

Fact sheet 5: Maintenance, Administration and Quality of Life

Umbrella Association for the Water-Company Site

In 1996, even before the district was completed, an umbrella association for the Water-Company Site was founded. This is an association for house owners on the site (housing corporations and associations of owners), tenants (commissions of inhabitants) and – voluntarily – companies. The association aims to guard and encourage the green character of the site.

The umbrella association pays for the concierge and for the rental of a district administration space (the Entrance House) on the site. All households on the site, as well as the housing corporations and other members pay a fixed monthly contribution to the umbrella association.

Twice a year, the general meeting of members is held. In addition, the umbrella association regularly organises technical meetings for its members. The association also took the initiative for the symposium to mark the 10th anniversary of the Water-Company Site in February 2008. To mark this, a film was also made about the development of the site. In June 2009, a crowded meeting was held for the inhabitants, organised with Kees Christiaanse and Adriaan Geuze, the designer of the urban planning design and of the landscape plan. The theme of the meeting was a second round for the Water-Company Site (about the plans for further green and the possibilities of building an extra floor. The umbrella association organises guided tours of the site for groups from the Netherlands and abroad.

The umbrella association has its own website (www.gwl-terrein.nl) and inhabitants' newsletter, to which inhabitants and other interested parties can subscribe free of charge.

Coordination

The concierge keeps an eye on the site and the public spaces in the residential buildings. One of his tasks is to ensure the area remains car free. The concierge is paid by the umbrella association.

Urban district

The urban district is responsible for maintaining the public space. On the site, cleaners from the district council comes every day, clearing refuse and keeping the area clean. The cleaner uses an electric cart.

The hedges are trimmed twice a year. The grass is mown a very limited number of times each year. Waterleliegracht is occasionally cleaned (removing cress, wrecks and other pollution, maintaining the plants on the banks).

Housing Corporations.

The housing corporations with property on the site at this time are: De Alliantie (Block 1); Stadgenoot, Ymere and Rochdale.

Technical maintenance

The technical maintenance of all the rental blocks (owned by five housing associations) was originally the responsibility of the PWV Housing Corporation (now the Alliantie). This has now changed; each

housing corporation is now responsible for maintaining its own dwellings and buildings. Owner-occupied blocks on the site decide through their own owner association who is responsible for maintenance.

Through the umbrella association, there is contact between the different blocks in the field of maintenance. In this way know-how is maintained and experiences are shared.

Quality-of-life consultation

In the quality-of-life consultation, inhabitants, officials for the district council, police, the concierge and other parties talk about the Administration and quality of life in the area. Here, the most practical issues are discussed including nuisance, clearing cycle wrecks and maintaining the vegetation. Once a year the area is surveyed by a group.

Neighbourhood activities



An important effort ever since the first plans has been to encourage the involvement of the inhabitants with their area. Occasionally this is in a formal setting (quality-of-life consultation), but in addition there are all kinds of activities in a less formal setting.

Since 1999, there has been a street soccer tournament every year in June, organised by inhabitants. For several weeks, they battle for the GWL Trophy. After the finals, there's usually a large neighbourhood party. Inhabitants also regularly organise parties for their own block.

There is an annual Christmas choir session in Block 5; also, every year there's a New Year's Reception in the Local Warden's House.

Ever since 1996, the area has had its own independent local paper, de Waterspiegel. Publication ceased in 2009. Information is now provided through the website and the email newsletter.

Inhabitants' groups

A fruit-tree working party, made up of inhabitants, maintains the fruit trees on the site (an annual pruning day and harvest day).

An allotment association coordinates the allocation of the 80-odd allotments on the site.

The association has added a clause that all gardening has to be environmentally friendly. No fertilizers or chemical weedkillers can be used.

The verges that have been added along the edges of many residential blocks are maintained by the inhabitants.

Since 2008, there has been a green-fingers working party involved with increasing amount of vegetation on the site.