

EUROPEAN GARDEN AWARD



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2023

EUROPEAN GARDEN HERITAGE NETWORK – EGHN



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20 YEARS EGHN

EGHN: 20 YEARS OF EUROPEAN COOPERATION

In 2003, the European Garden Heritage Network EGHN was launched in five countries with the support of the European Union. This year we celebrate the 20th anniversary not only with many supporters and with more than 200 partner gardens in 15 countries, but also with around 130 winners of the European Garden Award from a total of 21 countries.

Together we have carried out numerous projects and are involved in the Erasmus+ project "Craft Skills for Garden Conservation". Climate change, which is a huge challenge for all gardens but also highlights their strengths, is becoming increasingly important for our networking activities.

This is also reflected in the expansion of the European Garden Award and of the jury with Johanna Leissner (Germany) and Phillip Sattler (Germany) as new judges. The other jury members are Roswitha Arnold (Chair/ Germany), Kerstin Abicht (Germany), Ed Bennis (Great Britain), Lieneke van Campen (Netherlands), Gunnar Ericson (Sweden), Jacob Fischer (Denmark), Davorin Gazvoda (Slovenia), Nuno Oliveira (Portugal), Jens Spanjer (Germany), , Michael Walker (Great Britain) and Udo Woltering (Germany).

We would like to thank them, as well as the Lorenz von Ehren Nurseries, Garpa Garten & Park Furniture and the Federal Ministry of Housing, Urban Development and Building for supporting the European Garden Award.



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CLIMATE MITIGATION MEASURES IN PARKS AND GARDENS

On 19 July 2022, during a visit to the Prussian Palaces and Gardens Foundation in Potsdam, German Minister for Building and Urban Development Klara Geywitz presented the federal programme "Adapting urban spaces to climate change".

The funding programme makes an important contribution to climate-friendly urban development through the targeted development of green-blue infrastructure. The programme names parks and gardens as particularly threatened by climate change. Innovative, integrated approaches and pilot models are needed here to respond to both the increasing climatic changes and to social and ecological challenges.

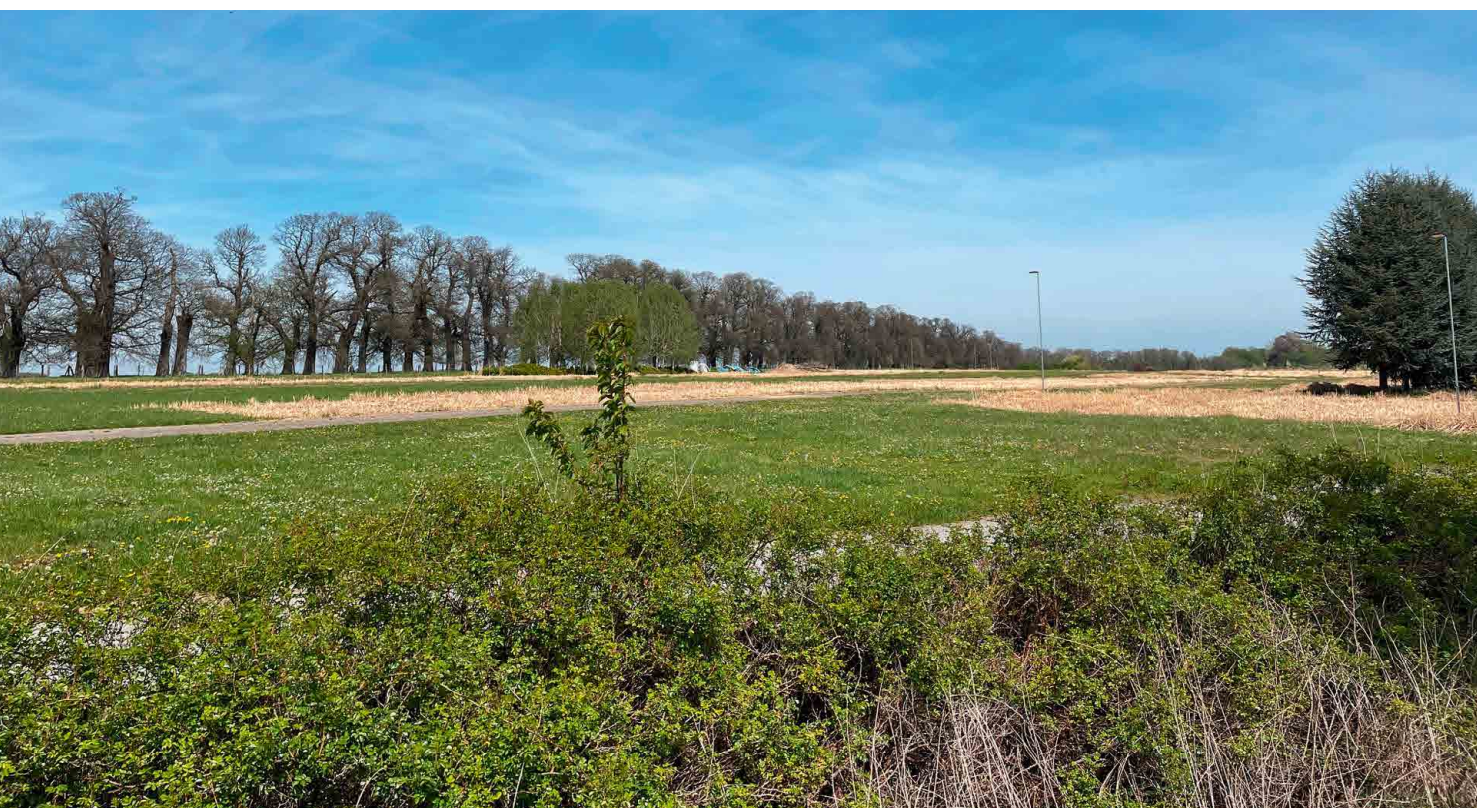
Cities, municipalities, public organisations and foundations were invited to submit pioneering projects for funding. Such projects must support and develop public urban green and open spaces including parks and gardens and thus contribute to climate mitigation and to the adaptation of urban spaces to climate change.

Miscanthus harvest
Dycker Feld

On the one hand, the projects should highlight the major challenges facing parks, gardens and other green spaces in Germany because of climate change (vitality, resilience and conservation in the face of increasing extreme weather conditions accompanied, for example, by drought, heat, heavy rain and storms). On the other hand, they are to prove nature-based solutions for greenhouse gas reduction, temperature or water regulation (heat and flood prevention) with excellent and future-oriented investments.

The Schloss Dyck Foundation took part in the federal programme and successfully submitted a funding application with the aim of implementing the "Climate Neutral Palace and Park of the Schloss Dyck Foundation".

The focus of this project is to develop and evaluate innovative solutions for gardens and parkland affected by climate change. This includes measures in the landscape park of Schloss Dyck, such as a new park maintenance system adapted to climate change,

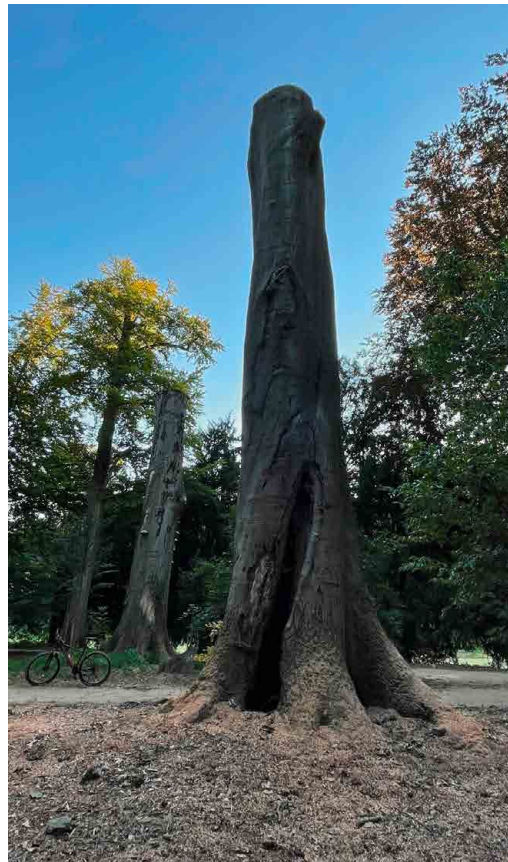


research and testing of climate-resilient tree species, innovative tree care, soil improvement measures, new irrigation systems and the increase of biodiversity.

Furthermore, the entire listed castle complex with the three outer castles and the visitor centre at the entrance to the park will be converted to a completely climate-neutral operation from 2027. This will be achieved by using Miscanthus that is growing on the site of the Dycker Feld as a source of renewable energy. This is combined with a new heating system, photovoltaic systems and the conversion of machines and equipment to electric operation.

The measures are complemented by scientific monitoring and accompanying research, citizen participation and communication measures. Also important is the exchange of professional experience, in particular within the framework of the "Initiative Alliance Historic Gardens in Climate Change" and via the "European Garden Heritage Network EGHN".

In addition to three conferences planned for the coming years, these measures also include the expansion of the European Garden Award by the category "Climate adaptation measures in parks and gardens". For this purpose, the international jury of the Garden Award now comprises two renowned experts on climate adaptation measures. This year, for the first time, three award winners (from the Netherlands, Denmark and Great Britain) will be honoured and presented in this publication. With the diversity of their concepts and results, the three award winners as well as the project of the Schloss Dyck Foundation make it clear that measures to adapt to climate change are a major challenge but can involve opportunities for more attractive parks, gardens and urban spaces, for greater biodiversity and for resource-saving management of historic sites too.



left:
Damaged tree

below:
Soil probing

(All images: Tamara Kunkel)



WINNERS: MANAGEMENT OR DEVELOPMENT OF A HISTORIC PARK OR GARDEN

1ST PRIZE: TUINEN MIEN RUYSS (DEDEMSVAART, NL)

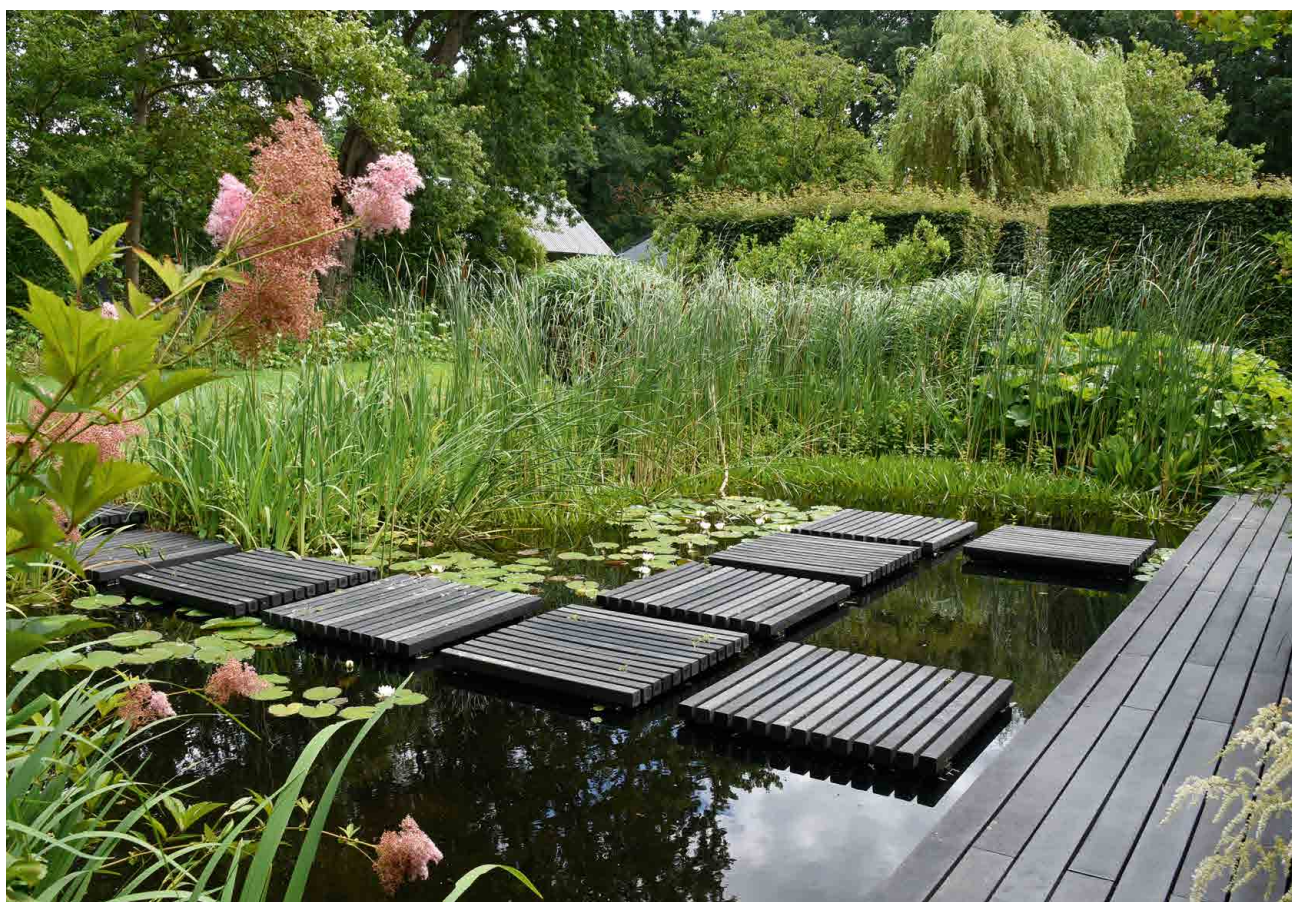


Somewhere tucked away in the typical Dutch countryside lies this green monument of 6,2 acres that originated through the creativity and enthusiasm of garden architect Mien Ruys (1904-1999). This inheritance is now managed by the non-profit Mien Ruys Gardens Foundation.

The gardens are a sequence of thirty gardens designed and laid out according to both traditional and innovative ideas with a well-balanced combinations of plants. New combinations of plants and garden materials are tried out. The Mien Ruys Gardens give an overview of 20th century garden architecture and actual trends.



Although the gardens stand for experimenting and renovation, not everything has to change. Some of the old experimental gardens are kept in their original state with much care and attention. The very first experimental gardens where plants were tested in sun and shade remain as they were. They form the basis of a long garden



Marsh Garden 1990

history. Also, several of the gardens designed just after the war remain unchanged. These are beautiful examples of garden architecture following the principles and style of 'functionalism'. A striking example is the sunken garden with the railway sleepers. The Parterre Garden designed in squares with washed gravel paving stones, the Water Garden with little raised walls and the Standard Perennial borders, all add their own infinite values. The new roof garden created in 2017 is an example of the new developments that are shown here. Meanwhile, a total of nine gardens earned the status of a national monument.

The knowledge obtained from design, plantation and upkeep of the gardens is made known through publications, conducted tours, lectures, courses, and 'theme' days.



left:
Roof Garden 2021

below:
Old Experimental Garden 1927

(All images: Stichting Mien
Ruys)



2ND PRIZE: BETH CHATTO'S GARDENS (ELMSTEAD MARKET, UK)



Beth Chatto OBE (1923 - 2018) was an award-winning plants woman, author and lecturer, who won 10 gold medals at the Chelsea Flower Show, in the 70s and 80s. For her own gardens she transformed desolate wasteland that was deemed unfit for fruit farming. The landscape varied dramatically so that each garden within the garden has become an example for ecological and sustainable gardening by working with nature to find the right plants for the right place.

Among the different gardens, the Gravel Garden is the most famous one. Despite being situated in one of the driest parts of the country, not being irrigated, and having poor, free-draining soil, it has become renowned for its spectacular display of drought-tolerant plants. The Scree Garden displays an ample collection of alpines typically found growing naturally on stony, mountainous slopes. The Water Garden includes a series of ponds and moisture loving plants. The Woodland Garden is full of shade-loving bulbs, perennials and shrubs planted underneath a dense canopy of tall oaks, creating an atmosphere of peace and tranquillity. The Reservoir Garden is an open area, redesigned recently in the Beth Chatto style.

The Nursery offers over 2,000 varieties of plants, grouped into conditions, making it easier to find the plants that will suit specific gardens. The Beth Chatto Education Trust has developed an inclusive range of courses, workshops and events and is approved by the Royal Horticultural Society.

Scree Garden (Copyright: Beth Chatto's Plants & Gardens)



2ND PRIZE: KEMERI RESORT PARK (JURMALA, LV)



A resort was established in Jurmala in the 18th century due to the healing properties of sulphur waters. Kemerī park is one of the oldest and major parks outside the capital Riga. It was designed in 1839 by K.H. Vagner, a gardener from Riga as a landscape park with a network of paths, amenities and rich greenery, romantic bridges, pavilions, and rotundas. With the opening of Kemerī Hotel in 1936, a symmetrical garden parterre with lawns, flower plantations and alleys was created.

In 2020 and 2021, the park underwent an extensive revitalisation, preserved and restored according to the historical photographic evidence. Being located within the Kemerī National Park was an additional challenge as the process had to comply with the conservation requirements. The network of walking paths was renewed, and new paths built. According to the style of the resort, more than 5,000 roses and hydrangea plantations and almost 20,000 ornamental plants were added as well as more than 500 trees. A playground has been built close to a new herb labyrinth. The “Islet of Love” with a pavilion-rotunda now is a romantic place again. The refurbished sulphur spring pavilion and the sculpture “Lizard”, from which a spring of sulphur water flows, are reminders of the historic importance of the water.

The renovated water tower offers splendid views and hosts an interactive exhibition about the resort and its history.



left:
Restored bridge

right:
Parterre at Kemerī Hotel

below:
Water tower and new alley

(All images: Artis Veigurs)



WINNERS: DESIGN OR CONCEPT OF A CONTEMPORARY PARK OR GARDEN

1ST PRIZE: WESTPARK (AUGSBURG, DE)



With the withdrawal of the American army in 1998, Augsburg used the conversion of the barracks for an overall spatial development and to expand the green system. After a planning and realisation process lasting more than 15 years, the Westpark designed by Lohaus - Carl - Köhlmos was completed in 2021.

Like a leisurely river, a meandering ribbon, made of light-coloured asphalt, lies in the middle of a tree-lined park landscape. It changes its width, individual lanes drift apart and reconnect to form the main path through the park.

The spaces in between are special places with sports and play animations and / or special plantings that interpret American landscapes. Fields with flowering prairie shrubs, dense groves of trees or topographical faults, which also refer to the Wertach floodplain, alternate in various forms and invite visitors to explore, experiment and investigate the park.

Many existing trees were integrated into the park and supplemented with North American, bright red, orange or yellow tree species. The edges to the buildings are uniformly bordered with rows of trees, which create the framework for the generous, open grass landscape loosely covered with tall trees. Some of the grassland is mown regularly and used for ball games and sports, while large areas are mown only twice a year and develop into extensive meadows rich in flowers and insects, which also serve as compensation areas or ecological connectivity.

The framework of the park was realised in sections before the adjacent structural development, but with "empty spaces" for future ideas and use. The planning was conducted with a time lag and with the participation of the residents.



this page:
Sheridan Park (Photo: Eckhart
Matthäus)

right:
Reese Park (Photo: Eckhart
Matthäus)



2ND PRIZE: PARCO PORTELLO (MILAN, IT)



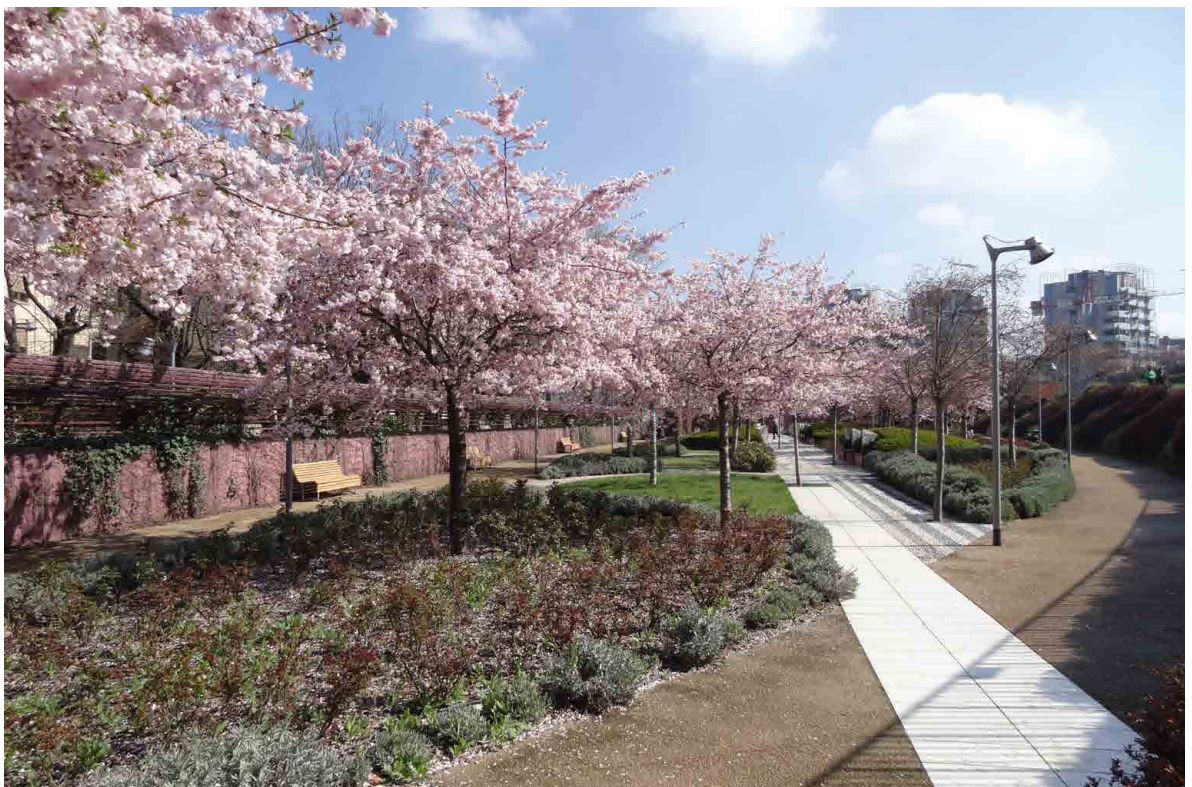
In November 2022, after more than 20 years, work on the Portello Park on the site of a former Alfa Romeo factory in Milan ended. It was Charles Jencks (1939 - 2019), whose principles guided the structure of the park and the redevelopment process in collaboration with Andreas Kipar (LAND S.r.l.).

The park develops at different heights recovered through a system of paths called "Time Walk". It is structured by a series of circular spatial lines that form the construction lines of the three 'green sculptures', which together with the small Time Garden represent different scans of time: prehistory, history, present and individual time. In the recently opened section, the upward spiral path features shaded resting places with benches. Fifty trees including maples, liriiodendrons, lime trees, mulberry trees and sophoras alternate with 1,500 square metres of colourful flowerbeds with herbaceous and shrubby plants and groups of rhododendrons.

The intervention includes two lower sinuous hills creating a secluded space for two ponds. The area is quiet, which is a real rarity for a metropolis like Milan. The ponds are surrounded, as if in an embrace, by a very long circular bench next to which several fir trees have been planted to provide shade and shelter.

Portello Park, with its approximately 73,000 square metres, is now a green lung for the whole of Milan and is a further key element in the green axes plan for Milan.

The linear garden (Copyright: LAND)



2ND PRIZE: PETITE SAUSSAIE (VITRY-SUR-SEINE, FR)



The Petite Saussaie spring resurgence project, based on a concept by Paysarchitecture, is restructuring the former Blondeaux park in Vitry-sur-Seine. The purpose of the project is to enhance the descent of spring water as an urban design element.

Therefore the descent of the water in the Seine valley is the subject of a sculpture-fountain: an aerial aqueduct, which forms the framework of two new public spaces. On an area with an average inclination of 12%, the flat surface is essential for sharing spaces (landings, terraces, plateaus) and urbanity.

The places created by the project, previously undifferentiated, now have a singular identity evocative of their historical and geographical dimension. The water remains horizontal as often and as long as possible and, conducted by the aqueduct, leaves the ground of the hill several times. It adopts the rhythm of the overflows, sings at the foot of the gargoyles before falling in a rustle into a basin or resurfacing in gurgling in the middle of a table of water. Descending the hillside, the water transports the landscapes of dozens of willows, wet gardens, aquatic plants, elongated basins or pebble shores.

The resurgence of the spring of the Petite Saussaie, buried more than 90 years ago, reinstalls the public space in an obvious relationship to the history of Vitry-sur-Seine. "Saussaie" is a land planted with willows, which were once used to produce baskets.



High quality spaces
(Photo left and below: Pierre-Yves Brunaud,
photo right: Gilles Brusset)



WINNERS: CLIMATE MITIGATION MEASURES IN PARKS AND GARDENS

1ST PRIZE: ZUIDPOLDER BARENDRECHT (BARENDRECHT, NL)



The built urban area in the Rotterdam agglomeration has grown rapidly over recent decades. To improve water quality and the recreational and ecological values of the water systems, the municipality and Arcadis have developed the landscape park Zuidpolder Barendrecht. Around 110 hectares of agricultural land between Barendrecht and the Oude Maas river have therefore been transformed into a contemporary landscape park with (clean) water storage.



The Zuidpolder, part of a larger Blauwe Verbinding project, has three main functions: Firstly, the storage of clean water for the urban water system. Secondly, providing attractive spaces for recreational boating and for the cycling and walking route between the Zuiderpark and the Waaltje waterway. Thirdly, creating an ecological connection between green spaces in the urban area and (future) nature areas in IJsselmonde.



Impressions of Zuidpolder Barendrecht

(All images: Arcadis)



Together, these functions result in a convincing design by Arcadis for an attractive new but also somehow traditional landscape mitigating climate effects and enhancing biodiversity. Thanks to its sophisticated water system, clean water will be stored during periods of high water, so that water levels in canals in the urban area can be maintained during drier times. There is an increasing number of visitors using the landscape park for canoeing, cycling, walking, roller skating and horse-riding. Here they can escape from the dense city with its often-extreme temperatures and enjoy the animals at De Kleine Duiker petting farm and a rest at the Theehuys Polderzicht.

Finally, nature has also benefited from the development. Many farmland, water and woodland birds have found a habitat here, as well as rare plants such as the European yellow rattle and the Southern marsh orchid.



Aerial view (Copyright: Arcadis)

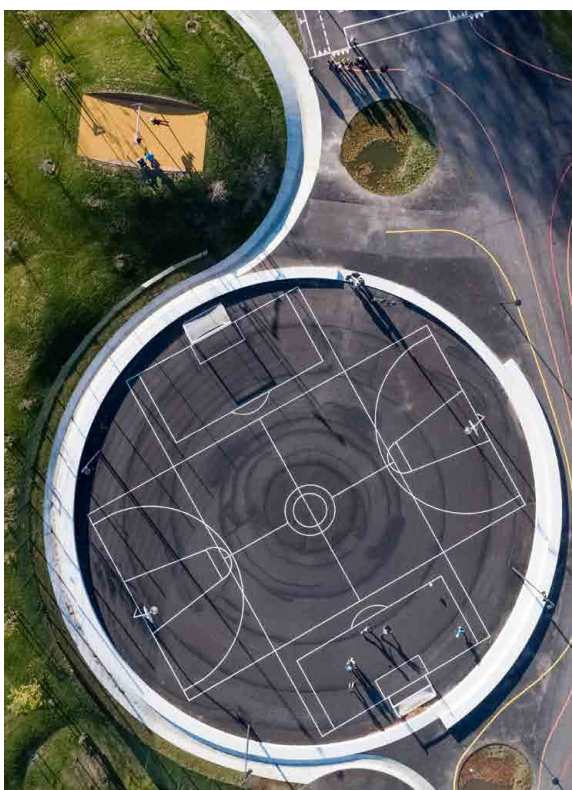
2ND PRIZE: KOKKEDAL CLIMATE ADAPTATION (FREDENSBORG, DK)



The challenge of the project was to develop a climate adaption which could also promote an improved urban life: connect fragmented urban areas, create attractive meeting points, and bring nature closer to the residents in the housing blocks. The park designed by Schønherr covers an area of 60 ha in the North of Sealand, which suffered from severe flooding by the Usserød river.

Whereas rainwater formerly was hidden underground in pipelines, it is now managed on the surface, making it possible to follow its course from the smaller basins on to the soakaways and trenches, until it finally reaches the large basins and Usserød River. All the water is led through cleansing elements such as rainwater beds and basins. The basins have a capacity of retaining a 5-year occurrence but rainfalls larger than this can still be managed without any severe damage occurring.

Climate Adaption Kokkedal consists of thirty-five individual projects, each offering recreational activities. This dual function has been central to the project. A garden space has for example been created which functions as green retainment basins and the local sports field has been walled in by a grass clad earth mound ensuring that stormwater can be held back. There are other gardens, activity areas, exercise paths, nature play-grounds and areas which can be used for educational purposes. One space is shaped as a bowl, which at night time is filled with projected images of flowering poppies.



left:
Sports field as rain retention
area (Photo: Carsten
Ingemann)



right above:
Rain can be fun (Photo:
Carsten Ingemann)



right below:
Green retainment basin
(Photo: Ulrik Kuggas)

2ND PRIZE: KNEPP ESTATE AND GARDENS (SHIPLEY, UK)

The new garden project at Knepp, led by Tom Stuart-Smith, extends the successful wider Knepp Wildland project that offers solutions for soil restoration, flood mitigation, water and air purification, pollinating insects, and carbon sequestration.

But can a complex mosaic of habitats be achieved in an outdoor space that is mostly considered as an extension of our homes? The experiment within Knepp's walled garden is a process of changing the conventional gardening mindset.

The Kitchen Garden shows how to create ecological complexity from existing structures. Here the focus is on soil-productivity for sustainable fruit, salads, and vegetables. Gravel paths are now carpeted with drought-tolerant herbs.

The larger Rewilded Garden is more experimental. Tons of crushed building waste materials were dumped on the former croquet lawn. The varying soil conditions and distinct aspects favour widely various plant communities. 900 species were planted here, chosen with global warming and sustainability in mind, for their ability to thrive with minimum water and fertility. The gardener's role initially is to give the plants their chance to establish. This means keeping an eye on the plants that dominate and, if necessary, thinning them out. But once the stage is set, native plants are allowed to seed themselves and add to the complexity. As much as possible, it is about accepting the winners and losers, and embracing an open-ended, constantly evolving garden kaleidoscope.



above:
Knepp Walled Garden
Drawing (Property of Tom
Stuart-Smith Ltd)

below:
Biodiversity is increasing
quickly (Photo: Charlie Burell)