.

THE SURPLUS VALUE

The frame of reference for caring neighbourhoods creates a surplus value in different ways:

- It clarifies the 8 building stones
- It creates a common language
- It contributes to shared goals (less loopholes, less slipping through the net).
- It unites different actors and interventions and connects them.
- It initiates a (new) way of working (together).
- It gives way to a structural and durable work method.

BOOKMARK



Detection

Detect needs and pick up signals

An assistance trajectory usually starts with a physical reception. The help seeker then already found the way and has notion of what the service or organisation has to offer him. What precedes this doesn't get enough attention. That's why hidden problems remain under the radar. For not everyone finds the way to the appropriate assistance or knows the right contact points. A proactive reflex is necessary to detect needs or to pick up signals.

Everyone can detect

Not only professional care and welfare workers can detect needs. Local merchants, society members, local residents and volunteers also play an important role. Creating a safe context is crucial, next to an active listening attitude, observing, showing respect and dealing with the shared information in a discrete way.

TOOLS

- ▶ Working with referral cards
- ▶ Organise a call event
- ▶ Detect with a visitors team for seniors

A sympathetic ear

It is so that detection revolves around detecting care and welfare questions. However, a simple sympathetic ear can do wonders. It isn't always necessary to ask a lot of questions. People mainly appreciate your taking the time to listen.

Other angles to detect needs or to inform target groups are among other things detection in a school context, a guideline for a broad intake during a first consultation or detection in life's turning points such as death, retirement, divorce or illness.



Guidance

Showing the way to a suitable solution

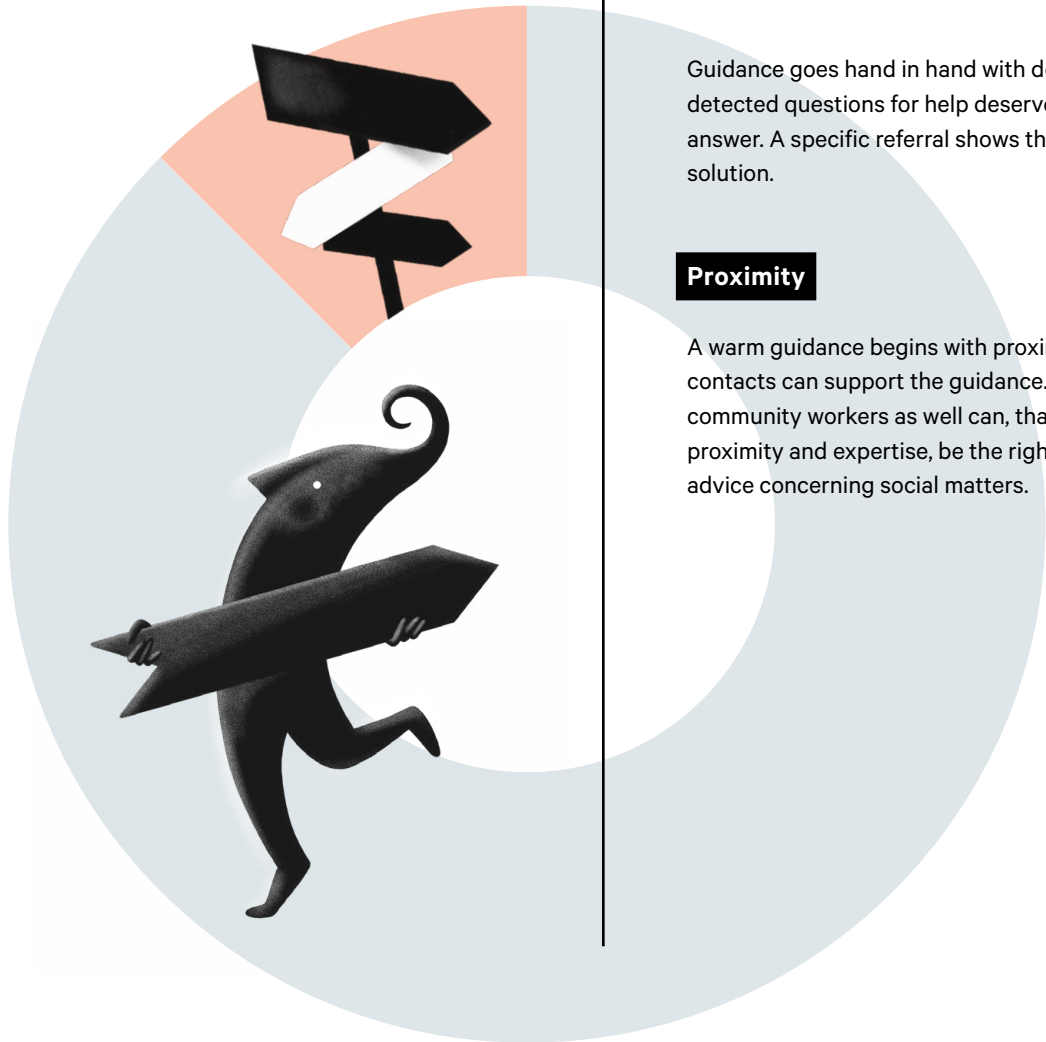
Guidance goes hand in hand with detection, as detected questions for help deserve an appropriate answer. A specific referral shows the way to a suitable solution.

Proximity

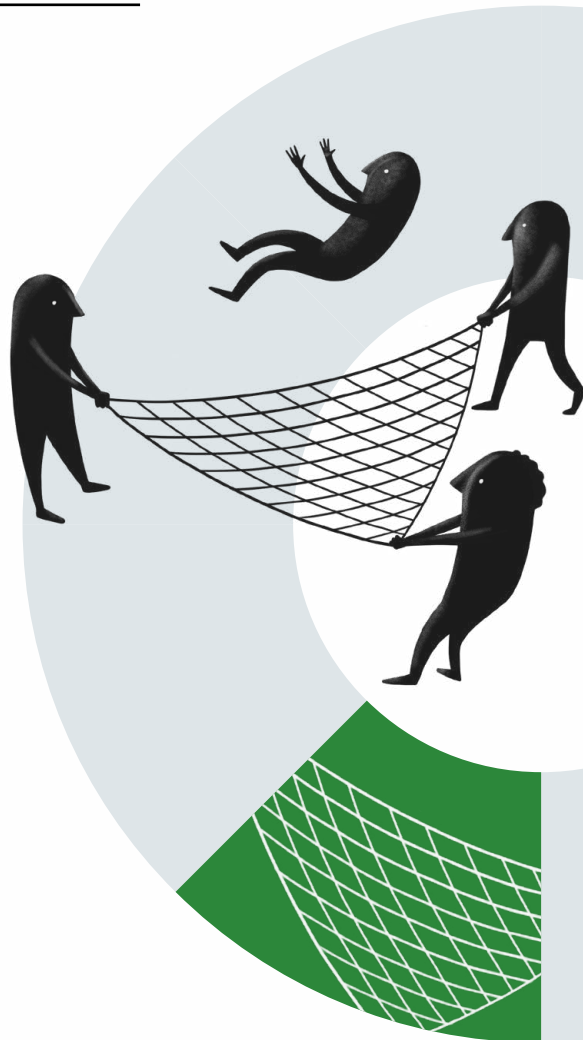
A warm guidance begins with proximity. Local contacts can support the guidance. But corner and community workers as well can, thanks to their proximity and expertise, be the right persons to offer advice concerning social matters.

A broad intake

A broad intake includes multiple life domains such as housing, health, income and education. And don't forget informal questions about meeting or leisure opportunities either. Receptionists doing the broad intake can, where necessary, guide people to specialized organisations tackling more complex issues. The link with the Integrated Broad Reception offers possibilities as well.



Social networks



From meeting to connecting

Social networks are a dam against loneliness and social isolation and stimulating neighbourly assistance. Connexion starts with creating meeting opportunities. A weekly community restaurant or a travelling library are great initiatives, but do not suffice. Meeting isn't just about doing fun things together. An open mind, without prejudice, letting people feel that they matter, that they can speak freely and that they will be listened to, that is key.

Variation in meeting

Not everyone is looking forward to a wide selection of activities offered by a local community centre. A mere bench on a park can connect people. There is need of a multitude and variety of small and durable meeting opportunities. Listen to what people are hoping to find in their neighbourhood.

Some inspiring examples: a civil initiative organising a weekly gathering in a parish hall, neighbourhood walks with benches, matching neighbours with shared interests ...

TOOLS

- ▶ [Bringing neighbours together](#)
- ▶ [Brochure for accessible meeting activities](#)
- ▶ [Building a network of caring neighbours](#)
- ▶ [Organising a neighbourhood activity: a guidance](#)
- ▶ [Co-creation 'Neighbours day'](#)

Stimulating and nurturing

A government can choose for a local selection offered by the leisure service or the local welfare centre. Intervening in public areas is also a valuable option. Making rooms available for free invites neighbours. Meeting occurs within society life as well, on sporting playgrounds, in neighbourhood committees or with teams of 'Mooimakers' (Flemish organisation against littering). Maybe check with the residential care centre whether their infrastructure can be a surplus value. Valuable meeting opportunities need to be stimulated and nurtured.

Support with neighbourly help

Neighbourly help often occurs spontaneously. But for whom it's difficult to ask for help, support is more than welcome. To be able to offer that support, neighbourhood proximity is vital. Knowing the neighbourhood and its residents can lead to temporary assistance for the single neighbour who had knee surgery. Working with a digital neighbourhood tool such as Hoplr or Give a Day can be very handy.



Inclusion



Make use of talents and inspire to inclusion

SAAMO looks at inclusion from two angles: person-orientated and society-orientated. There's a social and structural component, the capacity of the individual and the neighbourhood capacity.

When developing caring neighbourhoods both angles are important. A lot of meeting opportunities and a strong connected neighbourhood make for a sound breeding ground for inclusion. Each time the importance of proximity and knowing the neighbourhood and its residents surfaces.

Strengths and talents

Inclusion means that everybody belongs and matters. The girl next door with the mental handicap, the senior with limited mobility, the guy suffering from depression or the family who has to live on a very limited budget. Acknowledging that they all have something to offer demands attention for strengths and talents. By engaging in conversation you'll find out what people's passions are or what they are good at.

TOOLS

► [An inclusive look at the volunteer's intake](#)

More than lowering thresholds

Inclusion also means that actors in the neighbourhood develop the reflex to recognize people's talents and make use of them.

Organisations have to contemplate their own role in working on an inclusive neighbourhood. They can lower thresholds or even eliminate them.

Working on lowering thresholds can be simple: a neighbourhood committee suggests a cheaper alternative for the annual expensive barbecue. But sometimes it is harder: involve the asylum seeker living in the LOI house — Lokaal Opvang initiatief (local shelter initiative) — in the working of the community centre.

Involving various target groups in the activities doesn't suffice. An inclusive approach means daring to ask yourself how you, as an organisation, can really connect to everyone in the neighbourhood.



Neighbourhood: analysis & plan



Survey and plan together

A neighbourhood analysis is a starting point to build on a caring neighbourhood. A neighbourhood analysis helps to understand who and what lives in the neighbourhood. This knowledge enables residents and neighbourhood actors to write together a plan of action, the neighbourhood plan.

Quantitative and qualitative data

A good neighbourhood analysis collects numerical data and qualitative data about the neighbourhood. How do residents experience their living environment? What's the perspective of the residential care centre, the school or the small business man? How can the perspective of the family doctor, family aid or pharmacist improve the scan of the neighbourhood? There are many ways to put those questions into action: conversations with key figures, questionnaires, neighbourhood chats, etc.

Involve residents and local actors

By involving the neighbourhood in its analysis the process takes off. Analysis is aimed at questions con-

TOOLS

- ▶ [Making up a neighbourhood analysis](#)
- ▶ [Presenting a neighbourhood analysis](#)
- ▶ [Draw up a neighbourhood plan](#)

cerning caring neighbourhoods like: Do you like living here? What are the meeting places? What is lacking? Do you find the way to assistance? Can you easily fall back on a neighbour for help? Are the contacts warm? Do you have a contact? Naturally other aspects come into play as well like traffic, green maintenance or the quality of sidewalks, but that's not where the focus lies.

From analysis to plan

The result of the analysis is discussed with local policy, residents and all the neighbourhood actors. The neighbourhood plan formulates concrete agreements on the allocation of tasks, timing and responsibilities.

Work in progress

The neighbourhood analysis and the neighbourhood plan are tools. They guide the other building stones and the actions resulting from it. Making a neighbourhood analysis and a neighbourhood plan is not a onetime initiative. Ongoing evaluation, adjusting the planning or making new analyses are inherent in the realisation of a caring neighbourhood.



Vision and organisation



Developing, implementing social policy and making it sustainable

Setting out guidelines together

A vision provides guidance and direction to 'what, where, who and how'. A vision is not static and is refined along the way, together with all partners. A shared vision leads to ideas and actions everyone can get behind which stimulates people to go for it. Such a vision doesn't come to fruition from behind a desk, but starts from policy participation. In an ideal world, a top-down and a bottom-up approach are intertwined.

The vision dictates the content of the actions for the different building stones. The organisation is the engine of the caring neighbourhoods. That organisation takes place within and between municipality services, but also with as many external partners as possible. Coordination is therefore crucial.

TOOLS

- ▶ [Building on a organisational structure](#)
- ▶ [Presenting the vision and approach](#)
- ▶ [Sustainability: a process](#)
- ▶ [Sustainability: assessment frameworks](#)

Operational team

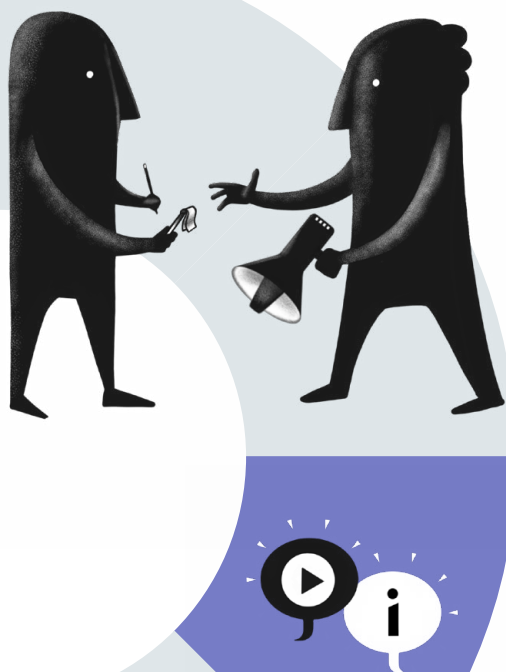
Professional proximity is a given, preferably from a community healthcare service employee. The field worker leads the way flanked by other co-workers. For instance from a local welfare centre, 'Huis van het Kind' or an external professional whose organisation also benefits from a community-based orientation. Together they form an operational team. They are among the residents and carry out planned actions.

Sustainability

How to continue with a caring neighbourhood? The road from a temporary project to a sustainable local policy is a dynamic long-term process and demands a structural approach. The course of that process varies because each local context is different. We distinct five stages in the process towards sustainability. The eight building stones of the reference framework are the compass. During its process 'vision and organisation' are gradually explored further.



Communication



Inform and sensitize

Obtaining suitable information allows you to bring the right information to the care and assistance seeker. Stories are a powerful tool to sensitize people.

Obtaining suitable information

In detection SAAMO uses info cards for specific target groups. No extensive brochure, but a kind of menu card giving insight into the selection. Parents for example need information about home services while young families want to know more about child care or education. It can be a surplus value to involve the target group in the process of creating information carriers. SAMMO put it to the test. People in poverty assess ten brochures of the OCMW on understandability and readability. Unanimously they picked the same brochure, the one that was designed in collaboration with the target group.

TOOLS

► [Guide to change-oriented communication](#)

Sensibilizing with stories

Stories motivate and inspire to care about the neighbourhood and your neighbours. Little stories about a neighbour help, maintenance of flower boxes in the street or organizing a community activity are instruments to sensitize.

Mediatize that little helping and commitment, in the municipality paper, with a photo contest, on the website, with movies on social media.

Persuasive translation

A persuasive translation helps to profile caring neighbourhoods and to propagate the vision on a wide platform. It raises involvement in the municipality. It pays off to visibly go all out with a relatable image and an enticing slogan, let your creativity flow.



Partnerships



Working together and stimulating networks

The power of a caring neighbourhood lies in the potential of its partners. Anyone can participate in a caring neighbourhood using their competences, proximity or goals. This may vary from a small contribution to steady networks with informal, formal or sectoral representatives.

Possible partnerships

Partnerships are possible with:

- **A local government** that is focused on all the residents: OCMW, local service centre, leisure department, Huis van het Kind, mobility department ...
The leisure department and the OCWM organise the Buitenspeeldag (playing outdoors) together with the residents.
- **Primary partners** who are among the people: family doctor, family aid, home care, psychologist, pharmacy, physiotherapist ...
The family aid discusses some of the questions from the neighbourhood analysis with her clients.
- **Facilities and organisations** that are present in the neighbourhood: school, residential care centre, institution for handicapped persons, hospital,

TOOLS

- ▶ Do guide: Working together on care and welfare
- ▶ Letting schoolkids contribute to a caring neighbourhood
- ▶ Tips for collaborating with external partners

National Health Service, social housing, public transport ...

The school makes the playground and equipment available for community sports.

- **Informal players** with talents representing social capital: residents, societies, small businesses, civil initiatives, caregivers, neighbourhood committees ...
The neighbourhood committee involves the guy in a wheelchair who has a talent for designing a poster.

The local context and the neighbourhood plan determine on which partnerships the focus lies. Within these partnerships you can connect with one or more other building stones.

“What are inhibiting and stimulating factors in the collaboration between local government, care and welfare?”

The centre of Expertise Health Innovation of the UCLL College has researched it. You can read the results in the research report, the Do guide and the frame for reflection for more and better collaboration, and in the inspirational bundle ‘Care and welfare innovators’.



3 starting points

Make time

Working on caring neighbourhoods is a long-term commitment. It takes time and space to grow and to make mistakes. Local government has to search for ways to get this well-organised. That's not easy in a political context where focus lies on noticeable and short-term results. However, quick wins do not lead to the sustainable foundation which is required to change tendencies. Especially not in the current context of social changes. The realisation of caring neighbourhoods is done step by step.

Deploy personnel

Superman doing it all on his own? Even when you attach the highfalutin title of community care director to it, it still remains impossible. A one-man post, without links to other municipal services or external partners doesn't hold much power.

Work suitably

A copy-paste approach doesn't work. A small town with a lot of residents in vulnerable positions, without infrastructure, society life or facilities is more likely to have a few bumps in the road than a large neighbourhood with everything at their disposal.

Each neighbourhood is different. So work suitably. You cannot let caring neighbourhoods solely depend on strong partners. A visionary anticipation for handicapped people or a dynamic civil initiative can be an excellent draw for a caring neighbourhood. However, these opportunities cannot be found everywhere, and then it's up to local government to step up.

“Community-oriented working takes time to get to know each other, to invest time and resources, to work together respectfully and to learn to communicate with each other.”



3 principles

Acting proactively

Acting proactively means that a service provider takes steps himself to make sure that everyone can realise their rights.

There are different methods to make this happen:

- Working outreaching or location-oriented. This way you look actively for people in vulnerable positions yourself, who you would otherwise not reach.
- Informing people actively on their rights and sharing information about care provision.
- Committing to community work and organisations against poverty where visitors can turn to information and training, on top of leisure activities.
- Working with formal and informal networks, such as a local contact person, care actors like the doctor and home care, or even the mailman. From their proximity they can close the gap to the right assistance and service provision.

Working participatively

Working participatively is a way of government in which a local government constantly invites the residents to think along, to be part of the discussion and also to help decide. There occurs a permanent dialogue about the neighbourhood they live in, areas of improvement, actions surrounding the fight on poverty, quality housing, more care, better service provision, a more attractive public space, etc.

Building networks

Networking is key to the growth of caring neighbourhoods. A local government should choose for an optimal coordination with all partners that are active in the neighbourhood. Raising the involvement of neighbourhood actors was already important from the get-go and that starts with the neighbourhood analysis: What are the needs and opportunities of the neighbourhood? What can each player contribute to the solutions?

“You’d better form a solid safety net when there is a lot of collaboration between authorities.”



3 roles

Local government can be involved in the realisation of caring neighbourhoods in three different ways, each starting from a different responsibility:

- as director (= initiator, moderator)
- as actor (= implementor, organiser)
- as supporter (= facilitator, support)

The roles are starting from leadership and commitment. Let thereby meet the top-down and bottom-up approach 'in the middle'.

Role of director

In the role of director, local government takes the wheel and by doing so works on all 8 building stones. A local government forms the link between neighbourhoods and organisations and is therefore well placed to take on the role of director. Primarily, this role is of importance concerning the building stones surrounding policy development. Local government takes the wheel in this. From the director's seat, it's a challenge to create a link between all players involved across all policy domains. Deliberation might help to create different tiny networks, which are all committing to the caring neighbourhood.

Actor's role

Local government can assume the actor's role for a certain action or intervention. Think about the organisation of a community restaurant, offering home care, a grocery service or telling connecting stories in the municipality paper.

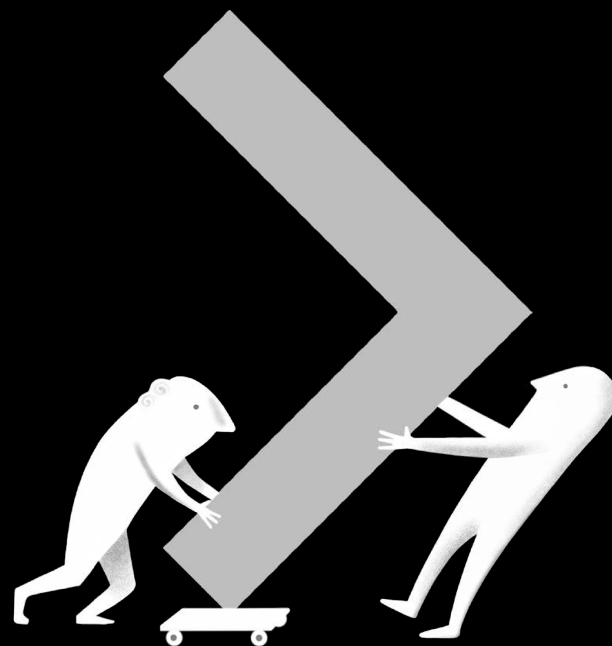
Supporter's role

The role of the supporter is mainly to facilitate practical and financial possibilities. A local government can allow neighbourhood committees a grant for a block party, making rooms available for meetings or set up a lending service with chairs, tables and umbrellas. A local government should and cannot do everything itself. Networks with partners, who stand on their own the next day, contribute to a caring neighbourhood.

“Individual demands and needs are considered in communal items. These are bundled in a community project and thus realised.”



Practice



Moor to the final dock: 20 tools, developed and tested in 4 pilot municipalities. Get inspired by various downloads to get busy in your home port. From presentations, sample letters, and memos to written out procedures and reports. They are anchor points to harvest ideas and methodologies which are easily applicable. And then now, all aboard and cast off!

27 ▶ Survey tools

Survey tools



DETECTION

- ▶ [Working with referral cards](#)
- ▶ [Organise a call event](#)
- ▶ [Detect with a visitors team for seniors](#)



SOCIAL NETWORKS

- ▶ [Bring together neighbourhood companions](#)
- ▶ [Brochure for accessible meeting activities](#)
- ▶ [Building a network for caring neighbours](#)
- ▶ [Organising a neighbourhood activity: a guidance](#)
- ▶ [Co-creation 'Neighbours day'](#)



INCLUSION

- ▶ [An inclusive look at the volunteer's intake](#)



NEIGHBOURHOOD: ANALYSIS & PLAN

- ▶ [Represent a neighbourhood analysis](#)
- ▶ [Present a neighbourhood analysis](#)
- ▶ [Draw up a neighbourhood plan](#)



VISION & ORGANISATION

- ▶ [Building on an organisational structure](#)
- ▶ [Present the vision and approach](#)
- ▶ [Sustainability: a process](#)
- ▶ [Sustainability: assessment frameworks](#)



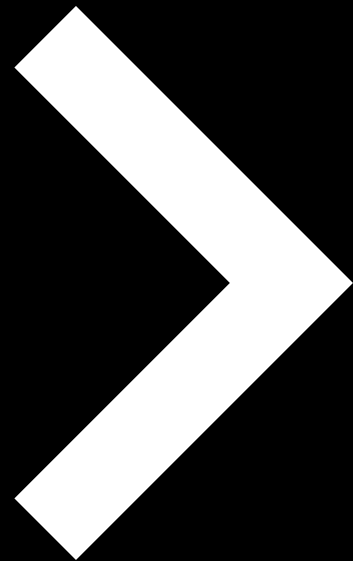
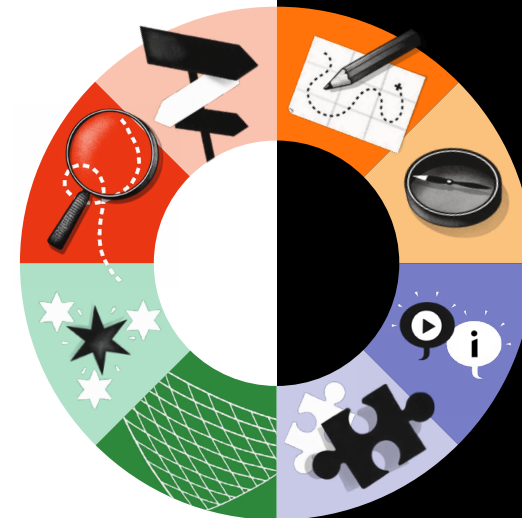
COMMUNICATION

- ▶ [Guide to change-oriented communication](#)



PARTNERSHIPS

- ▶ [Do guide: Working together on care and welfare](#)
- ▶ [Letting schoolkids contribute to a caring neighbourhood](#)
- ▶ [Tips for collaborating with external partners](#)



Working with referral cards



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Set-up and evaluation \(zip\)](#)
- [Equipment \(zip\)](#)
- [Training \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Primary workers such as family doctors, home nurses and family care workers know the residents' living environment. They sometimes pick up signals that worry them. These signals may be related to different life domains.

A warm referral can be a surplus value. Working with referral cards allows people in need to be referred by a familiar person to a fixed contact point within the municipality.

“We are getting to know each other better as services and are starting to take each other more into account, this also results in a better guidance.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Referral cards help local government and the professional network to work together efficiently. They make signals and care demands accessible and debatable. On top of that, the care seeker finds himself with the right local contact person.

Surplus value for a local government

Referral cards provide for a smooth and warm referral, through a familiar person.

Surplus value for a local network

Within the network you get a direct line to a nearby contact person.

WORK METHOD

A referral card contains information about the care and service and consists of a tear-strip. When there are questions or concerning signals the referrer starts a conversation and fills out the card together with the care seeker. The care seeker signs the tear-strip. The referrer hands the card over to the local contact person who, in his turn, contacts the care seeker. Together they look for a suitable solution.

Inform primary care workers with a short training on the work method of the referral card. Appoint regular local contact points in order to provide a sound guidance.

This tool is aimed at the professional network, but explore also the possibility for engaging volunteers.



Organising a call event



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Organisation \(zip\)](#)
- [Evaluation call event seniors \(corona\) \(pdf\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Contact by telephone helps to keep a finger on the pulse and to detect needs with people in the neighbourhood. That is something that municipalities noticed during the corona crisis. Parents couldn't appeal to their network anymore, resulting in the disappearance of valuable meeting opportunities. Contact by telephone filled that gap. A call event is an interesting work method we should keep applying.

“We are reaching people we didn't know before.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Contact by telephone is a quick way to detect concrete demands for help and to lend a sympathetic ear. A call event helps to reach people who weren't on the radar before.

Surplus value for a local government

Contact by telephone is a simple method to detect needs.

Surplus value for residents

Residents feel heard in their care needs and demands. Moreover, they can rely, whether for a longer period of time or not, on a sympathetic ear.

WORK METHOD

Use the step-by-step plan, explaining the approach, registration and follow up. Read the tips on empathetic listening.

Organise your call event as a one-time event or as a long-term trajectory, anything is possible.

You can call on professionals or volunteers for a call event. The conversation guide gives inspiration on which questions you can ask. Use the form to register needs.

Don't underestimate the value of a talk on the phone. Someone asking you how you are often does wonders. Explore the possibilities to keep in touch with people who need it over a long period of time.



Detecting with a visiting team for seniors



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Work method \(pdf\)](#)
- [Recruiting volunteers \(zip\)](#)
- [Training visiting teams \(zip\)](#)
- [House call \(zip\)](#)
- [Evaluation \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Seniors are often insufficiently informed of the assistance and service provision. Their social contacts in the neighbourhood are also decreasing. This can lead to isolations and thresholds getting to high to approach someone or to ask for help. Detecting with a visiting team for seniors may help to keep living longer and qualitatively in their familiar environment.

“Bundling individual signals and questions and work with those thematically, this way of working is an enrichment!”

SURPLUS VALUE

Detecting with a visiting team for seniors is a proactive method to inform seniors on the assistance and service provision and to listen to their questions. It helps to coordinate the senior policy better with the target group.

Surplus value for a local government

The municipality gets a clear sight on the living situation of seniors and can inform them on the available care and service.

Surplus value for residents

Care needs and demands from seniors are heard. A visiting team can listen to their questions and then give a warm referral to a contact person of the municipality.

WORK METHOD

Put together a visiting team of volunteers, phased by neighbourhood. The visiting team does one-time house calls with seniors. They inform them on the provision and sound them on possible needs or questions. Items like leisure activities, social contacts and society life must be included in this.

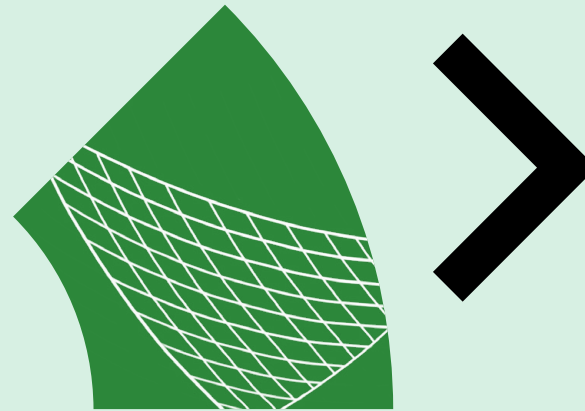
Prepare the volunteers of the visiting team thoroughly with training sessions.

The visiting team records signals in a findings file for general analysis.

In case of a written request for referral, the municipal contact person for senior citizens contacts the person in question. That person shall be informed on the provision and the individual needs shall be met at the desired place.



Bringing neighbour- hood companions together



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Neighbourhood companions \(zip\)](#)
- [Step-by-step plan for group \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Demand for and provision of neighbourly help slumbers in every street. It's just that the link between demand and provision doesn't happen naturally. Bringing neighbourhood companions together can offer a solution. It's an externally driven form of neighbourly help.

“It puts a smile on my face when I still receive messages from people who I matched as neighbourhood companion!”

SURPLUS VALUE

Neighbourhood companions assume a complementary role in the network of seniors, besides professional care and service.

Surplus value for a local government

In bringing neighbourhood companions together you bring something extra to the table on top of the spontaneous relations that already exist.

Surplus value for residents

Neighbourhood companions offer a solution for the need for companionship and help with small tasks. Things for which it's harder to bring in social services. For seniors having a limited network that's a surplus value.

WORK METHOD

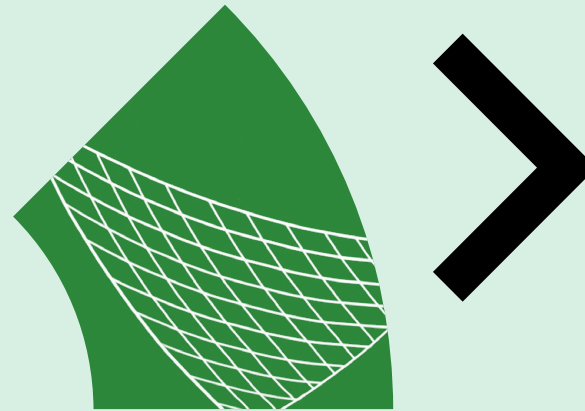
Neighbourhood companions are deployed for all sorts of limited tasks or companionship. Do you work with a visiting team for seniors, then these volunteers can sound for needs and questions for neighbourhood companions and if there are potential candidates among the seniors.

The contact person for senior citizens unites offer and demand. If there isn't a match, then the contact person looks for a different solution. After a match is made, the contact person pulls back. It is important that he or she remains approachable for both parties. Match seniors with similar needs. Some neighbourhood companions offer with pleasure practical help while others just prefer some company.

The status of the neighbourhood companion isn't officialised, but is placed in the same category as spontaneous neighbourly help.



Brochure for accessible meeting activities



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Brochure 'Hello Neighbour' \(pdf\)](#)
- [Accompanying letter neighbourhood associations \(word-doc\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Meeting opportunities are important for the home feeling in a neighbourhood. A neighbourhood activity is a good initiative, but not so easy to organise. Organising takes time and energy and making people enthusiastic to participate is easier said than done. The brochure 'Hello neighbour', a brochure for accessible meeting activities, helps you along.

“Never thought that meeting for local residents is such an important aspect.”

SURPLUS VALUE

The brochure may help to organise a neighbourhood activity easily, quickly and which is accessible to everyone. The information supports existing and starting neighbourhood committees, or enterprising residents. 'Hello neighbour' can challenge experienced neighbourhood committees to reach that neighbour who didn't participate in their activities before.

Surplus value for a local government

The brochure offers a concrete answer to the questions of residents who want to take initiative and hence contribute to neighbourhood connexion with an inclusive approach.

Surplus value for residents

The brochure goes a step further than a traditional neighbourhood barbecue and gives information about the support you might get from the municipality.

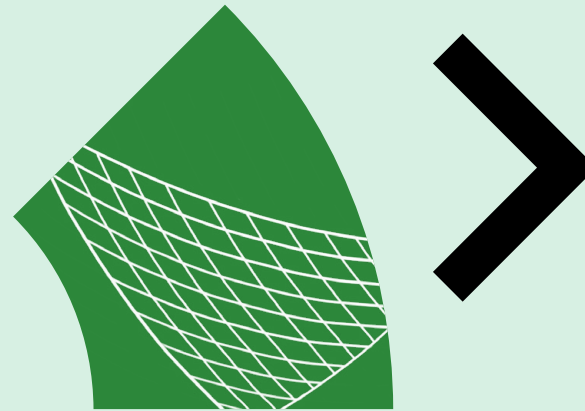
WORK METHOD

The brochure offers information about the municipality's support in organising neighbourhood activities. Think lending out equipment, a volunteer's assurance or a grant.

Discover the described activities. They are (financially) accessible and guarantee lots of fun for all ages. Per activity there are various focal points which could help you further along.



Build a network of caring neighbours



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Publication \(zip\)](#)
- [Approach \(zip\)](#)
- [Follow up \(zip\)](#)
- [Recruitment \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Residents are the eyes, ears and voice of their neighbourhood. They know as no other what's shaking and baking. A network of caring neighbours provides social connection. It's a crucial part of a caring neighbourhood, besides the proximity of professionals.

“We also need residents to realise suitable caring neighbourhoods.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Caring neighbours form the bridge between the neighbourhood and the local government, creating interaction.

Surplus value for a local government

A network of caring neighbours is active in the neighbourhood and provides feedback about people's needs. That provides useful info for a local government.

Surplus value for residents

Caring neighbours take on a meaningful commitment for their neighbourhood and neighbours. They increase the neighbourhood involvement.

WORK METHOD

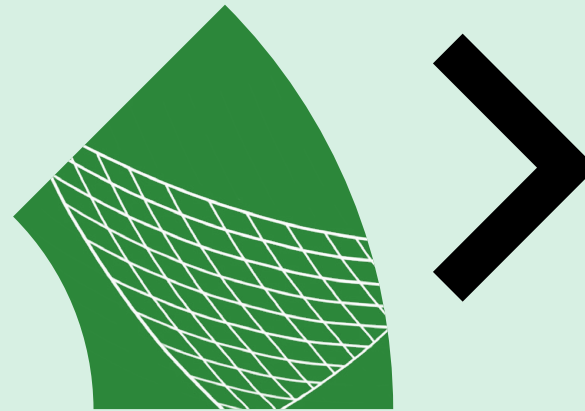
Look for residents who want to mean something for their neighbourhood. Ideally caring neighbours are proportionally spread over the neighbourhood. What precise role they want to assume, depends on their own skillset and motivation.

Coach and support caring neighbours in assuming their role. Provide intervision and training.

You may also choose to make use of digital volunteer or neighbourhood platforms to recruit people, place a vacancy or cater to the existing supply of neighbourhood groups.



Organising a neighbourhood activity: a guidance



Downloads

- [Guideline: organising a neighbourhood activity](#)
- [Tips: guiding a neighbourhood activity](#)
- [Practical examples 1 \(zip\)](#)
- [Practical examples 2 \(zip\)](#)
- [Practical examples 3 \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

A neighbourhood activity provides connexion. It's an ideal opportunity for residents to meet each other and to get acquainted. Preparing such an activity does require some brainwork from the professional. What do you want to do in the neighbourhood? How do you get started? What does it all entail practically? How do you advertise an activity?

The guideline helps you every step of the way.

“Involved neighbours make for warm neighbourhoods!”

SURPLUS VALUE

The clear five-step guideline makes sure that you are prepared to perfection. Each step the right questions are asked to make sure you do not overlook anything during the preparation.

Surplus value for a local government

Neighbourhood activities contribute to a solid community. An inclusive approach lowers the threshold. Contacts with residents will educate you about life in the neighbourhood.

Surplus value for residents

Neighbourhood activities contribute to the well-being of its residents. They stimulate social contact, offer opportunities for personal growth, and provide a positive experience like having fun together.

WORK METHOD

The ‘guideline’ challenges you to think about all aspects of the activity:

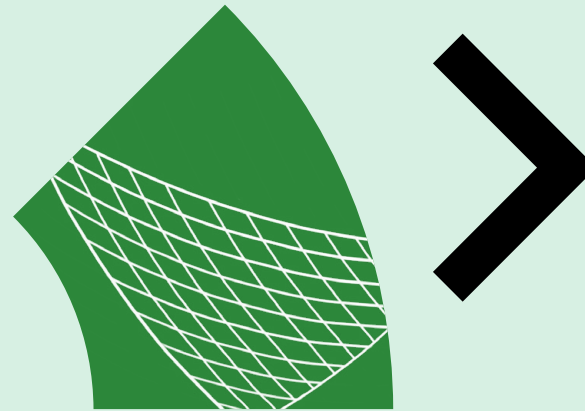
1. **Vision:** goal and playing field
2. **Practical:** for whom, with whom, content, form, where, when
3. **Thresholds:** cost, signing up, accessibility
4. **Communication:** clear info in plain language through the proper channels
5. **Evaluation:** feedback and lessons for the future

In ‘tips to guide a neighbourhood activity’ you read how to create a positive atmosphere, what the effective elements are of a positive basic attitude, and how to deal with difficult situations.

Get inspired by some examples.



Co-creation 'Neighbours day'



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Process co-creation \(Wingene\) \(pdf\)](#)
- [Announcement and organisation \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

'A good neighbour is worth more than a far friend', as the saying goes. Yet, many people hardly know their neighbours. 'Neighbours day' is an opportunity to make people come together, and an opportunity to shape the day together with committed residents. In time, this action may also stimulate 'little helping' in the neighbourhood.

“My husband and I were already toying with the idea to organise something for the neighbours. This was the little push we needed.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Organising 'Neighbours Day' together with residents opens doors. By joining forces and sharing creative ideas we create new innovative actions.

Surplus value for a local government

When neighbours take the lead in the organisation, more people and neighbourhoods are reached with a minimal deployment of personnel. The initiators can be approached to start up other projects.

Surplus value for residents

When actions are supported by local government, residents overcome their shyness and feel encouraged. Making a joint invitation available and announcing the initiative through various channels stimulates togetherness and enthusiasm.

WORK METHOD

1. As a local government, don't be afraid to leave the decisions to the residents. When the idea is coming from them, it gets carried and fuels enthusiasm.
2. Appeal to the residents to work out the day. Approach key figures personally, e.g. neighbourhood committees or people who are already active in the neighbourhood.
3. Develop the actions with enthusiastic residents.
4. Deploy professional support to assist communication and facilitate the actions. Send out joint invitations and provide tips for easy 'conversation starters'.
5. Make use of inspiring stories of the residents and broadcast them through different communication channels. Repetition works!
6. Look ahead and organise a follow-up meeting.

Get inspired by the approach in Wingene: 'Day of the Cosy Neighbours'



An inclusive look at the volunteer's intake



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Checklist inclusive volunteer's intake \(Word-doc\)](#)
- [Example intake file \(Word-doc\)](#)
- [Examples inclusive volunteers \(Word-doc\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Searching for and deploying volunteers usually starts from supply and demand. This limits the volunteer's chances to find a suitable vacancy, risking people to be left out. An inclusive look at the volunteer's intake helps to avoid this.

“We must look at the person, not the label.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Starting from the talents and the motivation of the volunteer opens up a range of opportunities. A fresh look at volunteer's work creates new connexions and creative vacancies. The focus lies on strengths and talents.

Surplus value for a local government

Making good use of the strengths and talents of residents fills small needs and tackles faults. All residents can mean something to their neighbourhood.

Surplus value for a local network

You can draw on a large pool of people who can bring their talents to the table.

Surplus value for residents

This work method makes use of the strengths of the residents and expands their social network.

WORK METHOD

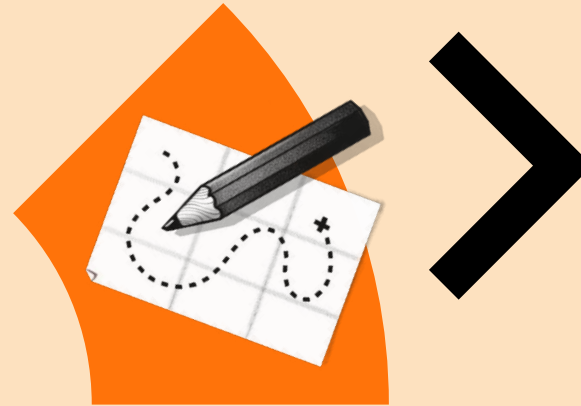
Engage with the candidate-volunteer. Ask the right questions during the intake: What are your talents and strengths? What is your motivation precisely? An example: a refugee who worked as an electrician in his homeland and is now an enthusiastic volunteer in a repair café.

Use the checklist with questions to shape your conversation.

Get inspired by the examples of inclusive volunteers.



Making up a neighbourhood analysis



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Inspirational memo \(pdf\)](#)
- [Methodologies individual conversations \(zip\)](#)
- [Methodologies group conversation \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Collecting information about the neighbourhood is necessary to be able to work methodologically on caring neighbourhoods. Collecting figures and making inventories of a neighbourhood is part of it. Yet, a thorough qualitative analysis cannot be left out. Numerical data and qualitative information make up a neighbourhood analysis. This analysis forms the basis of the subsequent neighbourhood plan. A good neighbourhood analysis involves all relevant actors from the neighbourhood.

“Thanks to the neighbourhood analysis more signals reach government policy.”

SURPLUS VALUE

This tool helps you in preparing and carrying out a neighbourhood analysis. And this from the bottom up, with the focus on caring neighbourhoods and with all the neighbourhood actors.

Surplus value for a local government

Handy tools help to collect information about neighbourhoods.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

A good neighbourhood analysis starts from a participative approach. By questioning residents and neighbourhood actors, their findings will also be included into the analysis.

WORK METHOD

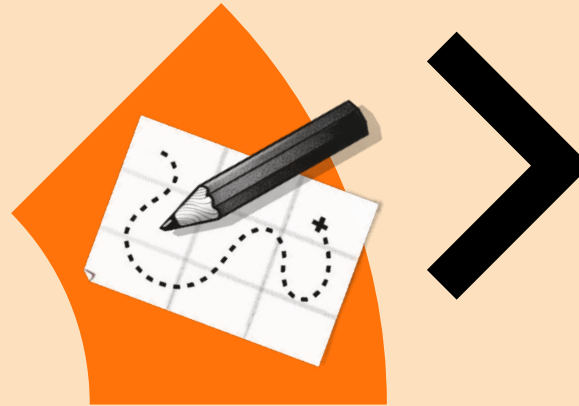
Collecting figures is one thing. But how do you start with the qualitative questioning? With whom and in what way do you engage in conversation? Which questions do you ask and which methodology do you use?

Get inspired by the enclosed memo containing information about the collection of figures and methodologies for questioning residents, key players and professional actors. Use them as an instrument for conversations with individual residents and groups in the neighbourhood.

Use the characteristics of a caring neighbourhood as a leitmotiv throughout the qualitative analysis.



Presenting a neighbourhood analysis



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Processing qualitative info \(zip\)](#)
- [Reports and brochures \(zip\)](#)
- [Presentation for policy \(ppt\)](#)

MOTIVATION

The neighbourhood analysis is an extensive snapshot of recent figures, knowledge and experiences of the actors involved. A clear representation of these data is necessary to name focal points and make conclusions debatable.

SURPLUS VALUE

A clear description of the data displays the existing needs, faults, opportunities and strengths of a neighbourhood.

Surplus value for a local government

A display of valuable information provides employable insights and more knowledge of the neighbourhoods.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

A clear scope of the neighbourhood motivates to address focal points together with government policy and neighbourhood actors.

WORK METHOD

The neighbourhood analysis consists of two parts. The first part is the quantitative analysis with relevant figures, an interpretation of these figures and an inventory of facilities and associations. The second part is the qualitative analysis with a summary of neighbourhood conversations.

Based on these two parts, formulate the focal points for the neighbourhood.

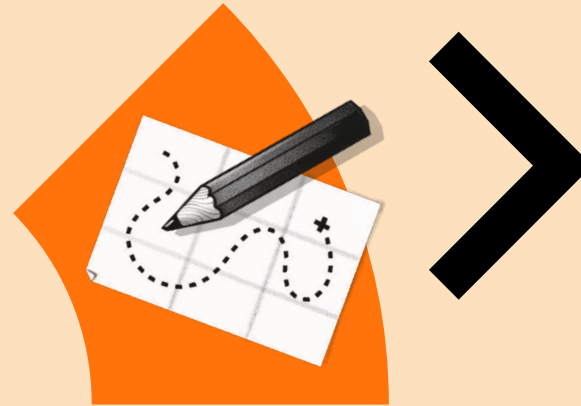
Present the collected data as clear as possible. The exemplary reports and summarizing brochures can help you on your way.

Use the analysis as feedback to government policy, partners and residents to convert together the focal points into concrete actions.

**“No participation
without declaration.”**



Draw up a neighbourhood plan



Downloads

- [Invitations \(zip\)](#)
- [Feedback residents \(zip\)](#)
- [Feedback government policy \(zip\)](#)
- [Neighbourhood action plan \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

The neighbourhood analysis maps needs and opportunities. To bring about change effectively you need a good neighbourhood plan. A neighbourhood plan describes concrete actions with the focal points from the neighbourhood analysis.

“A strong vision, a steady action plan and a climate of faith produce good results.”

SURPLUS VALUE

A neighbourhood plan is something to fall back on when working on caring neighbourhoods. It consists of feasible results, well-executable and well-carried actions and brings about positive change. It helps to follow up on caring neighbourhoods, to evaluate them and to make adjustments where necessary.

Surplus value for a local government

A neighbourhood plan provides carried-out actions, in cooperation with residents, neighbourhood actors and government policy.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

A neighbourhood plan stands for a mutual approach of focal points from the neighbourhood analysis. This is beneficial for all residents and all those involved.

WORK METHOD

A good neighbourhood analysis is a necessity for a good neighbourhood plan.

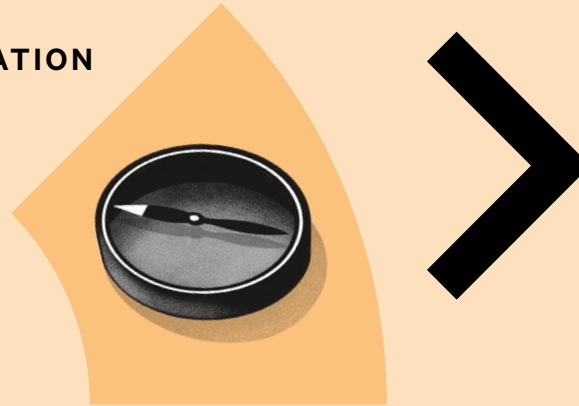
First of all, give feedback on the results of your neighbourhood analysis to residents, neighbourhood actors and government policy. Then formulate the goals in your neighbourhood plan based on the discussion of the neighbourhood analysis and in relation to the residents and partners that are active in the neighbourhood.

Write a detailed plan with concrete actions. Pay attention to the description of the actions, the involved partners, the expected output and the timing.

A good follow-up and possible adjustment of the neighbourhood plan are indispensable in its implementation.



Building on an organisational structure



Downloads

- [Function profile community care director \(zip\)](#)
- [Organising collaboration \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

You don't realise a caring neighbourhood on your own. Building an organisational structure is crucial. Arrangements concerning coordination and allocation of tasks are needed to work together with the local government, internal entities and local partners on a caring neighbourhood.

“The key factors are internal and external collaboration, use of personnel and means to take action.”

SURPLUS VALUE

A good organisation ensures a durable structural collaboration and a clear long-term plan.

Surplus value for a local government

Committing to caring neighbourhoods is a conscious policy choice. A good organisational structure allows multiple internal entities to develop a community-oriented view.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

A firm organisational base helps to take the necessary steps in the neighbourhood and with partners.

WORK METHOD

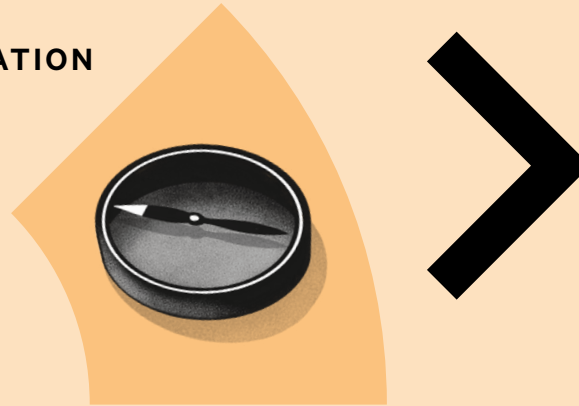
Deliberate together with policy partners and local partners on the preconditions to work on a caring neighbourhood. Make choices surrounding deliberation structures, personnel, time, resources, long-term planning, etc.

Get inspired by reflecting on internal collaboration and the conversation guide.

If the municipality chooses to make use of a community care director, then the enclosed function profile may guide you in determining the function or writing the vacancy.



Presenting the vision and approach



Downloads

- [Presentation vision and approach \(ppt\)](#)
- [Policy brief Hamont-Achel \(pdf\)](#)
- [Policy sheet Wingene \(pdf\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Building caring neighbourhoods is a process that requires a long-term vision. To warm internal entities and local partners to the idea, it is key to come up with a clear story.

“Various initiatives are centralized into one concept. That gives something to go by on and stimulates collaboration.”

SURPLUS VALUE

A comprehensible presentation of the vision and approach creates support, instigates collaboration and gets people excited.

Surplus value for a local government

The presentation of the vision and the approach gives guidance, ensures involvement and has an inspiring and motivating effect.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

Presenting the bigger picture of a caring neighbourhood stimulate its cooperation.

WORK METHOD

Develop within your local government a carried-out vision of caring neighbourhoods leading to an idea of the future where everyone wants to do their part.

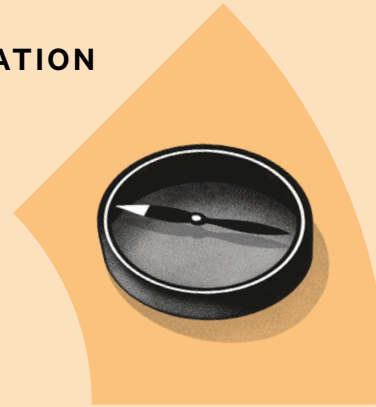
Describe where local government is headed with caring neighbourhoods and how it intends to go about it. While doing this think long term.

Provide a clear presentation of vision and approach in order to motivate and inspire people. Choose a form of presentation which caters to your target audience.

Use the vision on caring neighbourhood described by SAAMO in this publication, as inspiration for elaborating your own local vision.



Sustainability: a process



GET TO IT

Downloads

How do you continue with your caring neighborhood?

- [Presentation SAAMO \(ppt\)](#)
- [Inspiration day 22/04/2022 \(film\)](#)
- [Description process stages \(pdf\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Without a stepping stone to sustainable and local embedment, the concept 'caring neighbourhoods' remains a temporary project. The anchorage of a policy for 'Less Loopholes, less slipping through the net' is a long-term process. That process leads to a shared vision with all partners and a structural approach.

“The path towards sustainable policy is a dynamic process.”

SURPLUS VALUE

The outline with five stages in a process to sustainability offers a guideline to growing towards a structural and sustainable approach.

Surplus value for a local government

The stages in the process provide guidance to evaluate direction caring neighbourhoods at your own pace.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

The partners play a part in every stage of the process. The outline and the reference framework with the eight building stones help to outline the input of the partners.

WORK METHOD

Read first '[Description process stages](#)'

The five process stages are:

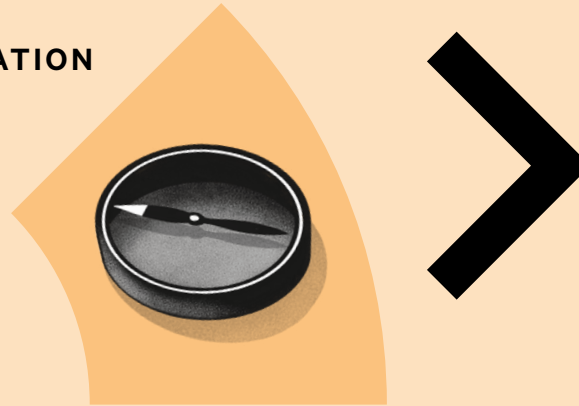
1. **exploratory stage and starting point:** the neighbourhood analysis provides direction to the actions
2. **planning stage:** the neighbourhood plan formulates actions for the neighbourhood, close to the people
3. **developing and realising actions:** the driving force (directive role) maintains an overview, 'partnerships' and 'communication' are brought into prominence
4. **anchorage of a sustainable policy:** moving gradually towards a structural vision and thorough organisation
5. **the caring neighbourhood is a never-ending story:** keep focussing on proximity, network, neighbourhood analysis

Each process proceeds differently because every local context is different.

The plan helps to outline the steps and to make an intermediate assessment of the progress using the tool 'Assessment frameworks'.



Sustainability: assessment frameworks



Downloads

- [Situating assessment frameworks \(pdf\)](#)
- [Assessment framework fundamentals \(pdf\)](#)
- [Assessment framework building stones and actions \(pdf\)](#)
- [Assessment framework vision and organisation \(pdf\)](#)

MOTIVATION

It's useful to reflect on the course you're steering. Where are we today in realising a caring neighbourhood? Where do we want to go? How do we move towards sustainability? Three assessment frameworks that help to reflect on the progress of the process.

“Reflection leads to insight in the following steps to sustainability. This is how you keep growing.”

SURPLUS VALUE

The assessment frameworks offer guidance to reflect on three aspects:

- the fundamentals of a sustainable framework
- the actions for the eight building stones
- the approach in the day-to-day operation (vision and organisation)

Surplus value for a local government

Local government can monitor the progress of caring neighbourhoods. The assessment frameworks help to ask the right questions: is our basic attitude and investment (still) tiptop, which actions are (not) foreseen, is our vision and organisation still sufficiently shaped?

Surplus value for residents and a local network

Reflecting together offers partners a global outline of the (co) operation and the fruits of their efforts. It leads to insight for taking the next steps towards sustainability.

WORK METHOD

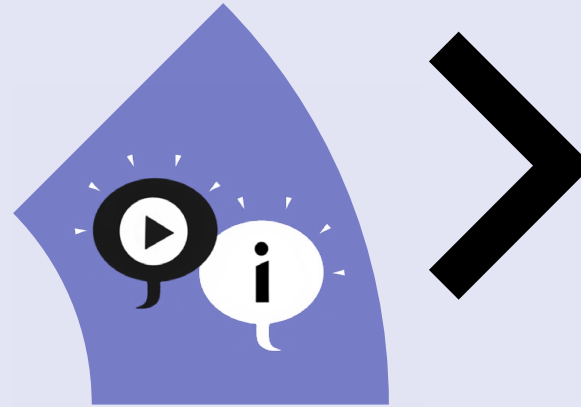
Which framework you use, depends on your project's progress. The frameworks can also be used simultaneously at different discussion tables: discussing fundamentals with policy, evaluating actions with broad steering committee, a vision assessment with the core partners.

Read '[Situating assessment frameworks](#)'

- Assess **fundamentals**: implementing basic conditions, the driving forces and their roles.
- Assess **building stones and actions**: reference framework as your compass.
- Assess **approach**: the vision dictates the content, the organisation is the motor.



Guide to change-oriented communication



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Guide change-oriented communication \(pdf\)](#)
- [Poster \(pdf\)](#)
- [Presentation communication services \(ppt\)](#)
- [Rules of thumb accessible communication \(Word-doc\)](#)
- [Inspiring examples \(zip\)](#)

MOTIVATION

'Little helping' is an important aspect of a caring neighbourhood. Rarely if ever little helping comes in the picture, while this just might be very motivating. Telling stories is an excellent tool to inform and sensibilize.

“We always think too big and reach too far. A little story can also have a big impact.”

SURPLUS VALUE

A carried-out communication strategy consisting of stories and little helping creates a connexion between local residents.

Surplus value for a local government

This communication strategy makes the positive aspect of a caring neighbourhood visible and helps sensibilizing.

Surplus value for residents

Binding stories strengthen the sense of community, which invokes decisiveness and empathy.

WORK METHOD

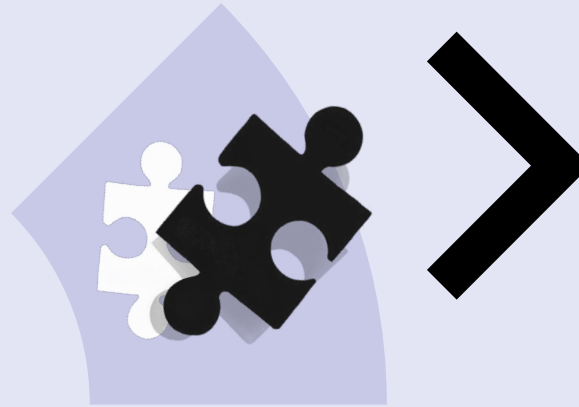
Get to work together with the communication service with the “Guide to change-oriented communication”. Inform them on the content using a PowerPoint presentation and make practical arrangements.

Inform your collaboration partner on this communication strategy and lay out your expectations. Let them pay attention to the signaling and passing on binding stories. Motivate local partners to tell their own stories using their communication channels.

Read the rules of thumb about accessible communication.



Do guide: Working together on care and welfare



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Do guide on care and welfare \(pdf\)](#)
- [Making rules of thumb for partnerships \(Word-doc\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Partnerships are an important condition for the realisation of caring neighbourhoods. Working together with different partners is needed to offer solutions to complex problems like under-protection, isolation or chronic care.

“You can only make a strong safety net when you work together.”

SURPLUS VALUE

Dividing responsibilities and a good allocation of tasks allow to make the work of every partner pleasant and manageable.

Surplus value for a local government

Collaboration brings about insight into the qualities of internal services and local partners, but also insight into the complexity of collaborations between care and welfare. This can make things more accessible.

Meerwaarde voor een lokaal netwerk

By working together one creates shared responsibility between all neighbourhood actors.

Surplus value for residents

Strong and long-term collaboration ties have a positive influence on the residents' wellbeing.

WORK METHOD

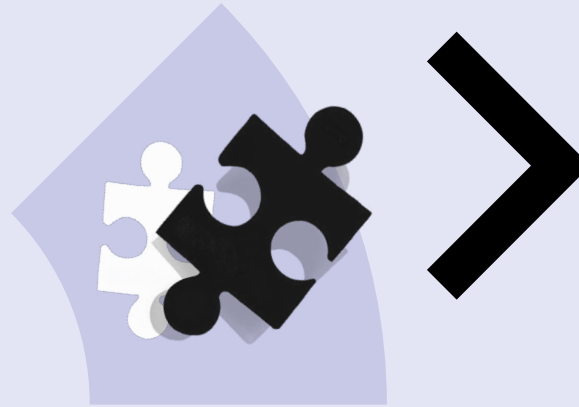
Intersectoral collaboration is a challenge. At SAAMO's request, the Expertise centre Health Innovation (UCLL) studied the stimulating and inhibiting factors for collaboration between care, welfare, local government and informal actors, and their combined action. Get inspired by their Do guide with practical examples.

Get to work with exercises and initiate intersectoral collaboration.

Also read the general rules of thumb about 'Building partnerships', for extra tips and facts.



With school kids contributing to a caring neighbourhood



GET TO IT

Downloads

- [Folders and methodologies \(zip\)](#)
- [Inspirational moment children \(Word-doc\)](#)

MOTIVATION

Children are the future and earn their place in this story. By letting them contribute to a caring neighbourhood they develop a caring basic attitude with attention to neighbourly help, getting to know each other, creating a positive atmosphere and respecting the neighbourhood. They learn that they too are part of a local society and moreover, that they help shape it.

SURPLUS VALUE

Community-oriented contacts between less obvious groups have to be stimulated. A motley collection of people creates animosity, diversity and increases mutual understanding and empathy. Children can safely and within their means help taking care of the neighbourhood: mowing loans for neighbours, doing groceries, surprise someone with a self-crafted gift, etc.

Surplus value for a local government

Working together with children creates a connexion between schools and internal municipal services. The neighbourhood care director becomes a familiar face to the school, the children and their families.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

What is learnt in the cradle lasts till the tomb. So engage children in this future-oriented story.

WORK METHOD

The school is a gateway and important collaboration partner to the target group children.

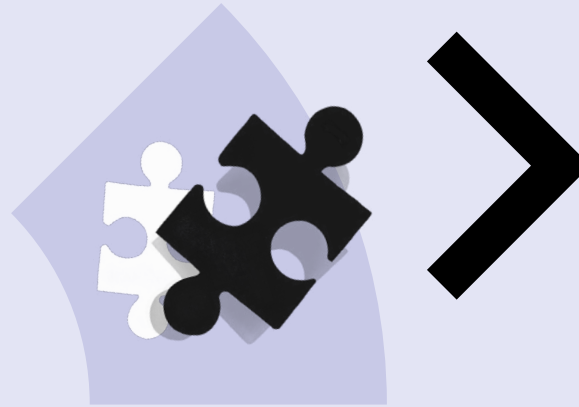
Use the folder to inspire teachers about accessible class activities relating to caring neighbourhoods.

The example of an inspirational moment in class shows how the neighbourhood care director or another municipal employee can work together with children on community-oriented themes.

“We have evolved from islanding to continenting.”



Tips for collaborating with external partners



Downloads

- [Tips for collaborating with external partners \(pdf\)](#)

MOTIVATION

With the realisation of a caring neighbourhood there are a lot of players involved: local government, professionals from healthcare and welfare organisations, local facilities, local traders, associations, residents. For some partners collaboration is the obvious choice, while for others it's a new path. The director is the matchmaker who woees potential partners to work together, to everyone's taste and while making good agreements.

“The story of a caring neighbourhood is one you write together.”

SURPLUS VALUE

The tips guide you to a well thought-out direction in creating an effective co-creation in the neighbourhood.

Surplus value for a local government

Local government usually takes on the part of the director. Investing in a network with external, local partners stimulates participation and leads to shared ownership.

Surplus value for residents and a local network

Working together on actions enforces the neighbourhood and the goals of the partners. Co-creation creates a win-win situation in the short as well as in the long term.

WORK METHOD

- Tip 1.** Convince partners with a story that speaks to them.
- Tip 2.** Help partners slow down in order to be able to work question-orientated and in a participative manner.
- Tip 3.** Evolve to a shared ownership with participation and customized collaboration.

In 'Tips for collaborating with external partners' you learn how to approach this gradually and in a well thought-of manner.



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▶ LOOK AT THE ANIMATION



SAAMO