

ANYBODY - ESSENTIAL - KNOWLEDGE

White Eindhoven



short description / what?

A one week-long spatial intervention in the city of Eindhoven, performed simultaneously by all the green-workers of Ergon, in which, instead of doing the ordinary maintenance acts -removing/cutting some plants- they will spray-paint them in white. Several panels accompany the intervention, with explanations about the maintenance work and a link to a new website page where people get extra information and can react over it.

Goals / what for?

- 1) In order to make *visible* the maintenance work, that, by nature, does its best to keep discreet. To put an emphasis of the hard work that ergon green-workers provide and maybe even get some gratitude from citizens.
- 2) In order to trigger the curiosity and attention of the citizens regarding the management of the public green. To inform them about the design decisions that are taken and give them a space to react and comment on those decisions.
- 3) Generate publicity for the green-workers, Ergon and the city on a national level.



Reasons / why?

With the development of cities, citizens have outsourced the responsibility of managing the public space to municipalities and companies. By doing so, they lost knowledge and feeling of ownership over their direct surroundings.

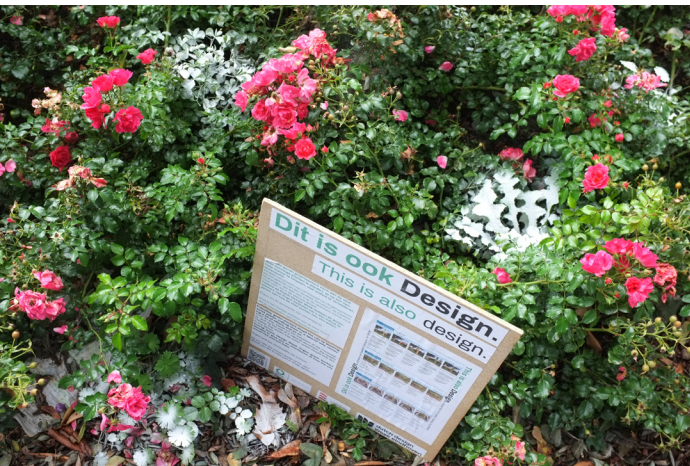
Although there is a growing interest and effort towards citizen participation within urban planning, potential co-designing events only take place during the creation of a new area. Little or nothing is said about the maintenance plan, which does impact greatly the appearance and livelihood of the city.

This had several effects: first, the general public is unaware of all the work put into keeping their city tidy. Indeed, the current goal of maintenance work is to keep the public space always looking the same, so citizens only become aware of it when there is a problem. This ignorance contributes to the idea that ergon green workers are “lazy”. Second, they are equally unaware of the system on which the maintenance (and therefore the look) of their street is based upon, thus they are unable to neither approve or question it. Very little is done to advertise the public maintenance work towards citizens, and it is not so easy to find information about it. Most of the time citizens are only able to give punctual remarks (through the buiten better app), take responsibility for a specific area (through programs such as adopt a straat or operatie sterenbreek), but not give directions for a more systematic change.

constraints / be careful that :

- 1) safety for humans: plants that represent a real danger for the citizens are still being removed or cut.
- 2) safety for non-humans : the paint represents no harm for the environment
- 3) understanding : there is enough information for citizens to understand and be involved. It does not feel like an aggression to them.

How to?



Performance :

-> what to paint? Every thing that the workers usually remove should stay and be painted, except if they represent a direct problem for people's safety. That is to say, every plants that would be removed, or every piece of plant that should be cut away. So "onkruid", "boomop-schoot", "haag"... But also all the garbage that they would pick-up (in the plantsoen)

-> when? I first thought of using the momentum of the Dutch Design Week, because citizens are then more open-minded towards surprising installations in the city. However October is not the best period in term of weather and type of work (chance of rain that washes off the paint, mainly fallen leaves to remove). Moreover, the event might get lost into the midst of other creative happenings. Therefore I suggest to choose a week in agreement with the green department : a moment with quite some onkruid and overgrown hedges and trees, but not yet too stressful in terms of amount work.

It is still good to use a symbolic date, here are some suggestion :

21st March : start of spring (not so handy because it will be a Saturday)

22nd May : International Day for Biological Diversity (a Sunday)

5th June : World Environment Day (a Saturday)

12th June : World day against drought and desertification (a Thursday)

21st June : start of Summer (a Monday, so maybe the best)

Communication :

-> signs : signs should be placed in the plantsoen for people to understand who is behind this change and what this is all about. There should be a small sign with only a logo and title/slogan, and a larger sign, that also carries information. On both signs will be a hyper-link (such as QRcode) that will refer to a online environment.

-> online environment : the goal of this website is to be the place where citizens can access information about the maintenance work that is done in the city, but also and importantly, about the policy that structures it. This website also gives citizens the space to make their own mind about the maintenance of public greenery via a simulator and give them a place to express their thoughts and desires. I have created a prototype of the website and of the simulator with Hugo Pilate. You can find it there : <https://juzbox.github.io/ErgonSite/>
The website also links to Ergons and the Gemeente's website.

contact / recommendations:

-> paint : I used a temporary chalk spray paint. It goes away with the rain /time and is absolutely harmless for the fauna and flora. I had a spray can, but those are one-use only and therefore not suited for large amount. I suggest buying paint in large quantity and using paint-guns. Large plastic sheets might be convenient for protecting the rest of the plant or environment, that should not be white.

-> signs : I would use plywood (resist outside and more sustainable) and have the information printed on it, preferably in white (to link with the chalk paint).

It would be good to come up with a type of sign that has a strong visual identity and can adapt to the different location (trees, low plants, higher plants).

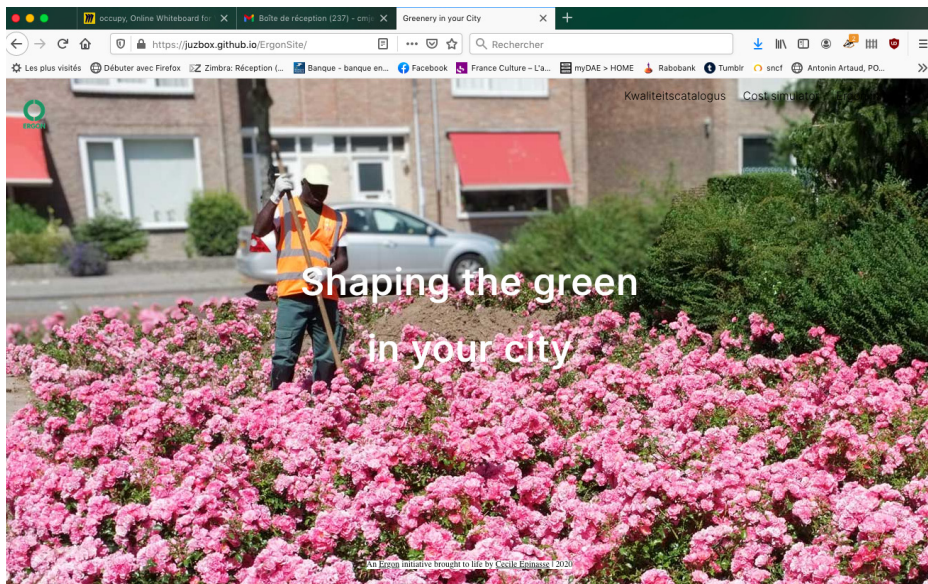
We need small signs with only slogan and logo, and bigger signs with explanations.

A designer (I could do it) would have to spend 5 to 10 hours on such a design.

-> online environment : I worked with Hugo Pilate to create this prototype for a website. I know that he is willing to develop it further and that he has a lot of interest in the topic of green maintenance. His contact : hugopilate@gmail.com ; +31 6 27974897.

research:

Here you can see images of the website I created with Hugo Pilate :
<https://juzbox.github.io/ErgonSite/>



It highlights the importance of green in Eindhoven, and of its maintenance, and it gives explanations about the way it is done.



Ever wondered about the work necessary to make Eindhoven the greenest city in the Netherlands?

You probably know that Eindhoven is one of the five major cities in the Netherlands, but did you know that it is the greenest of those five? This is due the decision of the architects [Louis Koolhaas](#) and [Jos Cuyper](#)s (who merged the villages together into what is now Eindhoven) to make it a Garden City (tuinstad). Since then, the municipality is making efforts to retain and develop the green even though a lot of new buildings are being built.

But if designing and creating new green spaces in the city is very important, the maintenance of those green spaces is equally significant. Maintenance makes sure that the green spaces sustain in time, keep being alive and providing all sorts of services. Maintenance shapes the appearance of the green spaces and therefore shapes our (citizens) relationship with it.

There are a lot of people working to maintain the city greenery and keep it as we know it, therefore we don't really notice their work. There are a lot of companies involved in the green maintenance in the city (some are private, some public, some do only the trees, other the pavements...). It is a quite complex system that most citizens don't really know





Kwaliteitscatalogus

The [Kwaliteitscatalogus](#) is the main reference for maintenance work. It is a national document that shows and tells how public space should look like, from signs to pavement... to greenery. It is a national document that municipalities are free to use (or not) to shape the maintenance of their cities. There are 5 levels of maintenance, the A+ being the more expensive and (supposedly) best one and D is the wildest, cheapest one. For each situation of green in the city, there is a series of photos and a small text, describing how the green should look, according to the level (see above photo). Municipalities decide on a level of maintenance for each area, according to their budget or other considerations. They make a contract with a maintenance company that has to make sure, everything in that neighbourhood looks like the picture of level of maintenance that has been chosen. Another company is employed to check regularly that the work is done correctly and that criterias are respected. If they find something that does not match the Kwaliteitscatalogus description, they make a photo and send it to the maintenance company, who gets a fine and has to change it within 3 days (see document on the right).

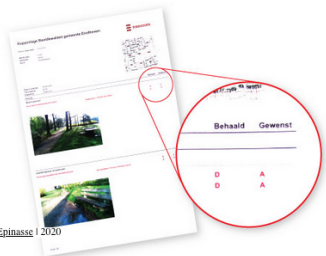
This system does not give a lot of space for the green-workers to make decisions, or use their green knowledge and adapt to specific locations. Moreover, the Kwaliteitscatalogus is most of the time based on appearance and safety, it does not really take ecological systems and plant's needs into account...and it makes nature always look the same, which is not so interesting to look at anymore.

Therefore some green-workers are unhappy with some of the rules, and they are wondering, how do you feel about it? [Here you can listen to green-workers](#) explaining three rules of the kwaliteitscatalogus that they would like to change.

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Verskoven op beeld via RAW-verticatorens 51.48.06

Groen		beplanting-natuurlijk afval		
A+	A	B	C	D
Er is geen bladval/bloesem.	Er is weinig bladval/bloesem.	Er is in beperkte mate bladval/bloesem.	Er is redelijk veel bladval/bloesem.	Er is veel bladval/bloesem.
bedekking 0% per 100m ²	bedekking \leq 15% per 100m ²	bedekking \leq 30% per 100m ²	bedekking \leq 50% per 100m ²	bedekking \geq 100% per 100m ²
maximale dikte 0 cm	maximale dikte \leq 2 cm	maximale dikte \leq 5 cm	maximale dikte \leq 10 cm	maximale dikte \geq 10 cm
Natuurstrategie: Natuurlijk afval				



Cost simulator

Here we created a costing simulator for you to think of what maintenance you would like to see in your street, and have an idea of how much work it is, and how much that will cost you.

Calculator Key:

Kwaliteitscatalogus Grade (A+, A, B, C, D)

Worker POV (😞 = confused, 😊 = approving, 😴 = tedious!)

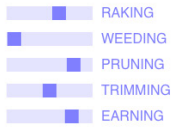
Plant Wellness (🌿 = limited, 🌿🌿 = OK, healthy = 🌿🌿🌿)

Average added cost per month per citizen

The aim of this calculator is also to inspire anyone using it to think of new ways of valuing the greenery in your city, one that celebrates plant life rather than contains it.




Having Ergon gardeners pick leaves up 5 times a month, weed 1 times a month, prune trees 7 times a month, and trim hedges 4 times a month would result in a healthy plant life. It's also worth noting it would take about 3 hours of work per week. With an hourly wage of 18€/hr this would amount to 1.31€ added to your city taxes. For the sake of comparison, the Kwaliteitscatalogus grade equivalent for this situation would be a D.



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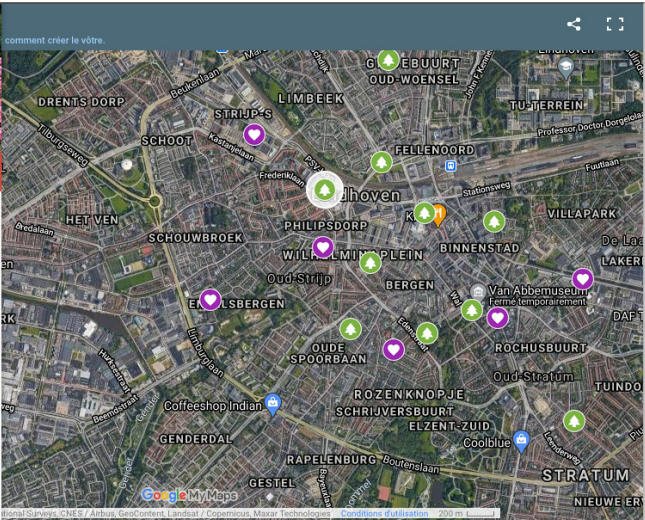
It explains the system of the kwaliteit catalogus and it also offers a possibility for the citizens to imagine their own ideal system of maintenance, thanks to a visual cost simulator.



Garden of Roses

name
Garden of Roses

description
Working with Roses is always a pleasure for the noses and the eyes, but ouch! it is a pain for our legs and hand.

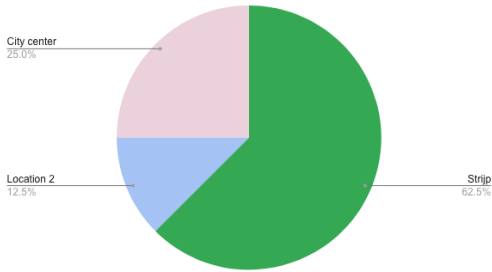


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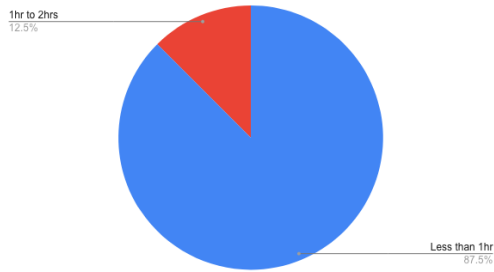


Community poll

Which neighborhood are you in?



How often do you garden?



Take the poll yourself [here!](#)

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But green should not only be about dry facts and numbers, so we added a map for workers and inhabitants to tell about their relationship with specific public places in Eindhoven. We also created a poll for citizens to check what they know about the work of the green-people and give their feedback, relating it to their own practice.

the poll:



Greening your city

An Ergon initiative brought to life by Cecile Epinasse

How much do you know about the work that goes into maintaining the plant in your city?

We've put together a little quiz to see how much you know about the work we do and to give you the chance to give us some feedback too!



Which neighborhood are you in?

- Strijp
- City center
- Autre : _____

How much time do you spend gardening each week?

- Less than 1hr
- 1hr to 2hrs
- More than 2hrs

Please select which of the following Ergon is responsible for:

1 point

- Remove fallen leave and fruits
- Remove fallen trees after storms
- Plant new trees

Please select which of the following Ergon is NOT responsible for:

1 point

- Mow the grass in fields and around obstacles
- Cut higher branches of the tree
- Remove dead plants
- Empty trash bins
- Cut hedges

Name four things Ergon workers will be doing in this photo:

4 points



- Pick up the leaves
- Remove the weeds
- Clean the windows
- Plant new plants
- Cut the hedges

At what time can you get your Ergon workers a cup of coffee?

1 point

- 8-830
- 830-9
- 9-915
- 915-930

Let us know what you think of our work!

Votre réponse

Thank you for participating in our little quiz!

We'd like to leave you with a quote from one of our gardeners: "There is no black soil in nature."

Envoyer

I had made those first signs with the context of the Dutch Design Week in head. After discussing with Raymond and Thijs we agreed that it was actually not the best option, so we would have to think of another slogan.

Also the design of the sign needs improvement. But it can give you an idea of the type of informations that should be there.

