

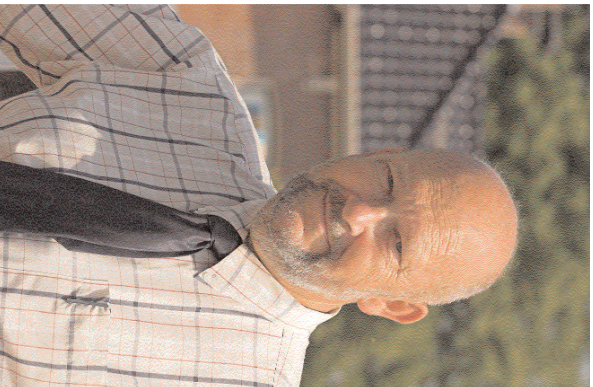
Shared Space

From project to process

A task for everybody

'A safe street is a street which tells us about its past, its present and the wishes and hopes of the people who are living there.'

This publication is dedicated to Hans Monderman, the head of our Shared Space-expert team, who died unexpectedly on January 7th 2008.



Hans Monderman pioneered the concept of *Shared Space* by removing what was supposed to make it safe for car drivers, cyclists and pedestrians: traffic lights, railings, kerbs and road markings. His maxim was: 'Never treat anyone in the public realm as an idiot, always assume they have intelligence.' He built a world-wide reputation for innovating street design under which vehicles and pedestrians shared the same space and negotiated by contact from person to person. Due to his radical ideas he initially was considered a dangerous tool by his fellow engineers, and he had to overcome the deeply ingrained view of road safety engineering. Through remarkable persistence and professional commitment he has managed to help putting in place countless *Shared Space*-schemes, transforming the urban and rural traffic landscapes into real people's space.

Contents

Part 1

From project to process

- 4 Introduction
- 11 A new vision and a new knowledge domain
- 14 Participation: What does it mean?

Part 2

The process in 10 stages

- 18 Stage 1: The politicians' basic vision
- 24 Stage 2: Designing the process
- 34 Stage 3: Exploring the problem
- 38 Stage 4: A collective vision, task and playing field
- 44 Stage 5: The spatial context
- 48 Stage 6: Scenarios and design
- 50 Stage 7: The implementation plan
- 52 Stage 8: Decision-making by the authority
- 54 Stage 9 and 10: Implementation and management

Part 1

From project to process

4



Introduction



Shared Space is a spatial development project that was launched early in 2004 under the European INTERREG IIB programme. The project partners, spread over five European countries, are the province of Fryslân (lead partner) and the municipalities of Haren and Emmen (all in the Netherlands), the municipalities of Bohmte (Germany) and Ejby (Denmark), the city of Ostende (Belgium) and Suffolk County Council (England). The *Shared Space* project was set up as an innovative road traffic project, a new way of designing public space where traffic no longer dominates but is balanced with other functions. *Shared Space* approaches public space as 'people space' rather than as traffic space.

As the project developed, it found wide acclaim, all over the world. People all over the world, in their own ways, relate to the ideas behind

Shared Space, as demonstrated by headlines like 'Away with traffic signs', 'Safe streets', 'No separation between pavement and road', 'Take responsibility', etc.. These slogans refer to the visible, 'surface' features of the *Shared Space* philosophy, which is grounded in the view that politics, public services, specialists and interest groups should primarily focus on man and society.

As we were working on the *Shared Space* project, it became more and more obvious that implementation of the *Shared Space* vision would only be possible if we remove 'signs' from across the whole spectrum. *Shared Space* is not just about designing public spaces in a different way; the process leading up to it is equally important. The way that the authorities, residents and specialists get involved in the

process has proved to be decisive for the success or failure of *Shared Space* projects.

Over the past few years, we have learned a lot about how the participation process works from the various partner projects. We have summarised the lessons that we learnt in this book, and devised a staged plan for carrying out a *Shared Space* process. A lot of this plan will be familiar to any experienced process manager, but, in several respects, the staged plan goes well beyond usual practice. Take the *role of politics*, for example. Often in spatial design projects, the role of politics is limited to approving plans, but in a *Shared Space* process the politicians are expected to have a coherent view of man and society from the outset and have to make a definite choice about what level of participation is desired. *Shared Space* also takes the process

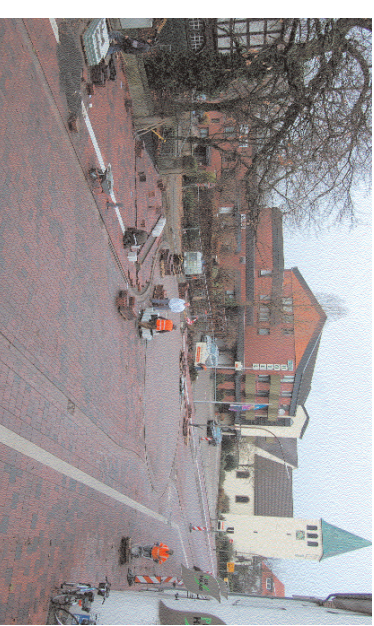
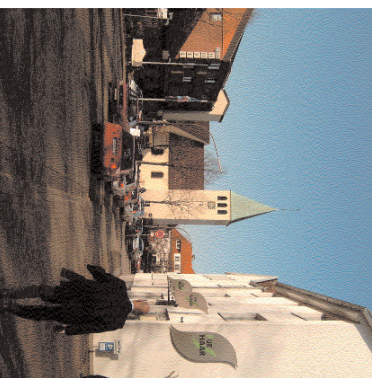
a step further with regard to working in an integrated manner. *Shared Space* advocates an *integrated approach from the very beginning of the process*; this produces a wide range of potential solutions.

This book also touches on two general themes that are characteristic of the *Shared Space* process as well: the *new citizenship* concept (p.34 and further) and the *dilemma of an innovative design versus an innovative process* (p.25 and further). These four italicized themes are wound together to form the thread through the staged plan in any *Shared Space* process.

In Part I of this book we introduce the Staged Plan and, in brief, the partner projects. We describe the developments which the European project underwent in the past few years (from project to process) and we offer a definition of 'participation' as we refer to it in this book. In Part II of this book we elaborate the staged plan in detail, illustrating it by using practical examples from the seven European *Shared Space* projects.

We hope that this book will inspire anyone who is professionally involved in the drafting and implementation of spatial policy and that it will also provide practical tools for day-to-day process practice.

Bohmte



The German municipality of Bohmte is redesigning the long main road through the village of the same name. This road has an important function as a shopping area but is also a through route from and to the regional road network. The construction of a new link road connecting the village centre to the regional road network gave Bohmte the opportunity to transform the road through the village centre into a proper main street. An ambitious plan was developed in close consultation with the local residents and shop owners, which is now being implemented.

Elby



Since living memory, the Danish town of Elby has been divided in two by a railway running right through the middle of the town. A long-cherished wish came true in Elby when the Shared Space project was embarked on: the station area has been redesigned to reconnect the two parts of the town and to make the area more accessible for disabled people. At the end of 2006 a new community centre was officially opened.



Emmen



In the nineteen seventies the Dutch municipality of Emmen had a world first in spatial design: the home zone, which subsequently found application in many countries. However, over the years, the concept developed more and more into a traffic concept with the usual plethora of traffic rules and signs. This happened both in Holland and elsewhere. With the 'Bargeres' Shared Space project and the 'Emmen Revisited' project the municipality is returning to what the home zone concept was originally all about: the quality of life of the residents. Reconsideration of the home zone concept has been integrated into the municipal organizational process in which integrated ward and village teams largely determine spatial



development. The teams are responsible for residents' participation in policy development and implementation.

Haren



The Shared Space project in the Dutch municipality of Haren includes two locations. In the village of Noorlaaren, with active participation from the teachers and pupils, the surroundings of the village school have been redesigned so that passing motorists can easily identify the location as a place where children play, cycle and run around. In Onnen, the character of the village needed bolstering after several facilities had moved out, leaving the village without a real centre, which had a bad effect on the speed of the traffic going through it. By redesigning the centre of the village, the municipality tried to give it a recognisable centre again

- a centre where the public would be encouraged to stay.



Ipswich



The project in Ipswich (Suffolk County, England) is intended to improve the quality of life in the area around Ipswich Town Football Stadium. This area was blighted by hazardous road conditions and intense traffic, especially during football matches. The project aims to reinforce the character of the area and to make cycling and walking more attractive so that car traffic will be less dominant.

Oostende



Belgian Oostende started their pilot

project with the idea of linking the wards of Conterdam and Melboom again by building a bridge across the busy motorway separating the two wards. As the project progressed, however, Oostende grew convinced that liveability in the Conterdam ward would be better served by strengthening the quality of public space in the ward itself. So they redeveloped several places in which so far the car had dominated the street scene. This was to be done in such a way that all the users of such space share the same physical and psychological level. By investing in an attractive 'slow' network in the ward itself and into the direction of the city centre residents are being challenged to take to their bikes more often.



Fryslân



The Dutch province of Fryslân has

decided to redesign a route in a rural area according to Shared Space principles. The project concerns a long through-road running along a historical barge canal, the Strobosser-trekvaart, which was once, from the 16th to 19th centuries, one of the main shipping routes in the province. The province wants to design the route in such a way that people using it will get an impression of the rich cultural history of the area. The route will also be made more attractive to cyclists and pedestrians from the region and to tourists.



Shared Space
(re-)approaches public
space as 'people space'
rather than 'traffic space'.
The Shared Space
approach is to treat
people as independently
thinking beings with
their own responsibility.



A new vision and

a new knowledge domain

The European *Shared Space* project has its origins in the ideas of Hans Monderman, a Dutch traffic engineer. Rethinking traffic safety issues, he evolved an innovative vision for streets and space specifically configured as civic space rather than merely highway or traffic space - as the hub of society, where people meet, gather, relax and linger as well as move about. In this approach, the traffic function is no longer dominant but equal to the other functions of public space. This vision was baptised 'Shared Space' at the start of the European project.

The Shared Space philosophy arose as a reaction to the common practice of designing public space from a functional/divisional perspective. In this approach, the various functions of public space are almost completely reduced to a single

function, e.g., pedestrian areas are meant only for shopping and going out, nature areas only for recreation and industrial estates solely for economic activities. A public space commission is defined from a principle of segregating functions. Conventionally, most elements of streets serve only one function. Over the years the design of a lot of public spaces was the exclusive domain of traffic engineers. As a result, traffic signs, road markings, speed bumps, separate paths, traffic lights and so forth came to dominate the streetscape. These are all traffic engineering solutions for 'problems' in public space. In contrast to conventional segregation this divisional approach, *Shared Space* advocates a holistic approach where all the functions of public space have equal weight. In this approach, people's behaviour in public spaces should not (predominantly) be regulated by traffic rules and all kinds

of traffic signs but, primarily, by the surroundings and social rules that apply to everybody.

Start of the European project Since 1980, as an advisor of the Dutch province of Fryslân, Hans Monderman had the opportunity to put his views into practice at a number of locations in the province. The new design method proved successful: car speeds went down, the number of accidents diminished, traffic flow improved and spaces could be used for more than one purpose. Wishing to further develop this new vision on public space, the province of Fryslân in collaboration with the Keuning Institute in Groningen, where Hans Monderman was by then employed, started the European *Shared Space* project. Partners who had established suitable projects needing redesign were identified in five countries.

The European *Shared Space* project effectively began in 2004. The guiding principle at the start was the new vision of public space as the hub of society. In the beginning, the emphasis was on the physical translation of the vision into public space. The expert team that was set up realised that the involvement of the interested parties could contribute to realising public spaces of high quality, but not that participation would play such an important role in the project as it eventually did.

Whilst the expert team concentrated on elaborating the *Shared Space* philosophy, the project partners started making plans for their project locations, without clear criteria for participation. So the concrete realisation preceded conceptual deepening and political embedding. In retrospect it is clear that, because of the time pressure, an essential component of a true *Shared Space* project, namely the preparatory stage, was not carried out properly. An exception to this was the project in Bohmte, where sufficient time was indeed taken for all the steps.

Using their customary management tools, the partners drew up and carried out their working plans in the way they always did for projects. At the same time, they joined a comprehensive process whose consequences they could not fully foresee. The partners expected the local parties to have a broad view (looking beyond their own interests) and a cooperative attitude. But, because they were not explicit about this expectation, in most cases it did not materialise.

From project to process During the course of the project, it became more and more evident that having a new vision of public space not only leads to a radically different streetscape but also requires a new attitude on the part of the public and a different work method. As the *Shared Space* philosophy developed, the concepts of 'social interaction', 'own responsibility' and 'risk perception' became increasingly important. The expert team discovered that the main question in *Shared Space* is not, 'How should we organise a particular space?' but, rather, the more strategic question, 'What opportunities does this space offer the com-

munity?' - not just from a traffic engineering or an environmental or landscape perspective, but from a collective cross-divisional vision. Awareness grew - first among the specialists and then among the project partners - that an entirely new approach was needed.

Organisational change has to come from within: particular departments had to redefine boundaries, relinquishing certain traditional powers and, above all, cooperate. We observed in the *Shared Space* projects that such changes are only possible if they are effected at a very senior level.

A new attitude Authorities' ambitions are not enough, on their own, to achieve the desired change. We noticed in the partner projects that *Shared Space* requires all the parties involved to have a different attitude. The *Shared Space* concept goes against what we have learned and been practicing for decades. It is very difficult for us to let go of familiar practices and adopt a new attitude. To avoid accidents from happening we draw up endless streams of reports, protocols and procedures. These are

'The primary change that the Shared Space concept requires is that people learn to think for themselves again and take responsibility'

the administrative equivalents of traffic lights and the familiar plethora of mandatory and prohibitory traffic signs... and they have a similar effect: we stop thinking. The primary change that the *Shared Space* concept requires is that people learn to think for themselves again and take responsibility.

A new knowledge domain When reviewing the developments in the *Shared Space* projects, one of the main conclusions drawn is that the traditional divisional approach and the instruments employed by local and higher-level authorities do not fit the *Shared Space* vision; which leads one to conclude that *Shared Space* must have spawned a new knowledge domain. The knowledge of the traditional specialist, however deep, just isn't enough any longer. Specialists are not trained to venture outside the boundaries of their discipline. Citizens, too, think in roles, such as a cyclist, parent of school-going children, local businessman, etc.. The internal organisation of public and private organisations is usually still based on a clear division of tasks in each department. Organisations like this offer very little

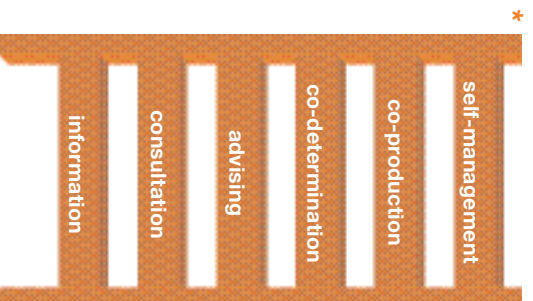
space for re-allocating tasks across departments. New organizational structures are needed.

The recognition that the *Shared Space* concept has effectively introduced a new knowledge domain led to an important change in the way that the European project was carried out. The focus now is less on physical solutions but, rather, on the process; that is, on the involvement and attitude of all the partners in the process. The principal objective in any process must be to pool information and use knowledge from all the disciplines involved, not with an eye to the various roles which people can have as traffic participants, residents or shoppers, but in the service of society in general.

A new process It is evident that organisations and processes need to change; the question is how? To be able to answer this question we need to carry out more research and not just investigate the effects of the new physical layout but, more particularly, try to find out the way in which the new layout has been achieved, which parties were involved, and how, etc..

From the regional *Shared Space* projects which have been carried out so far it is already clear that we need to organise the process in a new way, so that the players' new roles are well-defined. We need professionals on the shop floor in the local and regional authorities, professionals who have expert knowledge as well as those who are specialised in process management. In other words, we need knowledge about the several stages of a participatory process. In this book, we provide a provisional method. A process does not have to evolve in exactly the way we describe it in the Staged Plan below, of course, but this Plan can provide guidance to anyone who shares the *Shared Space* vision of public space and wants to put it into practice.

Participation: What does it mean?



*

The new attitude to participation which emerged during the *Shared Space* project reflects a change which is not restricted to the western world but which can be seen worldwide.

Empowerment, the participation of articulate citizens in all kinds of decision-making and implementation processes is a global phenomenon. This makes human creativity the new engine of economic growth. As much as ever, economic growth depends on the development of the human mind and not on technological innovation, a better location or tighter production processes. We are moving from pluriformity to pluralism, from 'beside each other' to 'together'. This is not happening within the 'vertical' chain, but horizontally across the chains. It is this pluralism which we mean when we refer to participation in this book.

Participation ladder The literature about participation offers various models of participation which are usually expressed in the shape of a ladder. Most of these models are based on a dual system in which an authority or a public institution (for example, housing associations) involves the parties who are directly concerned (typically, the local residents) in the preparation and planning process to a greater or lesser degree. In a *Shared Space* context, however, participation means there is always collaboration between a wide range of parties. The authority and the local community are only two of these. The other participants are all the parties who have an interest in the project or provide input to it in any way. These parties may be different ones from case to case: we will get back to this in Part II (*Stage 2, Designing the Process*).

'In Shared Space participation is always cooperation by a wide range of participating parties'

In some models the participation ladder has five rungs, in others it has six. Basically, they are not very different from each other. We have opted for a six-rung model. *

In our model the rungs of the ladder, from bottom to top, represent:

- *Being informed:* The stakeholders are informed of the authority's plans.
- *Being consulted:* The parties involved are regarded as discussion partners in the development of the plans, but the politicians and public servants set the bulk of the agenda. They do not commit themselves to the outcome of the discussions.
- *Advising:* In principle, the politicians and the public servants draw up the agenda, but they give the stakeholders the opportunity to raise issues and formulate solutions. Their ideas are treated with equality in the preparation and development of the plans. In principle, the politicians commit themselves to the outcome, but they may depart from this in their final decision-making (stating the reasons).

- *Co-determination:* All the parties involved participate in the preparation and development stages. Clear agreements have been made about the boundaries within which the partners can work out plans. The parties can choose from a number of scenarios and designs, but the final decision lies with the authorities.
 - *Co-production:* The stakeholders and the authority cooperate on an equal basis. All the parties involved are equal partners during the planning preparation, planning, development and decision-making stages.
 - *Self-management:* The process, the responsibility for planning preparation and development planning, and the decision and its implementation are completely in the hands of the stakeholders. The public servants only have an advisory role and the politicians accept the outcome as long as it complies with the preconditions agreed on in advance.
- There are two criteria for indicating the level of participation. The first indicator is the *point in time* at which the various target groups are

involved in the process. There is a direct relationship between the time at which people become involved in a process and the degree of influence. Generally, the higher the degree of participation, the sooner the target groups will be involved. The second indicator is the manner of communication with the target groups, i.e., what *means of communication* are used. The means used say a lot about the degree of involvement envisaged. A news letter, for example, is suitable for informing people but is not adequate if wider cooperation between the stakeholders is wanted.

The Stages of the participation procedure

We concluded earlier that the *Shared Space* approach has introduced a new knowledge domain. The principle of 'thinking for yourself' requires a new, different attitude on the part of the people involved and an entirely different kind of process too. But what should this process look like? Condensing the experiences from the projects carried out in the various EU countries and supplementing these with insights

The participation scheme and the communication means

Delegated power	Representative advisory bodies, steering committees, the right to put items on the agenda, the right of initiative, referendum.
Partnership / co-production	Consultation group, project group, workshops, working group, participation agreements, covenants.
Advising	Advisory boards, town district platforms, village councils, expert meeting, planning teams, round-table-talks.
Consulting	Involvement, hearing, soundboard groups, referendum, think-tank, survey, questionnaire panels, focus groups, all sorts of participating ways, round-table talks, electronic polls, photo competitions, prize contests (thematic, public), investigation into support.
Informing	



Participation in European pilot projects

Reviewing the European Shared Space projects, it is notable that the level of participation was not clearly defined in advance in any of the projects.

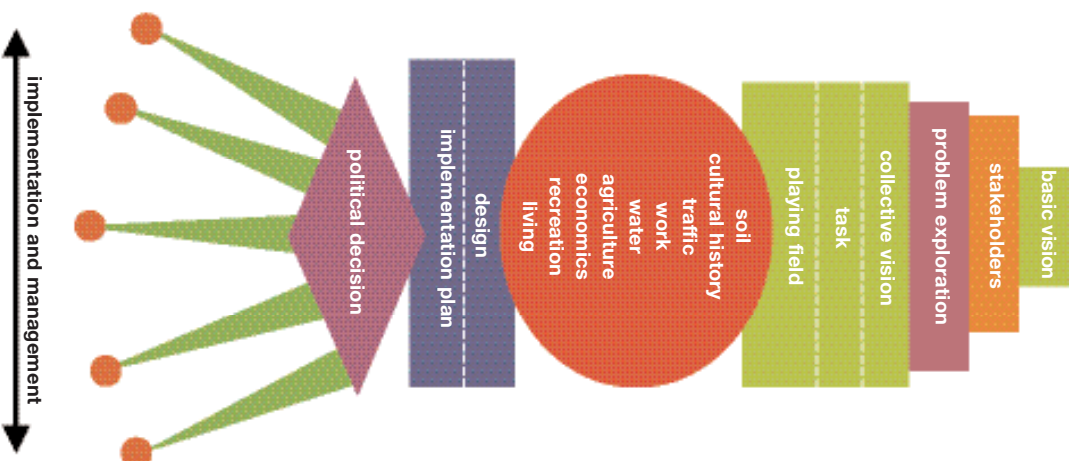
Remarkably enough, the level of participation was not very different from one project to another. Self-management (the top rung of the participation ladder), which is the level at which the politicians and the authority leave development planning and decision-making completely to the interested parties, was not tried in any of the projects. Neither did any of the projects stop at the level 'information' (the bottom rung of the ladder), which is the level at which the politicians and public servants control the whole procedure, and the stakeholders are merely informed.

Most of the participants positioned their project at the level of 'Advising' on the participation ladder. At this level, the stakeholders are heard, they can give their opinions and are involved in the design, but decision-making, implementation and management are wholly the responsibility of the authority. The means of communication most

commonly used were news letters

(information) and workshops (advising and consultation, with some degree of co-production).

Collaboration usually consisted of the local authority, the external experts and the local community. That is a perfectly legitimate participation and process management method, of course, but it is not new. The desired level of participation was not determined and communicated at the outset in any of the European Shared Space projects; not, at any rate, at government level. One of the most important lessons to be learnt from Shared Space practice is that it is crucial for the course of the whole process that the authority in charge determines the level of participation at the outset. You can read more about this in Part II of this book, where the Staged Plan is worked out.



from other, similar projects, the following Staged Plan for an optimum participatory procedure evolved. This procedure consists of the following stages:

1. Working out the occasion/reason, the starting position, the basic vision and the approach
2. Forming the network of stakeholders and designing the process
3. Exploring and analysing the problem
4. Broadening the basic vision to a collective vision, formulating the task, and mapping out the playing field
5. The spatial context: collecting and analysing data
6. Working out scenarios and the design
7. Making the implementation plan
8. Final decision-making by the politicians
9. Implementation
10. Management

As the figure shows, politics lies at the beginning and the end of the planning process, providing a basic vision and making the final decision. The participatory process takes place inbetween. As many disciplines and fields of knowledge as possible are involved in this process, this will provide a much greater bandwidth at the implementation stage than would be the case if a traditional divisional approach was employed. A divisional approach almost always

results in a single project with more or less obvious solutions. In the *Shared Space* process, the input from a variety of knowledge and policy fields results in a wide range of solution options, for which particular implementation processes are more appropriate. As often as not, it will not be possible to realise all the processes immediately, so it is important to set priorities. In the following sections we will describe the stages of the *Shared Space* process and illustrate them with practical examples.

Part 2

The 10 stages of the process

18



Stage 1

The politicians' basic vision



A participatory process is only possible if all the parties involved in it share a common interest. The process must be firmly anchored in local politics, social organisations, possibly the business community, and certainly the community. The (local) authority member responsible for the process (or better still: the team of authority members) must provide clarity in advance about what the common interest is.

In any case, a *Shared Space* process is never limited to just one portfolio and, thus, always involves more than one department within an authority. Whether it is a single authority member who is supervising the process or a team, a vision statement which outlines the cross-divisional collaboration is required from the outset.

The authority in charge has to make a choice about the level of internal and external participation which is desirable at the beginning of the process. This is crucial for the rest of the process. If the authority does not allow for sufficient (internal and external) participation from the start, there will be a price to pay later on. Even if the project manager favours participation, it will not get off the ground without backing by the authority.

The importance of such backing, and establishing the level of participation, was borne out at a meeting of all the *Shared Space* partners. As they were discussing the participation ladder, the issue of the level of participation in *Shared Space* projects was raised. At the beginning of the session all the partners positioned them-

Administrative involvement A good example of involvement on the part of local authorities is to be seen in the Bohnte pilot. Here it was the mayor who from the very start acted as the Shared Space standard bearer. He embedded the intention in his municipal organisational structure. It was only after this had been done that the idea was broadcast. Within the organisation all those involved were convened to jointly explore the use, need and surplus value of the planned process. In the external part of the process too the mayor most emphatically committed himself to the whole process. On the evening of the first external meeting the town council through the mayor sketched the quality level of the process. The council won the people's trust because the mayor was quite outspoken. He remained the Shared Space standard bearer at Bohnte throughout the process.



‘Every occasion is an opportunity for development’

Stage 1

selves in the middle of the participation ladder (see page 16), but in the course of the discussion they realised that their projects were actually at a lower rung than they had thought. They definitely wanted a greater degree of participation, so the question was why this could not be realised. One of the reasons they gave was that their authority had not provided for it. It was difficult to involve colleagues from other departments, they could not activate their networks and so could not utilise their full potential.

Participation is always a *process*, never a *project*. Unlike a straightforward implementation project, a participation process cannot simply be controlled on the basis of a linear time/money plan. Projects typically are more or less one-dimensional: we have a problem, it is the responsibility of Department X to solve it and there is a tested solution which they can apply. The solution, nowadays, usually includes cooperating with the residents concerned, but this all happens within narrow frameworks of thought which

leave little room for change or for new insights that might arise in the course of the process.

Participation in the *Shared Space* method requires authorities to approach the occasion as a development and an opportunity. This means that they must choose a process that is not fixed from the start but which leaves room for new developments. This asks a lot of the authorities – decisiveness as well as flexibility (which is not the same as just swimming with the tide). How they handle this is largely a matter of their individual flair and instinct.

It is important that the authority ensures that all the people involved internally are well aware of the ‘occasion’. It, and the other parties involved, must be aware that the occasion is an opportunity for development and that the process can lead to a wide range of solutions. The organisation must develop a *shared vision* and *shared values*.

Choosing a processor When the authority has ascertained that its officers understand and are committed to its vision, an internal team must be set up which has responsibility for the process and which will supervise it in close consultation with the authority. This team can act as the *process supervisor* itself or engage and support an external supervisor. Neither of the options is better than the other, but a choice has to be made. This choice will depend on the particular circumstances. A smaller municipality, for example, will more often than not employ an external supervisor. In either situation the public servants and the politicians must stay involved in the process.

Many authorities have limited experience of the new principles and opportunities arising from the *Shared Space* process. An authority which has committed itself to a participation process but is struggling to give shape to it without being able to oversee the knowledge domain,

Internal or external processor *Whether one chooses for an internal or external inspirational figure sensitivity for informal leadership among local residents is indispensable. We can see this illustrated at Ejby. The council thought the Shared Space vision sufficiently interesting to experiment with but they chose for it not to have this developed by their own town hall staff. An external processor was hired, a consultant known from several earlier engagements. This consultant knew the council, the manoeuvring space and the possibilities. And he knew the civil servants. He was soon familiar with the local situation and the players concerned. Such a processor can and will develop into a dynamic inspirational figure provided he has a more than average contact with the civil service and gets a great deal of trust from them. At Ejby the external consultant showed that drive and passion to complete the project successfully.*



'Confined thinking frames leave no room for insights arising in the course of the process'

Stage 1

will be wise to engage an independent external process supervisor. But if the authority decides to supervise the process itself, it is also advisable to reinforce the internal team by adding an external advisor who has experience of shaping participatory processes.

So there are two options: an internal supervisor who is supported by an external advisor, or an external supervisor who is supported by the authority. Whatever the character of the supervisor, he or she must be able to gauge local (political) relations, not just with regard to the (council) authority and the public servants but also with regard to the other parties involved. The external supervisor must also be aware of his/her independence from the commissioning party, which can otherwise create problems. Here again, we see the importance of a clear commitment being made by the authority. Such a commitment gives the supervisor room to manoeuvre, maintains continuity and ensures embedding in local and regional policy.



Stage 2

Designing the process

25

In the description of Stage 1 we saw that a process begins with the authority evolving a basic vision. The authority also determines the level of participation and appoints a person who is responsible for the project within the authority itself and a process supervisor. In outline, it is now clear what direction the authority has chosen. The next stage is to design the participation process, which results in a start-up document or a strategy plan. This stage is led by the supervisor, who may be an internal or an external player, a single person or a small team.

The start-up document or the strategy plan lists the main stakeholders and describes the powers and responsibilities of all the parties involved. It must at least state:

- the desired level of participation (and its feasibility);

- the parties that play a role in the process, i.e., the stakeholders;
- the formal aspects of the participatory process: the position, tasks, responsibilities and powers of the representatives of the parties involved.

The drawing up of the start-up document is an important event in the process and in the communication systems between all the (internal and external) stakeholders.

Tensions Processes such as *Shared Space* generate tension between maximizing participation and generating innovation. This dilemma cropped up all the time in the European pilot projects. The project partners noted that their message to the stakeholders seemed contradictory: 'This is a participatory planning process and everybody's input is valuable', but, 'Don't

Dilemma That compromises may be necessary was demonstrated in the Shared Space project in Ipswich. Here the participants in the consultation exercise were stuck on a detail, thinking that Shared Space by definition excluded different levels of the carriageway and the pavement. This principle met with fierce objection, in particular from a very active interest group of blind and visually impaired people. Blind and poorly-sighted people are less able to orientate themselves properly in public spaces if tangible distinctions between the pavement and the road are removed. Understandably, this element of the plan caused incomprehension and indignation, and the protest was taken up by other groups. In fact, the whole issue was based on a misunderstanding. Shared Space does not mean that pedestrians and motorists are expected to mingle, criss-crossing through each other's space. The intention is to create spaces where people feel at ease and enjoy being. The point is that space is not designed from a traffic engineering point of view, but from a people perspective.



'Participation means rules for all parties'

Stage 2

forget, the plan which we are working on has to fit *Shared Space* parameters'. To quote Henry Ford, 'You can have any colour you want, as long as it's black.' This is a recurrent dilemma in the *Shared Space* context. The *Shared Space* principles conflict with so much that we have learned, that people don't embrace them easily. There is a danger that the higher one aims at participation the less innovative the result may be.

This dilemma was raised frequently during meetings of the *Shared Space* partners. All the project partners wanted a high level of participation, but at the same time they wanted to control the outcome of the process too. In other words, all the stakeholders are invited to join in, but within strict bounds. How do we deal with this...? The uncertainty felt by the project partners was increased by the fact that, in terms of both substance and organisation, they didn't (yet) understand the dynamics of the *Shared Space* process well enough.

In practice, the process often develops in either of two ways. One course of action is to seek as many *supporters* of the concept as possible but, by trying to please everybody, in the end, little remains of the *Shared Space* concept.

Another approach is to have as many people as possible *joining in the discussions* about the concept. In this case, the design is in keeping with the *Shared Space* concept and is neatly presented by the commissioning party and one or two experts. A lot of discussion takes place, but the result is a solution which was in fact 90% certain from the outset. Dilution in the first case, manipulation in the second.

How do we deal with this dilemma? Our main conclusion is that unequivocal rules must be agreed in advance about which items are open for discussion and which are not, and what the various parties' roles and powers are. To begin with, everybody involved (experts as well as amateurs) has to understand what *Shared*

Space is about. Secondly, the distinction between experts and laymen (in this case, the residents concerned) must be clear: the residents provide the input and the experts use this information to make designs which they deem feasible and appropriate from the perspective of their discipline. This does not mean that the input of the laymen is just a matter of form; it represents the basis for the designs and scenarios which the residents can later choose between.

On the basis of our experience with *Shared Space* processes so far, we can tentatively conclude that the maximum level of participation that can be achieved in a *Shared Space* process is 'advising' or, perhaps, 'co-determining'. That is not at all a bad result, and forms a good basis for continuing the process. So, the point of departure for any process supervisor is to determine the roles and powers of the participants in the process carefully and to leave no

Internal communication A good example of internal communication is the collaboration model which is applied in the Emmen Revisited project. In this project, the municipal government of Emmen entered into a long-term partnership with housing corporations, community work organisations, and residents' groups from three districts. Together, they carry out the process and implement projects. Trust is the key concept, but reasonableness, time and continuity are important cornerstones of the process as well. The team which is responsible for the Emmen Revisited project has far-reaching powers with regard to the three districts and therefore works in a relatively independent way. Members from the Emmen Revisited team initiated intensive communication with their colleagues in the other departments within the context of the Shared Space process. Their work methods, based on the municipality's intention of doing things differently and together, have been put into practice more broadly in a 'learning by doing' way, and the Shared Space process will now be rolled out as a way of thinking and working across the municipal administration.



Stage 2

doubt about the level of co-deliberation and co-determination.

Defining the stakeholders and their roles

During the design of the process it must first be made clear who both the internal and the external participants are. Their roles in the process and the (pre)conditions for their participation must also be clear before they should be approached. What will their respective roles be when important decisions are taken? The final decision usually lies with the elected authority but, all the same, the reasoning must be transparent and communicated clearly.

One of the structural components of the strategy plan is the forming of the collaboration. Who are the stakeholders? Ideally they comprise all the internal and external parties who have to be involved in the process because of their knowledge or interests, but this will differ from case to case, of course. The persons responsible

need to analyse the field, appoint the parties and define their roles. Organisations that work in the field and specialists in the relevant disciplines must definitely be included, and as many departments as possible in the authority, or the several authorities, should be involved. The alliance should not be limited to a kaleidoscopic group from outside the authority; the variety must also be visible within the authority's organisation. That is the only way to cut across (divisional) one-sidedness.

Internal communication and launch

Something that is often forgotten or omitted is proper internal communication and holding an internal launch. In fact, this is an indispensable ingredient. In an ideal situation the organisation members have already been informed by the authority (see Stage 1), but that does not automatically mean that all the people involved actually feel involved. It is the supervisor's duty to involve all the internal players first, before he

or she can engage with the other stakeholders. To realise internal participation throughout the departments, each person involved needs to understand why it is that he or she has precisely this or that role in the process, what that role entails, and how he or she can fulfil that role using whatever means, etc..

The supervisor has to reach agreement with the internal participants about their basic attitude, which should be constructive, positive and open-minded. They must be prepared to venture outside the boundaries of any ingrained work methods and procedures of their specialties. All must be aware of the common goal and should embrace it as if it were a personal goal. This does not mean that their professional knowledge is not valuable anymore. To the contrary, their expert knowledge is indispensable, but it is equally essential that they realise that knowledge from other disciplines can enrich their own field of expertise. Such internal participation may

External kick-off The mayor of Bohmte, in the role of supervisor, presented the process to the citizens during the kick-off meeting. The following evenings discussion focused on establishing the objective: what seems desirable on the face of it, what are the underlying issues, what is it all really about. This is a fundamental stage intended to prevent the parties from starting out on the process with different expectations.

In the end, the Bohmte authorities hired a bus and took the parties involved on an excursion to view example locations, in this case, in the Dutch province of Fryslân. They then spent another evening talking the objective over with the specialists attending, and everyone had the opportunity to voice their observations and opinions. All these points, in particular, were extensively discussed and the municipality accepted the criticisms seriously and constructively. Although not all the citizens of Bohmte were enthusiastic about the vision that was finally adopted, the authority had gained people's trust during the process and had proved its integrity.



Stage 2

31

seem self-evident but it is not, by any means.

Good internal cooperation is at least as important as cooperating with the external parties.

It is one of the preconditions of a successful participatory process, and the supervisor should always take enough time to build a sound, stable internal platform for the comprehensive collaboration that is required.

External kick-off After the start-up document or the strategy plan is finished and has been approved by the authority, and after the process which is to be initiated has been discussed thoroughly with all the internal parties, it is time for the external kick-off. Normally, a preliminary talk with each of the participating parties individually is held first, they receive the start-up document and are invited for the kick-off. The kick-off itself can be organised in lots of encouraging ways.

The following, at minimum, should be discussed at the external kick-off:

- The start-up document or the strategy plan. The stages of the process must be clear to all the parties involved, and they need to agree on the document or plan.
- The basic attitude. The participants should have a constructive and positive attitude, be open-minded, and have public welfare in mind.
- The common goal has to be established. In practice, a process usually arises from a problem, something that people experience as negative. If that is the case, the players may come to the meeting just to be present when things go 'wrong' so that they can intervene and shout 'No!'. In other words, the start of a participatory process is often characterised by suspicion, or at least scepticism. For this reason, it is important to spend a lot of time on creating good collaboration and an atmosphere of trust during the first stage. This cannot be forced, but open communication can help.
- The official representatives of the various stakeholders must be appointed.
- The parties' responsibilities need to be formulated. No one represents their own individual interest, but always the group which has authorised them.
- Clarification of powers. We concluded above 'co-determining' is probably the highest level of participation that is attainable in a *Shared Space* project. Therefore, it has to be made clear that the final decision lies with the authority in charge, that the aim is to establish a partnership based on equality, and that the authority will account for its final choice and decision.
- Agreement on the rules. This concerns the way in which the participants treat each other. No one may abuse their expertise to drown out a discussion and no one may persist in challenging an opinion which is



Stage 2

33

demonstrably well-founded and correct.

- The time schedule. Time limits have to be set for achieving the objective. This does not mean that the schedule has to be kept to at all cost. It is a general guideline, but any departure from the schedule must be made with good reason.
- The budget available and how it is allocated. The effort and reward of each of the parties must be established.

It is quite possible, even likely, that one or more additional meetings are necessary after the kick-off meeting, for example, to reach unanimous agreement on the formulation of the start-up document. It is important to announce clearly that the process and the project will proceed, so a 'go' or 'no go' signal must be given for Stage 3.

As the catalogue list above shows, we choose not to bring up the 'problem' at the first external kick-off meeting, but to focus instead on the participants' perspectives and attitudes, which

will give direction to the process. By employing this method, when the problems are discussed at a later stage, they will often appear in a different light compared to how they might have been formulated at the very start.

Both the institutional model of the Emmen Revisited project and the 'ad-hoc' model applied in Bohmte can be applied with good effect. The Bohmte model is more suitable for a short process lasting from one to two years. In the case of Emmen Revisited, a situation has been created where collaboration could easily last for ten years. In both cases, there is a shared vision, all parties concerned understand the whole process and it is firmly anchored politically. There is a budget available for the process so that no delays arise from having to arrange funding before a certain activity can be undertaken. Once the process is under way it is important to have continuity, and not to have to stop at every stage to organise things.

*Shared Space
requires new citizen-
ship, commitment
by the people.*



Stage 3

Exploring the problem



The internal and external kick-offs have taken place and agreements have been made about the common goal and everybody's role and attitude in the process. Now the representatives of the participating parties can begin to explore the problems. We will see that the problems identified in this stage are already very different from what the participants perceived them to be at the beginning of the process.

In the stage of problem exploration we examine one of the cornerstones of the new knowledge domain, which we called 'thinking for yourself' earlier. 'Thinking for yourself' is one of the main qualities of the 'new citizenship' which is increasingly being appealed to. This new citizenship is one of the fundamental tenets underlying the *Shared Space* concept. Because it is defined

in different ways, we will first explain what we mean by citizenship in the *Shared Space* context.

Citizenship is often equated with empty phrases like 'I speak my mind', 'There are too many rules' or 'There are too many public servants'. To speak one's mind is an excellent idea, but only if one has applied one's mind to the issue as well. The cultivation of entrenched opinions, whether it is citizens' ideas about government, the government's concept of its citizens or social organisations' views of each other or government agencies, and vice versa, is not helpful. Citizenship not only means being articulate, it also means having thought about the conditions for, and the consequences of, being articulate. It entails taking responsibility for one's

'Quality = commitment'

36

Responsibility In an innovative process like a Shared Space one, citizenship and responsibility are particularly important elements. If one asked users of the new Laweiplein square in Drachten (which has been designed according to Shared Space principles) how they feel about it, many would probably say that they find it 'problematical'. But what actually is the problem? The problem, we say, is that these users have to deal with a situation that is different from the one they were used to. They don't have a problem – they are the problem. As soon as our behaviour is not regulated by external rules anymore, we are out of our depth and have to rely on our own behaviour and decisions in our communication with other people. People have to want this and learn it. This is the kind of responsibility we mean. One should feel committed and want to act accordingly. One shouldn't shift responsibility to others but assume it.



behaviour and what one does. Reducing the number of rules only makes sense if citizens assume responsibility and don't appeal for intervention by the government or the police at the slightest hiccup. We are well able to manage a lot of thing ourselves, but then we have to stop grumbling too. After all, a lot of grumblers are actually quite happy to blame others for any problems they experience.

We talk a lot about quality: spatial quality, process quality or the quality of a design or product, but we don't clarify what we mean by it properly. Practically, we need this term to be able to assess, measure and weigh things, but quality cannot be measured in objective terms. Quality is someone's commitment to whatever he/she is involved with – another person, an object or a task. That is the kind of commitment that citizenship is about.

‘Citizenship not only means being articulate, it also means having thought about the conditions for, and the consequences of, being articulate’

Stage 3

In everyday language we often divide people into two camps: citizens in the one, and professionals (in government, social organisations, businesses) in the other. In ‘participatory’

processes, the concept of citizen gets narrowed

down further to ‘resident’. Our experiences in

the *Shared Space* projects led us to a new

definition: we are all citizens, whatever our

profession, position, role or capacity. So, being

a citizen simply means being a ‘human being’.

Of course everybody in a participation process represents a certain organisation or special

interest group, and that is only right. But that

interest does not just stand by itself. It should

serve the people. Therefore we should all agree

at the beginning of a process that our common

main interest lies in reaching a result that

comes up to what we as users expect of that

space. Here again applies: man is the measure

of things. Sometimes it is necessary that we

hold that special interest that we represent to

the light taking a second look at it and learn to

look at it in a slightly different way. This is hard but it does help to achieve just that quality that we are looking for.

What is the relevance of all this to problem

exploration? We believe that it is great. If we are

aware of our citizenship and the corresponding

attitude, responsibility and behaviour, we look

at problems very differently than if we were

merely asserting our own interests. Problem

exploration is an important stage which, alas,

is often undertaken at far too early a stage. As

a result, solutions are often sought for problems

that don’t really exist from a citizenship perspective.

It is important to obtain clarity about the actual

problem. Is it a feeling of risk? Is it a lack of

quality and, if so, what quality - spatial, social

or individual? Then, when we have identified

the actual problems, it is important for all the

parties to agree. The commissioning party can

carry out any number of studies and define the problems as thoroughly as it can, but if the other participants don’t acknowledge the problem, the process comes to a halt. A realistic view of the problems is required before it makes sense to think about solutions.

Urgency of the problem An important lesson that we learned from the *Shared Space* projects is that projects which have been running for some time and which have parties in it who feel an urgency to arrive at a solution, are not really suitable for an innovative approach. The art is to introduce real innovation whilst the sense of urgency is building up, because then problem holders and solutions can come together more quickly thanks to the innovative approach.

A delegation of business people, residents and municipal staff from German Bohnte paying a visit to the Shared Space locations at Drachten in 2005. The picture shows the Lawei-plein at Drachten.



Stage 4

A collective vision,

task and playing field

In Stage 4, the politicians' vision which served as the baseline is reviewed again, supplemented with input from the participating parties. The basic vision is shared with the experts, implementers, residents and users. This can't be done in an evening or a single meeting. Several workshops must be held and, preferably, some excursions made to projects that have been executed according to the *Shared Space* philosophy. The expertise and experience gained from previous projects will be discussed, this will serve to broaden and modify the basic vision and lead to a collective vision embodying shared values, targets, etcetera. In the Bohmte project, this method of working helped to transform the natural reluctance of the local population and business community into support. It does not mean that one should go on talking

until the very last critic or sceptic has been crushed or leaves the stage. Criticism must be taken seriously and discussed sincerely. This takes time, but the example of Bohmte shows that investing time at this stage easily offsets the delays that might be incurred during the design stage, as happened in several other cases.

What if the vision is not widely shared? Should one persevere until there is agreement all round? This is a matter of judgement. It is an illusion to expect everybody to welcome the vision. In any case, we shouldn't think of *Shared Space* as the new bible of spatial planning, to be abided to the letter. *Shared Space* means acting in the context of local conditions, which may require making compromises and concessions.

Widely supported vision In the city of Ostende, a widely supported vision has held sway for some years now, i.e., that prosperity and well-being are determined to a large extent by spatial quality and high-quality public space. In this vision, such quality forms the engine of economic and social development. That is why, in the allocation of government resources, the focus is on investing in public space. The Shared Space concept was perfectly in line with all this.

In the picture you see Maria Hendrika Park. This park has been subject to extensive renovation works over the past few years. It used to be somewhat hidden and isolated but now the park is a green heart with an intricate network of footpaths and cycle tracks. Since the park has been made accessible from several sides the ward of Contendarm now has a singularly attractive and fast bicycle connection to the centre of Ostende.



‘For a long time local authorities have presented themselves as the institution that solved our problems, but everybody has a task in this respect’

Stage 4

Whatever happens, one can never satisfy everybody, there will always be opponents. That is just the way things are and all one can do is draw lessons from it for the next project. All the same, we must try to discover the reasons why people are opposed, and what can, or should, be done differently the next time.

To effect changes it is necessary to collaborate and to have a joint vision, framework and coalition. Real collaboration requires mutual interest, valuing the other person, open communication, mutual understanding, trust and equality. These textbook phrases are not easy to realise and to apply in the reality of day-to-day practice. When formulating the task, cross-divisional cooperation is essential. For example, the reason for starting a process may be a dangerous traffic situation, but if the cause is not related to traffic engineering then a traffic engineering solution may not be the best option. *Shared Space* operates on the principle that people adapt their behaviour

to the signals which a space sends out to them about what behaviour is expected from them. The reason for a dangerous traffic situation may be that it is difficult to ‘read’ the space, or there is poor maintenance or a degraded identity of the surroundings. Undesirable behaviour can also have social causes, which illustrates the importance of cross-divisional cooperation.

The task is not to remove all the problems at once as if by magic. For a long time, the government presented itself as having the solution for all our problems, but, as we have already seen, everybody has a duty in this regard. Some problems can be solved by a new design, others by a change in behaviour, and yet others by both design and behaviour in interaction. Some problems, however, are of a permanent nature. What is possible, and what is not, must be made clear in advance. People’s behaviour can be influenced by designs to a certain degree, but never completely, and this has to be explained.

Defining the playing field The task determines the playing field. Problem exploration includes mapping out the playing field. By ‘playing field’ we mean the parameters within which possible solutions can be sought. First, the areas which have already been established and which cannot be challenged must be demarcated. Users are inclined to express wishes that are impossible to realise. They may also bring up matters that have been decided long ago.

Politicians sometimes tend to be vague about such matters for political reasons; that, however, is destructive of the process. The boundaries regarding what is possible and what is not must be drawn clearly and sharply. There are plenty of opportunities ‘hidden’ in the policy plans and programmes of the alliance’s stakeholders. They will have things in common with the project and may also retain additional funds.

Schoolyard In 2005, the municipality of Haren and a local working group started to cooperate in the redesign of a road, the Zuidlaarderweg, in the village of Noordlaren. Part of the plan was to redesign the environment of the village school according to Shared Space principles. To make the school more visible it was proposed that the schoolyard be connected to the road running alongside it. However, legislation presented an obstacle because it stipulates that schoolyards must be bounded by a fence. To find a creative solution to this problem, the school set up an art project involving an artist and the schoolchildren who then worked together to make designs that would mark the boundary. This resulted in a colourful abacus and some benches being placed along the road. An owl perched on one of the benches is a hint to motorists to drive wisely. The municipality received supplementary funding for this project from an educational fund.



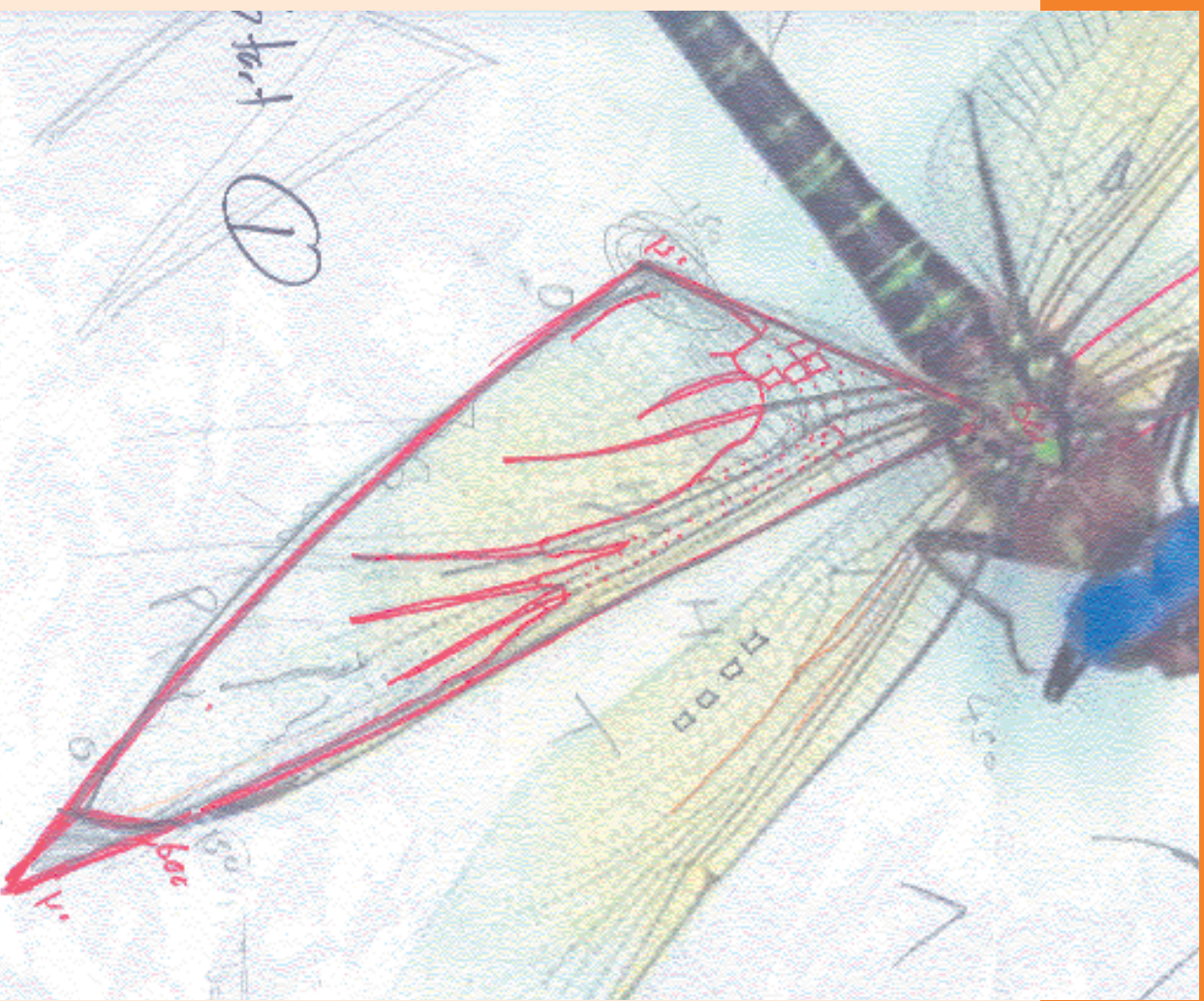
Design: artist Wja van Dijk

Stage 4

43

Something that may not be tampered with is official policy, including frameworks such as EU standards. On the other hand, policies must not be used as an excuse for curtailing discussion. Policies should be scrutinised carefully and creatively to determine what scope they offer the process and to see if the boundaries can be stretched, extended or modified. This also applies strongly to the clutter of guidelines that were developed over time to ensure road and traffic safety. They are guidelines, after all, not laws. They offer orientation points but do not need to be followed blindly.

Dragonfly The Alderman Road design in Ipswich was inspired by the shape of a dragonfly. The dragonfly alludes to the city's past (about 1800 AD) when Ipswich was only a small settlement in the middle of a marshland area. At that time the dragonfly was quite a common insect there. The triangles and vertical lines in the design were inspired by the wings of this little creature.



Stage 5

The spatial context

45

We now have a shared vision. The participants' roles and responsibilities are clear and so is the playing field. Now it is time to take stock of the location that we want to set to work at. What is its significance? What is its history? What makes it special and distinguishes it from other places? What do the local residents value about it and what do the external experts say?

Stage 5 consists of gathering information and knowledge about the location and analysing and interpreting this data. How is the location's history expressed spatially? What traces of the past are present? What do we want to preserve, and how can this be done? In collecting this information, the location's archaeology and its cultural and settlement history are considered, including its use and functions over the centuries

with regard to agriculture, industry, water management, etcetera. People's collective and individual perception of the space is also important. One way of discovering this is by making a so-called mental map. A mental map is a map of the area with those elements sketched in which the local residents value and feel attached to, and which they want to be preserved and enhanced. Such a map is a useful supplement to the official maps; it affords the opportunity to look at the landscape from the perspective of the people who live and work in it.

The information collected in this way is analysed and interpreted interactively by, chiefly, the local residents and urban designers, cultural historians and landscape architects. They outline the spatial context which forms the input for the next stage

Stroobosser trekweg 'Shared Space encourages social behaviour by calling on the self regulating capacity in people; it is not the traffic signs and rules that determine behaviour but the environment itself. That is exactly what the province of Fryslân had in mind: inviting people to show social behaviour. This is an extra difficult task for roads in rural areas. As a first step in this the road network must be brought down to human size. For Stroobosser trekweg [trekweg = tow path] this could be done by first making the cultural and landscape context of the road legible again. This context had eroded over the past few decades on account of a growth in traffic. The new infrastructure had to be fitted into the landscape in such a

way that the landscape's own culture and history would come back to life again. In the reconstruction the cultural-historically important relationship between towing barges and tow path had to be restored or given greater emphasis. There is only room for as few traffic signs as possible. Part of the road has been designed as an area to be around in and it is possible to walk and bike safely in or along the old road again. The crossings with little bridges are the pearls in the string. Especially in those places the road was drastically redesigned with a different road surface, adapted lighting and nice road signs.'



Stage 5

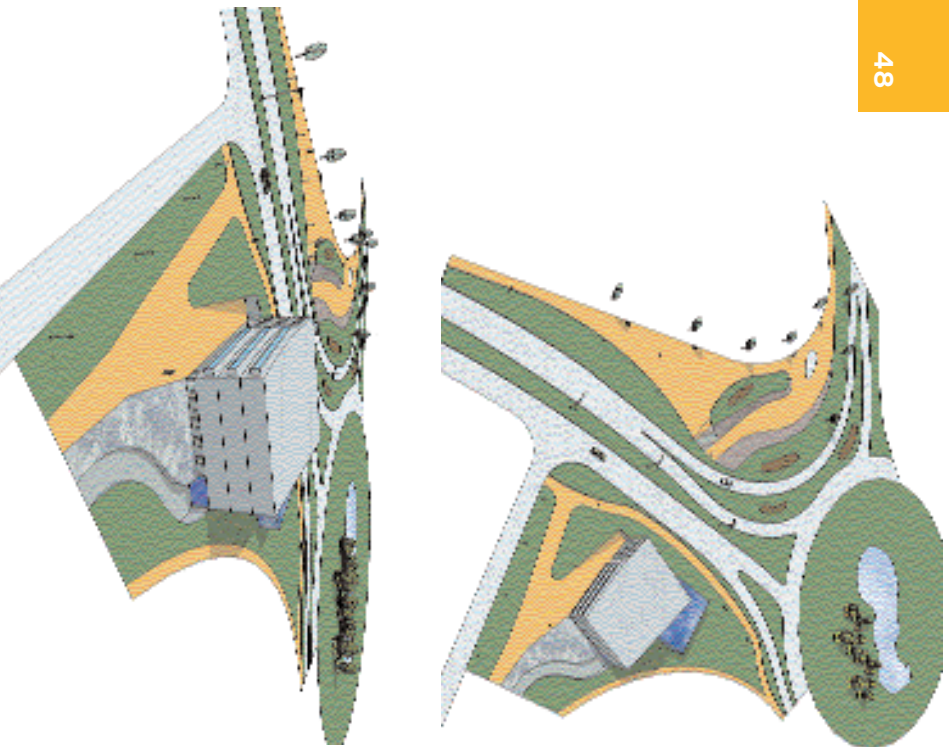
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of the process: working out scenarios and designs. From this stage on, the external experts play a vital role in the process - that is, if they subordinate themselves to it - because it is their responsibility, using words and images, to describe the identity, the task and the various solutions that are possible. Instead of dry documents and figures, stories and images now determine the course of the process. It is these stories and images which will foster creativity, as they allow people to look at their familiar surroundings with new eyes.

for. After all, the less a location is dedicated to just one purpose or function, the more meaningful it becomes.

By using the expertise of both the residents and the designers, we can be certain that the designs made later on will really reflect the special and unique character of the location. The more disciplines are involved in exploring the location's history and its spatial expression, the more aspects and functions will be reflected in the final design, and this will contribute to the spatial quality which the *Shared Space* project strives





Scenarios and design

The information that was gathered about the spatial context of the location in the preceding stage is converted into images by the designer or, rather, a team of designers. Preferably, this team should be made up of at least a landscape architect, an urban designer and a traffic designer.

The design team elaborates several broad scenarios on the basis of the outcomes of the previous stages. Then the participants are invited to discuss these scenarios and comment on them.

After the team and the participants have made a number of choices on the basis of the scenarios, the experts go back to their studios to make a detailed design. When this first design is finished, the team presents a number of

options to the participants again. Depending on the complexity of the situation, a number of workshops will be necessary from the scenario to the final design. In this way, the participants are closely involved in the design without actually sitting on the knee of the designers.

This close involvement minimises the chance of participants rejecting the final design. It is important that the public servants involved are included in the process at this stage too, as they check whether the design fits in with planning policy.

In almost all the partner projects of the European *Shared Space* project, Stage 6 was executed in the manner described above. In each case landscape architects, in consultation with traffic engineers and urban designers, worked out

'Shared Space processes can evoke strong emotions'

Stage 6

scenarios on the basis of agreed principles, and presented them to the local residents and users. Participation during the design stage was usually limited to providing an opportunity to react to the proposals. In all cases, the local authority initiated the process.

An element which often makes the participation of interested parties in the design process difficult, is emotion. All participants must be clear in advance that they are part of a dynamic process and that things may turn out differently from what they foresaw or planned. The participants have to accept that it may be necessary to repeat parts of certain stages if unforeseen circumstances arise. This will occur during the design stage, in particular, when ideas are being fleshed out. It is important that the players are aware of these dynamics.

Shared Space processes can evoke strong emotions, because they affect residents' immediate living environment and safety. It can be quite difficult for councillors and public servants to deal with this. They carry the bulk of the responsibility and may begin to behave in an over-cautious manner during the process. If residents take their emotions directly to an alderman and accuse him or her of endangering the lives of their children, that alderman will need to be well grounded to be able to deal with such serious accusations.

This applies to Germany even more than it does to the other partner countries, because there the designer co-shares the responsibility for the effects of the plan including any losses resulting from its implementation. As a conse-

quence, German landscape architects often adopt a reserved attitude and are not very inclined to make experimental designs.

Phasing The Shared Space location at De Rieshoek primary school in Noord-laren is part of the redesign of a whole road, the Zuidlaarderweg. In retrospect, it is clear that the phasing of this project played an important role in a sometimes difficult process. Because the redesign of the school surroundings was a high priority on the political agenda and promises had been made to the villagers, the school area was tackled first although there was not enough funding to implement the design fully, and immediately, according to Shared Space principles. Parents felt the new, provisional situation was dangerous. Dissatisfaction and incomprehension was voiced, which was grist to the mill of those who were prejudiced against the idea in the first place. But now that the new design of the schoolyard has been completed, the Shared Space approach has come out on top.



Stage 7

The implementation plan



completed. The other projects and plans are not binned, but are taken up in proper order.

In all the partner projects to date, the final designs were presented to the participants at a concluding meeting. In each case, it was emphasised that approval of the design by the participants did not entail the formal adoption of the design, but that the (local) authority would take the final decision.

It is important to make it clear, right from the start of the participatory process, that the process will not replace decision-making by the competent authorities but hopes to provide higher quality, greater support and better understanding.

In Part 1 of this book we explained that an intensive participatory process, such as that envisaged by *Shared Space*, will result in a range of individual implementation projects. Not all of these projects can be carried out at once, of course. It is essential to make this plain to all the parties involved right from the outset. Once the projects have been selected, their priority should be announced. At the same time, one can start to find other funds or programmes which might help to realise the projects.

The prioritisation of the projects is reflected in the implementation plan. This is a concrete plan for the realisation of a certain component which also outlines how the other components will be realised. As we said earlier, a process is not completed when a certain project has been



***Confirmation** The mayor of the municipality of Haren unveils a new 'Shared Space' sign at the entrance of the village on the occasion of the partner meeting at Haren in 2006. The sign is a knowing wink at all the other traffic signs in the village that were removed after the introduction of Shared Space. In this way the Shared Space process is confirmed most clearly. Possibly other partners have followed suit for they were given the same sign as a present by the municipality of Haren.*



Stage 8

Decision-making by the authority

According to the principle stated in Stage 1, the (local) authority is obliged to take the outcomes of the participatory process into account and, if possible, honour them when it makes its final decision. If substantial modifications seem likely, the authority is obliged to consult the participants again.

In the European *Shared Space* project, the authority's deliberations on the final design took the input from the participatory process into consideration in all cases.

After the politicians have reached an agreement in principle, an internal process follows to prepare for the physical realisation of the project. Specifications must be drawn up which conform to the national guidelines and all kinds of decisions still have to be made, such as what

materials to use. This stage can often take quite some time to complete. Because the citizens hear little or nothing about 'their' *Shared Space* project during this stage, they may become uneasy, wondering what is going on, or even whether the project is still on track. It is important to update the citizens regularly during this stage and to inform them what hurdles remain and what the planning looks like.



Stage 9 and 10

Implementation and management



The implementation of a project in the public realm often causes traffic nuisance and some additional risk. Roads have to be blocked and traffic has to be re-routed, sometimes right through a residential area. Usually, the residents are asked for their cooperation and understanding. But that is not all that can be done.

The local community and the other participants can also play an active part during the implementation stage. We are very inclined to think that implementation is the task of the local authority and its contractors, but the community may well include people who work in sectors that are relevant to the implementation stage, such as road construction, layout of green spaces, etc.. We are not used to doing things this way, but the implementation stage can be

made into something which the whole village or neighbourhood could be engaged in. An appropriate budget should be made available, of course.

We have seen few examples of participation during the implementation stage. Participation during this stage is entirely new ground and definitely deserves attention in the next *Shared Space* projects. Participation does not end with the adoption of a project, and certainly not just before the final plan is approved. Involvement during the implementation of the designs is important so that modifications can be made if there are unforeseen effects. Having a say in the budget is also important, because material choices can still be made during the implementation stage for financial reasons -

often as not, the kind of choices that impinge on the quality.

Another way in which residents can participate during the implementation stage is with regard to maintenance and management. The municipality of Emmen has gone a long way down this road. Organised groups of residents receive management budgets which they can use at their own discretion. Participation in management is an ongoing process. The Emmen authorities are convinced that the participation of the residents (and others) from the start of a project until its completion prompts residents to take responsibility for their own living environment.

Which is exactly what *Shared Space* is intended to achieve!

Colofon



Lead Partner
Shared Space

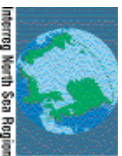


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