



Date: May 24, 2019
Subject: Horizon Impact Award & Institutions for Collective Action

Dear Sir/Madam,

When a process of change sets in, you sometimes need a helicopter view. Why is change needed and where exactly are you heading to? History provides insights into these processes. During the symposium 'The Commons', organized by Tine De Moor, I learned about these processes. Partly because I became aware of the history of the commons in 19th century England, but also because of the many meetings with changemakers around the world who attended this symposium. Discussing what culture means, and why it is essential to have that understanding in a process of innovation is important in order to make such a transition successful. Knowledge about tradition is presented through history.

Such a process is neither easy nor straightforward; it is a matter of searching and experimenting. and there are conflicts, there is no blue print of the development Tine De Moor has taught us that this is inherent to such a transition, which gives us comfort and courage!

Klooster&Buren is a cooperation of five villages in a sparsely populated coastal area in the province of Groningen in the North of the Netherlands. Central to our way of thinking is redeveloping an area which once was the terrain of the oldest monastery in Groningen, called *Olde Klooster*. This area was under pressure.

Vision on the past and future

History and foundation

Northwest-Groningen has unique cultural and naturalistic values. At the same time it is under pressure because many people leave – it is a shrinking area – and good infrastructure is missing. The community of Kloosterburen received a grant from the Belvédère-Fund in 2006, which was used to investigate aspects that could vitalize the economy, activity and culture in Kloosterburen.

The Belvédère-project resulted in a plan called the SintJan plan, drafted by designers, artists and academics. It was inspired by the historic roots of the monastery in Kloosterburen and its traditions, one of which was the pioneering spirit of the monks, who created a society based on development through sharing knowledge. This tradition included all aspects of 'society', including eating and drinking, sleeping, providing care, but also science, education, the system of law, and art and architecture. We would like to reinvigorate this tradition in Kloosterburen.

We aim to do this by focusing on two concepts, and put these next to each other: 'claustrum', meaning privacy/protection/safety, and 'monacus', meaning as a whole.



The Norbertine monastery SintJan, founded around 1160, includes the medieval *Olde Klooster*, also a national monument, the surrounding monastery gardens, two churches (Nicolaaskerk and Willibrordkerk), and elderly home *Olde Heem* with surrounding green pastures and an animal farm. This used to be the center of Kloosterburen and has therefore also become the center of our plans. The idea is to re-use the monuments, and reshape the use of the landscape. The image and accessibility of the terrain is now poor, while it is a unique place with unique history, as the name Kloosterburen ('monastery-neighbors/neighborhoods') already suggests.

The future

We want to be able to tell the history of the area, and ensure people experience this. We aim to use cultural history as a foundation for 'cultural future'. With this we mean creating a breeding ground and source of inspiration for new ideas, creativity, sustainability, nature, knowledge, care, education, religion, living, energy, food. In short: making connections so we can have the best quality of life. We aim to combine tasks to ensure the community keeps its important aspects, knowing that separation will probably lead to dissolution in the long run.

With this breeding ground, we hope to put Kloosterburen on the map locally, regionally, nationally and internationally. Kloosterburen is a link between the villages of Kleine Huisjes, Molenrij, Kruisweg en Hornhuizen (previously the municipality of Kloosterburen), all of which are now united in the local cooperative Klooster&Buren, a direct outcome of the SintJan plan. This cooperative strives to ensure quality of life and rebuild the social structure for this particular area. The medieval religious heritage, surrounded by a 2000 year-old cultural landscape connected with the Wadden area, presents unique opportunities central to the development of inhabitants and visitors.

Tourism and viability are directly linked to economy and business. Education also plays a vital role in stimulating the local economy in the whole province. All components of the project aim at revitalizing and strengthening the current economic structure. Not only for Kloosterburen, but also for its direct surroundings.

Sincerely,

Anne Hilderink
Founder and developer of Cooperative Klooster&Buren

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