

A photograph of a brick house with a red-tiled roof. A tree with green leaves and clusters of red berries is in the foreground, partially obscuring the house. The text is overlaid on the right side of the image.

An integrated neighbourhood approach

for a future-proof living environment

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Think of the environment:
read this document digitally.

This publication was
prepared within the framework
of the European project

AT LAST

*(Accelerating Transition
of Local Authorities through
Support and Training).*

See p. 19 for
more information



The assignment

In line with the Dutch Climate Agreement of 2019, 7 million homes and 1 million buildings in the Netherlands should be free from natural gas by 2050. This presents an immense task for the existing building stock. It means that all existing homes and buildings must be disconnected from natural gas, insulated and sustainably renovated in the next 25 years — over 1,000 homes every day. A significant acceleration is needed to meet this goal!

This challenge cannot be viewed separately from other challenges and plans for the neighbourhood. The changing climate requires adjustments to our homes more resilient to heat and flooding. Housing shortages and shifts in household composition call for changes in living space. Shifting mobility patterns require adjustments in local infrastructure. Biodiversity and liveability in the neighbourhood are high on the agenda. And all this on top of the need for regular maintenance and renovation. Taken together, these issues form a broad and urgent societal task: creating neighbourhoods that are both future-proof and pleasant to live in.

The key question is: what will encourage homeowners to take action? Is it the top-down — though not yet mandatory — transition to a gas-free home? Or is it something more tangible, like adding a new dormer window, enjoying a more comfortable indoor temperature, or seeing a greener, more pleasant street? It would be a missed opportunity not to link these goals wherever possible. A successful neighbourhood transition starts with the residents.



*“Sustainable
neighbourhoods can
only be created
successfully if we
start with the people
who live in them.”*



Recognising this, Energie Samen, BouwhulpGroep and Klimaatverbond Nederland advocate for an integrated approach that begins with the needs and wishes of the people who live there. We call this the integrated neighbourhood approach. This publication explains what it means, as well as the opportunities and challenges the approach entails. It is intended for local authorities and neighbourhood initiatives that want to get started with this way of working.

There is no single ‘owner’ of the integrated neighbourhood approach. Our goal is to encourage everyone to embrace and apply its key elements. Achieving the energy transition and sustainable renovation goals in the Netherlands will require all hands on deck!

The integrated neighbourhood approach

Combining societal and sustainability challenges with individual (living) needs and translating these into replicable, scalable, and affordable solutions at the neighbourhood and regional level. That is the integrated neighbourhood approach in a nutshell.

This approach places residents at the heart of the process. It is driven by the needs, pace, and financial capacity of individuals, within projects that collectively guide the neighbourhood toward a sustainable future. By cleverly translating individual preferences into replicable solutions, residents are more inclined to participate, and the process becomes more efficient and cost-effective.



The key elements of the *integrated neighbourhood approach* are:

- An **integrated** process, where energy efficiency upgrades are combined with climate adaptation, greening, liveability, and other motivations for renovating homes and neighbourhoods.
- A **participatory** process, focused on involving residents and focusing on user needs and a liveable neighbourhood rather than energy performance alone.
- A **continuous** process, recognising that most of the time, more than 1 renovation intervention is needed to achieve sustainability. It also allows better alignment with the process homeowners go through.
- A **replicable** process, with solutions designed to be applied again and again on a larger scale.
- A **feasible** process, offering clear renovation plans that consider practicality, affordability, and financing options for homeowners.
- A **cooperative** process, acknowledging that sustainable neighbourhood renewal is a long-term effort involving many stakeholders. Ongoing collaboration is needed between municipalities, residents, homeowners, community initiatives, and both design and construction professionals.





The different phases of the neighbourhood approach

The journey a resident takes—from the first contact to enjoying the results of a completed renovation — involves many different steps. Each phase involves a range of stakeholders: residents, local initiatives or neighbourhood collectives, the municipality, (social) designers, contractors, energy specialists, and more. Typically, the neighbourhood approach follows these stages:

1. **Initiation:** The municipality—or other stakeholders such as a community initiative—takes the first step toward sustainability. Ideally, renovation goals are defined cooperatively. What is the trigger to renovate? What are the neighbourhood's needs? Does a resident want a cooler home, better safety in the street, or a lower energy bill? At this stage, the municipality can also identify important opportunities to link the initiative to related issues, such as energy poverty, heat stress, biodiversity, or lifelong living. Motivations may vary between neighbourhoods. The next step is to link these needs with the energy renovation of homes in the area.
2. **Community support:** ideas are shared more broadly with the community and enriched with input from residents. Residents, local initiatives, and the municipality get in touch to discuss the proposed plans, for instance in neighbourhood events. This typically requires multiple conversations. First,

common ground and differences are identified in order to reflect on them at a later stage. Support often grows from a shared problem. Municipalities and community initiatives often work together closely in this stage. The goal is to get residents excited and on board. The result: a neighbourhood renovation plan that has local support.

3. **Design:** in this phase the solutions are shaped with municipal support. This might include collecting a wish list, conducting home scans, assessing financial impact, and drafting a renovation plan. Solutions are presented to residents to make informed choices. You could involve residents earlier and more actively through participatory design, which boosts engagement and trust in the process and outcomes. This is the ideal stage to introduce a “menu of solutions,” as detailed later in this document.
4. **Development:** once residents have made their choices, the technical detailing begins. The focus is on how to implement the selected solutions in each home. Though it involves individual homes, it is more efficient to approach this collectively. It allows residents to exchange knowledge and ideas. For contractors, the project then concerns dozens of homes rather than one, which is more profitable for them. At this stage, a technical renovation report, financial



plan, and set of technical requirements are prepared.

5. **Procurement:** once residents' preferences are clear, quotes can be requested and a tendering process started. This, too, is best done collectively. A coordinating party is needed. This could be an energy cooperative or another organisation supported by the municipality. This partner helps the resident group interact with the market and secure the most suitable offers for their collective needs.
6. **Implementation:** contracts are awarded, and work begins. Progress is monitored. In practice, due to limited labour availability, this is often more complex than it seems. Collective solutions may offer a way forward, as discussed later in this document.
7. **Use:** once renovations are complete, the homes enter the use phase. A delivery and completion report outlines the technical details. Residents will immediately notice improvements: more space, greater comfort, better maintenance. The energy upgrades should also lead to lower energy use – resulting in more affordable housing costs.
8. **Service and warranty:** contractors provide service and warranties for any defects. If the contractor remains active

in the neighbourhood over time, it is easier to respond to any issues.

The moment of entry can differ per resident. Some already know what they want and are only looking for implementation, others are barely informed. These phases should not be seen as a one-off trajectory. They concern an iterative and ongoing process in the neighbourhood, offering suitable solutions for people for a longer period of time and thus offering people a chance to continuously join in the integral neighbourhood approach.

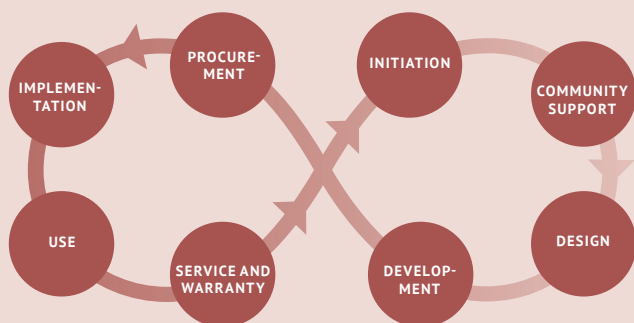
Community commitment through clear communication

A crucial success factor in sustainability projects is commitment and engagement by residents. That's why communication and participation play a key role throughout the entire process—from initial conversations about wishes and needs, to the actual renovation.

Ensure clear and continuous communication, as well as active management of expectations. What should residents prepare for? Do they need to start saving money? Will they have to temporarily move out? Tools like a “menu of solutions” (see page 17) or roadmap help residents understand- and make choices between different technical options.

The way in which communication and participation are organised depends on factors such as the complexity of the message, the self-sufficiency of the target group, and the resources available in the neighbourhood. This could include one-on-one kitchen table conversations, group meetings in a community centre, or online platforms (such as www.ikwoon.io). Involving community initiatives can be invaluable in effectively informing and involving the neighbourhood, because they understand residents' day-to-day reality.





The Continuous Renovation Flow

In the integrated neighbourhood approach, the process—from initiation to completion—runs continuously within the area. Every month, for instance, a new group of at least 25 homes starts a new renovation cycle. As more homes in the area get renovated, they serve as visible examples. Contractors also gain experience, making each cycle smoother and more efficient, while lowering barriers for new participants. This process repeats until all homes have been renovated and sustainability goals are reached.

In practice, this means a renovation programme remains active in a neighbourhood for around 5 to 10 years. It is unrealistic to expect every home to be upgraded at once. The integrated neighbourhood approach should be viewed as a long-term process. Long-term presence is not optional—it is an essential part of the method. However, the intensity of work can decrease over time.

A continuous process:

From one resident to 7 million households

To make 7 million homes more sustainable, we must work in 14,000 neighbourhoods across the country — offering tailored solutions for every type of ownership, construction period, and local context. To make this achievable, we need a multi-year, replicable process: **a continuous renovation flow**.

A renovation challenge of one thousand homes per day calls for a continuous renovation flow that can expand from neighbourhood to neighbourhood. This approach offers several benefits.

First, it helps alleviate the pressure on **implementation capacity**. The shortage of skilled workers means that many prefer to work on large, long-term projects for housing associations. By creating a steady, long-term

programme within neighbourhoods, the work becomes more attractive. A dedicated team can remain active in the same area for multiple years, increasing continuity and effectiveness.

Secondly, this approach leads to greater **efficiency**. Once the first renovation cycle is complete, the process tends to move more quickly. Experience is gained, routines are established, and while process support—from the municipality, an energy collective, or an external party — remains necessary, the intensity of that support can decrease as other parties, such as contractors, take on more responsibility. This leads to a self-reinforcing process. Even the transition from one neighbourhood to the next becomes increasingly streamlined over time.

It is unrealistic to expect a neighbourhood of 500 homes will be fully renovated in one go. It may take 10 years before all homeowners join in. Long-term presence is not optional, it should be part of the strategy.

A participatory process:

How a continuous renovation flow helps residents join in

The integrated neighbourhood approach puts residents and their wishes at the centre. It is based on the needs, pace, and capacity of individual citizens. This requires active participation. Ideally, the continuous renovation process is built around existing community initiatives. If those do not exist, a municipality may initially need to take a top-down approach—while still involving the neighbourhood as early as possible. A continuous, iterative process creates **room for resident participation** to grow over time. One added benefit of being present in the neighbourhood for a longer period is that support can also gradually increase.

In practice, not every resident in a neighbourhood is ready or willing to join at the same time. A typical Dutch neighbourhood may easily consist of 500 households, each with their own preferred timing. Especially in areas with many privately owned homes, some residents may already have taken steps towards sustainability, while others, for a variety of reasons, have not yet started. A continuous renovation flow allows for **flexibility** and accommodates these differences in timing.

It gives residents the chance to join when it suits them. By offering them different routes, they also gain insight into their options. This allows residents to choose their own path based on their circumstances, while collectively maintaining control over what is done, when, and in what order. A continuous approach helps reach groups who might otherwise have been left behind—those who need more time or encouragement. This way, long-term presence in the area also contributes to reaching and engaging a community.

As time goes on, more and more renovated homes appear in the neighbourhood. This has a **motivating and inspiring** effect on others. The power of example is often underestimated. Think of solar panels—highly visible, and a catalyst for others to take action. A successful renovation, with satisfied residents, becomes a natural and approachable “model home” for others in the area.

With this continuous approach, you can reach a group of residents who might otherwise not have joined in — because they need a bit more time and encouragement. Long-term presence in the neighbourhood also becomes a community engagement process.





A cooperative process:

A successful neighbourhood approach starts with clear roles

A successful neighbourhood approach is not just a technical task, but also a social one. It requires well-organised cooperation between municipalities, residents (and their initiatives), and the private sector. For this, a clear division of roles and close collaboration are essential.

As the facilitator of the energy transition, the **municipality** is the natural coordinator of an integrated neighbourhood approach. Because this approach brings together so many aspects of housing and the living environment, it requires input from across the municipality's departments to create added value. The challenge lies in making enough resources and personnel available, and in good coordination to reduce the complexity of multidisciplinary participation. Practical experience shows that sustainability efforts only succeed when the municipality takes or designates a clear coordinating role, organises the process effectively, and builds a strong execution structure.

Not every municipality has the capacity to take the lead, but energy collectives, community initiatives, civil society organisations, or a coalition of these groups can also take on this role – provided they have sufficient capacity.

Community initiatives are close to the community and can therefore play an important role in every phase of the integrated neighbourhood approach. They can act as the link between the neighbourhood and the municipality, staff local information points, and organise community events to increase engagement. Energie Samen has already gathered many lessons and best practices in recent years on how community initiatives can successfully play this role. With (financial) support from the municipality, a community initiative can be a vital link in this complex process.

Because the continuous renovation flow requires sustained engagement, a community initiative must be active in the area for a longer period. This demands additional funding, time, energy, and above all, a long-term scope. Embedding this in a solid organisational structure is important. It also means a certain level of professionalism is needed. An energy cooperative is a great example of how this can be achieved.

A **civil society organisation** or steering group can be an alternative or complement to community initiatives or technical external partners. In an integrated approach, the municipality, the market, and the community come together.



Klimaatverbond Nederland has explored the concept of a social energy services organisation, inspired by the model of an Energy Service Company (ESCO). Such a group can act as an intermediary between public and private interests, supporting residents, contractors, municipalities, network operators, and financiers. At its core, this approach aims to relieve all parties – residents, municipalities, and executing organisations—of the burden of coordination and execution. At the same time, the organisation can serve as a knowledge hub, funding platform, and driver of the energy transition at regional and national levels. In this way, it is more than just a project organisation – it plays a structural role in the long-term neighbourhood transition.

Execution. Given the long-term ambition to make neighbourhoods more sustainable, the ideal situation requires recognisable, regional implementation partners that remain visible in the area for extended

periods. These parties move from one project to another within the neighbourhood, gaining knowledge and experience along the way. This leads to better quality over time, with the benefits of cost optimisation being shared among all.

The Netherlands currently faces a major shortage of skilled labour. While the integrated approach helps increase renovation efficiency, many large contractors still find projects on a neighbourhood level unattractive. They prefer long-term projects in one location with a fixed team, and the extended preparation time can be off-putting. However, the integrated approach unlocks new potential for these companies. After all, the largest renovation challenge lies with private homeowners.

Through collective neighbourhood approaches, the work becomes more appealing for contractors. It offers the private sector more certainty compared to working with individual households,

encouraging them to develop solutions – and even invest in training new staff.

There are also clear opportunities at local level, especially for smaller regional contractors or collectives of self-employed workers. Ideally, these parties take on multiple neighbourhoods, building knowledge of local conditions and challenges. This kind of practical experience is key to ensuring renovations proceed smoothly and efficiently. In this way, the integrated approach also impacts the economic and social domain of a municipality. One example is Rotterdam where a collective of self-employed professionals was brought together to carry out the renovation work. This proved a great way not only to bring the right expertise into the area – but to keep it there.

A continuous renovation process doesn't happen by itself—it must be actively maintained. An **external partner** from the construction or advisory sector can play

a supporting role throughout the process, offering technical advice and solution development. Especially when a specific approach like the component method is chosen, external expertise is indispensable. This publication partly builds on proven methods, services, and experiences from BouwhulpGroep, but other organisations could fill this role too.

Such an external party can be hired by the municipality, but a joint commissioning model – such as a collaboration between one or more municipalities and housing associations – is also possible. This allows for a fairer distribution of costs for support services, and makes it easier to create critical mass, which is often more attractive to contractors. Cooperation and coordination between all of these parties – on roles, responsibilities, performance, and payment – is essential.

A replicable process:

Seeking unity in diversity

So many people, so many opinions. The challenge lies in developing renovation solutions that can flexibly respond to a wide range of needs – arising from the type of home, the preferences and capabilities of residents, and their financial situations. To make an energy-neutral neighbourhood feasible, these individual wishes must be translated into a serialised approach.

The component approach offers a way to achieve this. Many homes in the Netherlands share similarities – so the solutions share similarities as well. This allows individual residents to be supported in a similar manner. The component approach views the national housing stock as a collection of homes that may look different on the outside but are made up of recurring types of roofs, façades, or other building ‘components’. These components can be categorised into ‘families’ and linked to standard renovation solutions applicable to that family.

This way, you can create a straightforward “solution menu” of standardised construction options that apply to different components of the homes to be renovated. Within these standards, small adjustments can be made as needed. By providing clear information on each option’s cost and performance (including ease of use), residents can make choices that suit their situation.

A major advantage of component-based solutions is that they cut across housing types. For instance, a home built in the 1960s

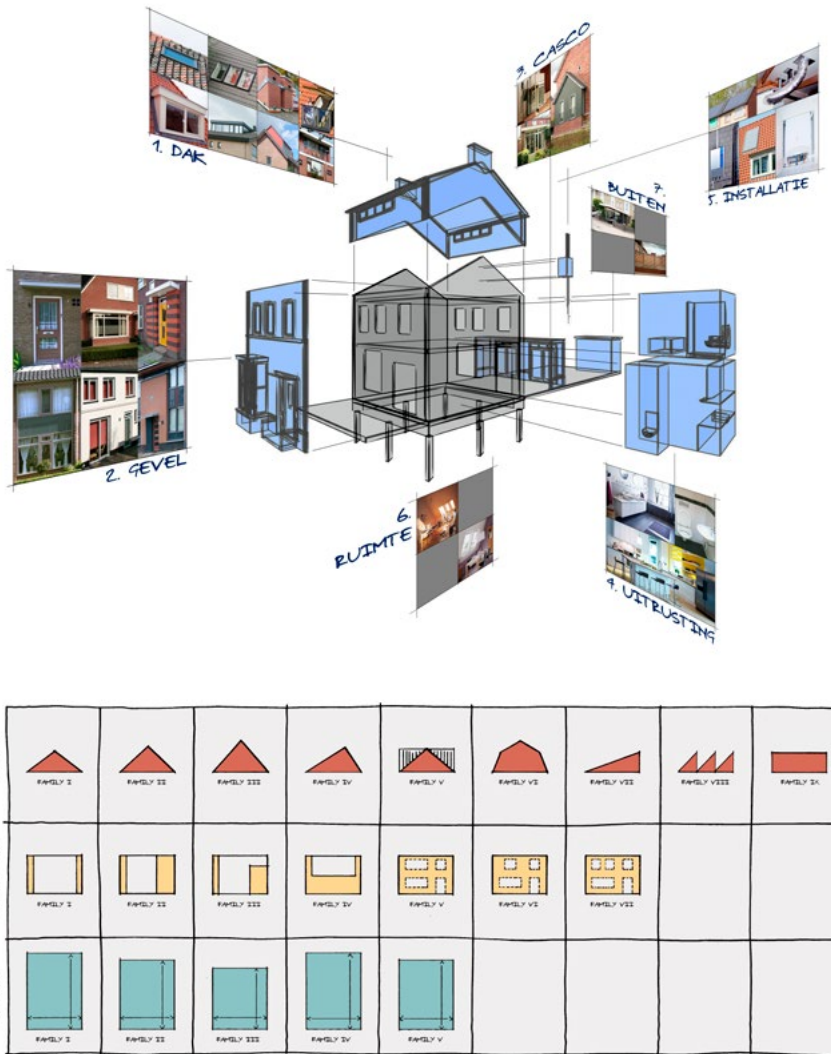
may have the same type of roof as one from the 1980s. Even if the building type falls into different categories, the roof – and therefore the renovation solution – can be the same.

By selecting the relevant component solutions from the menu, **a resident can determine their own path and pace**. You might choose to renovate all components at once – perhaps because the house is in poor condition – or opt for a step-by-step process, saving in between interventions.

Depending on personal preferences, the ambition for renovation can vary. For example, the solution menu might allow residents to **choose from different ambition levels** – from a basic affordable package to a premium sustainable option. Such overviews clearly show what each option means for the home, the energy label, and the resident’s wallet.

Every solution is based on a holistic view of quality. This means that replacing windows, for example, is never just a standalone measure, the actual goal is insulating the façade. There are multiple ways to do this, from upgrading the glazing while keeping the frame, to cavity wall insulation and draught-proofing, or even a complete façade replacement.

The usability side of the home is central to each component. So, when insulation is added to a wall, for instance, the wall is also neatly finished and painted. Including this holistic quality in the design phase prevents



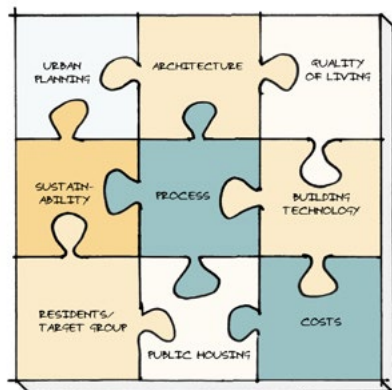
Thinking in building components allows homes to be grouped into ‘families’ with similar characteristics of the space, façade or roof.

later disputes, ensures a better end result, and also speeds up the process.

A menu of solutions can also help streamline the permitting process. Take Zoetermeer, for example, where the municipality pre-approved certain renovation solutions that align with its visual quality guidelines. This benefits residents too, by reducing waiting times and offering greater certainty from the outset.

Component renovation is not inherently complex. In fact, it simplifies the large-scale renovation challenge. It makes the menu-based approach possible – supporting residents in making informed decisions.

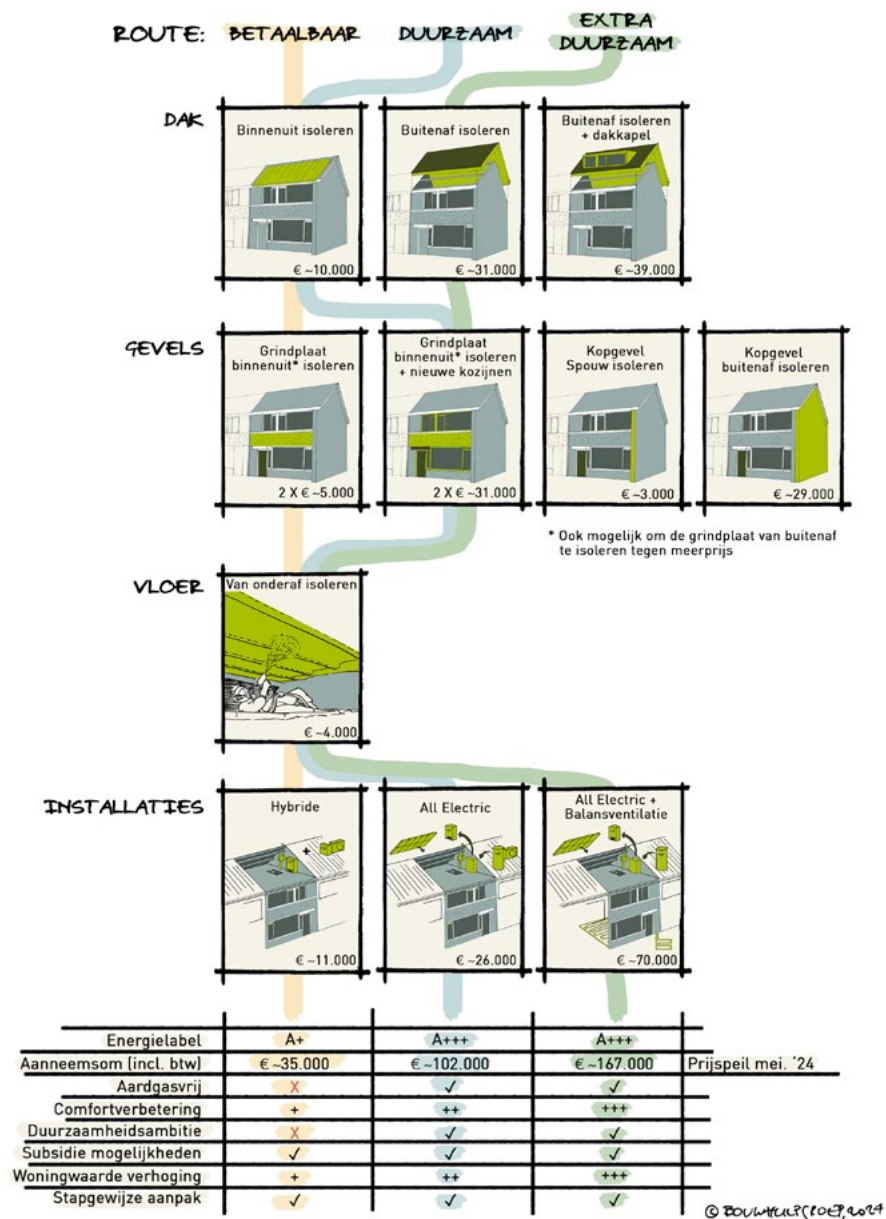
The key is to strike the right *balance* between individual and collective



Various considerations for a renovation.

approaches. Even a resident who only wants (or can afford) to address one component from the menu must still be able to participate. The most important condition is that a small renovation today should not block future sustainability upgrades.


It is not necessary for all neighbours to join in. Though the more that do, the more efficient the process becomes, especially if the homes are adjacent. Still, synchronised participation is not essential. The chances are small that your neighbour has exactly the same plan at the same time. That's why the solution menu is designed to be individually applicable, while still fitting into a wider, serially executed neighbourhood programme.



Example of a menu of solutions with different renovation routes, from affordable to fully sustainable, with different options for the roof, façade, floors and installations.

The integrated neighbourhood approach compared to other methods

The integrated neighbourhood approach combines elements of collective purchasing and the *contingentenaanpak*, enhancing them with repeatability. However, there are key differences:

- **Collective purchasing** generally focuses on a single type of solution—such as solar panels or insulation—rather than aiming for the full sustainability ambition for 2050. The process usually follows a linear path, with a set start and end point for all participants. It also tends not to consider how different measures interact. For example, solar panels might be installed on a roof that later needs replacing.
 - The **'contingentenaanpak'**, like the integrated neighbourhood approach, aims to scale up the sustainable renovation of homes by creating efficient, serialised construction flows. However, in this method, the emphasis lies on a single solution offered by the provider, which is then applied wherever possible. It doesn't involve choices between components. Since the municipality is not a process partner in this model, the permit process can be more cumbersome. And, as with collective purchasing, this method doesn't take into account which other renovations might be needed (the overall route). The starting point is the solution itself—not the home.
 - In contrast, the **integrated neighbourhood approach** starts with the home and its residents, and explores suitable solutions from there. It offers a range of options that match different starting points. While this requires more time and effort initially, it ultimately delivers more impact per home. It also helps streamline the permit process. The approach takes into account all aspects of renovation, as well as how different measures relate to one another. By aiming for a continuous renovation stream, it builds more momentum and delivers greater overall impact than one-off projects. In this model, the neighbourhood's needs are the starting point.
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A feasible process:

Understanding the financial side

One of the biggest barriers for sustainable renovation is financing. Even though a wide range of subsidies is available, it is not always clear whether residents can actually make use of them. Often, people are still required to contribute a portion themselves. And even for measures that eventually pay for themselves, the upfront cost can be a major obstacle. Many people are reluctant to take on additional debt without guarantees on returns or clarity about the long-term consequences. As a result, only a select group — with sufficient financial means and knowledge — takes the first steps towards sustainability. To help overcome this, residents need clear information about the financing options available to them, such as the Nationaal Warmtefonds (a scheme of the Dutch government offering affordable financing for the sustainable renovation of buildings), government subsidies, or municipal support schemes. National programmes aimed at lower-income households are also designed to help lower the financial threshold for action.

An integrated neighbourhood approach that includes a “solution menu” offers scale advantages and potential financing pathways to help address this challenge. Thanks to the serial execution of renovations and the efficiency gains that come with it, cost savings of 20% to 40% can be achieved for projects involving 25 homes or more, compared to smaller, one-off initiatives. It has also been shown that a well-organised team of independent professionals can deliver projects more cost-effectively than

large construction firms. Continuity in the neighbourhood — and in the chosen solutions — leads to further efficiency gains. A collective approach can also help residents with subsidy and financing applications. Providing support and **unburdening residents is a key role** for the coordinating party, so that financing will not become a barrier. Creative solutions can be explored, such as **collective financing arrangements** via the Warmtefonds.

It is important to note that organising an integrated neighbourhood approach also requires funding. Roles like project coordination, technical expertise, and support for community initiatives require additional resources. However, these organisational costs are broadly in line with those of traditional renovation projects — and the advantages of scale help to drive costs down even further. Municipalities can make use of various subsidies, such as SPUK funds, to help cover these costs. The SPUK 'local approach' funds are meant for municipalities to set up programmes to offer support to home owners to insulate their homes. European research shows that residents — particularly in the early stages — are not inclined to contribute to overhead costs. They expect the municipality to take on an informative and organising role. From the moment residents choose to proceed with actual improvements, they are generally willing to pay for advice and guidance.

The integrated neighbourhood approach in practice

In recent years, the integrated neighbourhood approach has been put into practice in several locations. Below, we share two examples, each with a different starting point. In *Het Lage Land* in Rotterdam, a community initiative kicked off the process, while in the *Waterbuurt* in Zoetermeer, the municipality took the lead.

Zoetermeer – A shared vision for the Waterbuurt

The municipality of Zoetermeer aims to make 26 neighbourhoods more sustainable in order to achieve a climate-neutral built environment by 2050. The Waterbuurt is one of them. Due to the sale of former rental homes, this area has become a patchwork of ownership types, with rental and owner-occupied properties side by side. This leads to varying ambitions and possibilities when it comes to sustainability. Yet the shared goal remains: comfortable, sustainable homes with lower energy bills.

A Shared Vision and Joint Approach

Waterbuurt residents launched a unique collaboration between tenants and homeowners to make their neighbourhood more sustainable and liveable. Housing association Vidomes and the municipality of Zoetermeer are supporting the initiative. Together with residents, the housing association, and expert partners, the neighbourhood's character was mapped out and a shared future vision developed. The chosen approach allows both tenants and owners to participate in line with their own preferences, timing and financial means.

A Regret-Free Solution Menu

BouwhulpGroep was brought in as an external expert to develop a neighbourhood approach in collaboration with the

community initiative, homeowners, housing associations, and the municipality. Based on research, three renovation packages were assembled: Affordable, Smart & Fast, and fully sustainable. These included improvements to roofs, façades, floors, and installations.

On behalf of the municipality and Vidomes, a “regret-free menu of solutions” was developed – an overview of proven sustainability measures suited to the Waterbuurt district. This allows residents to take individual or collective steps in a way that suits their situation, without the risk of having to make less efficient decisions later.

Permit-Free Sustainability

Permits can delay construction projects and increase costs for residents. To address this, the Waterbuurt residents, housing association Vidomes, the city architect, and the municipality – under BouwhulpGroep's guidance – created a set of rules for permit-free sustainability upgrades. One such rule stipulates that the roof gutter line must be maintained when insulating the roof from the outside. These rules were compiled into a document with visual design guidelines, making it easier and faster to carry out renovations.

The Power of Participation

The time and effort required to develop the permit rules and menu of solutions are one-time investments that will save time and money over the course of the multi-year renovation process. They simplify the sustainability challenge for both residents and the municipality, contribute to a consistent street view, and prevent fragmented renovation efforts.

Thanks to the participatory approach, sustainability has truly gained momentum in the Waterbuurt. The first residents have already started making their homes more energy-efficient. A powerful example of bottom-up change.

Waterbuurt,
Zoetermeer



Rotterdam – One-Stop-Shop to support residents

European Acceleration

Rotterdam en Valencia participated in a European renovation project Save the Homes (www.savethehomes.info) aimed at increasing the number of energy renovations in private housing. The project uses a One-Stop-Shop model: a physical contact point where homeowners can access guidance on making their homes more sustainable. BouwhulpGroep introduced this concept in the neighbourhood Het Lage Land, in the Prins Alexander area in Rotterdam.

Funds Available, but No Builders

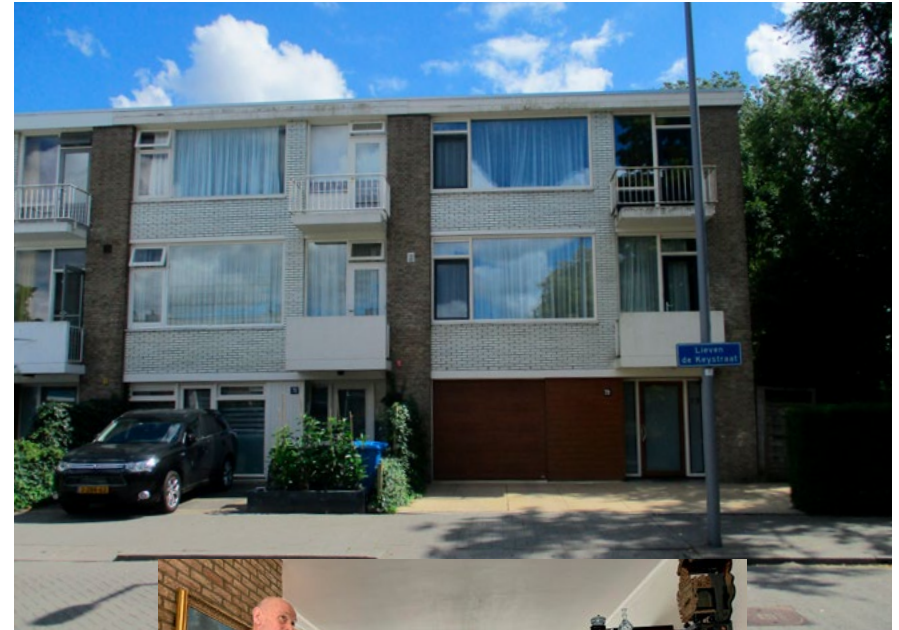
The One-Stop-Shop unburdens residents and helps overcome challenges like financing gaps or lack of construction capacity. In collaboration with Rotterdam and local energy collective Alex Energie, the team explored how to initiate and maintain neighbourhood-level renovation efforts.

With the Energy Transition Fund of Rotterdam in place to provide loans, the financing issue was largely resolved. The remaining challenge was execution. With support from the province of South Holland, a collective of regional self-employed builders was formed—proving to be a successful strategy.












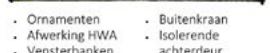

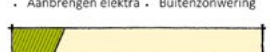



Together You Achieve More

Another key success factor was the formation of resident collectives that made renovation plans together. Active residents who were already working on making their homes sustainable became ambassadors, encouraging others to join. The active support of Rotterdam was key to keep the process running smoothly.

The chosen approach combined collective sustainability goals with room for individual choices. By working collectively, the implementation became more efficient and accessible. Once again, the message was clear: together you can achieve more.



Het lage land, Rotterdam

Titel :	G.01 - Gevelonderhoud en spouwisolatie	G.02 - Pui vervangen	G.03 - Isoleren aan buitenzijde gevel	G.04 - Isoleren aan binnenzijde gevel
Omschrijving :	Een gereinigde, herstelde en nageïsoleerde gevel met nieuwe beglazing in de bestaande kozijnen, nieuwe draaiende delen, een nieuwe voordeur en vernieuwd hang en sluitwerk.	Een gereinigde en nageïsoleerde gevel met een nieuwe pui van nieuwbouwkwaliteit. Hiermee is de uitstraling en inbraakwerendheid van de gevel verbeterd en klaar voor een duurzame toekomst. Voorzieningen tegen oververhitting voorkomen opwarming van de woning.	Een aan de buitenzijde nageïsoleerde gevel met een hoge isolatiewaarde, nieuwe kozijnen, vernieuwd hang en sluitwerk en een nieuwe uitstraling. Voorzieningen tegen oververhitting voorkomen opwarming van de woning.	Een aan de binnenzijde nageïsoleerde gevel met een hoge isolatiewaarde en nieuwe kozijnen. Voor deze oplossing is een chirurgische aanpak nodig met aandacht voor detaillering, kleur- en materiaalgebruik vanwege de bestaande hoge beeldkwaliteit.
Categorie :	Conserveren	Renoveren	Renoveren	Renoveren
Geveelfamilie :	  	  	  	  
Conceptschets :				
Invloed op:				
Beeldkwaliteit (uitstraling) :				
Woonkwaliteit (comfort) :				
Duurzaamheid (isolatie) :				
Gebruikskwaliteit (ruimtegebruik) :				
Trotse bewoners:				
Bewonersoverlast :				
Uitvoeringsduur :				
Impact op energielasten :				
Bewonersopties :	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornamenten Afwerking HWA Vensterbanken Aanbrengen elektra Buitenkraan Isolerende achterdeur Buitenzonwering 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornamenten Afwerking HWA Vensterbanken Aanbrengen elektra Buitenkraan Isolerende achterdeur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornamenten Afwerking HWA Vensterbanken Aanbrengen elektra Buitenkraan Isolerende achterdeur 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ornamenten Afwerking voorzetwand Vensterbanken Aanbrengen elektra Buitenkraan Isolerende achterdeur
Prijs :				
Uitvoeringswijze :	 	 	 	 
Referentie foto :				

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Renovation opportunities

Using the component atlas, the renovation opportunities in the Prins Alexander area were identified. For example, many homes from the 1990s in this district have flat roofs, which are easy to insulate – presenting strong opportunities for (collective) upgrades.

In another part of the neighbourhood, the Alex Energie collective organised bulk purchasing of solar panels and insulation. Some homes were extensively renovated and made gas-free, and a range of other improvements were also implemented.

Example of a “menu of solutions”. This example includes solutions ranging from maintenance of the façade and cavity insulation (G01); insulating the outer side (G03) or inner side (G04) of the façade, to replacing the front of the façade (G02). It shows the consequences of the different options for the building and its residents.



One thousand homes a day

The immense renovation task ahead requires an integrated approach that not only focuses on energy improvements, but also on creating liveable, future-proof neighbourhoods. With the integrated neighbourhood approach, we bridge the gap between people and technology, with plans designed by and for the community. In doing so, we create community engagement within the neighbourhood and built new connections. We aim to create a liveable neighbourhood through an approach that can effectively tackle challenges like energy poverty, heat stress, biodiversity, home care, and the need for additional living space for specific groups—using solutions that are both replicable and affordable. Ultimately, sustainable renovation should be accessible to everyone.

This approach is not about one-off projects. It is about setting up a long-term programme within a neighbourhood — a continuous stream of renovations that can keep running for years, before expanding into the next area. In doing so, suppliers and contractors will also begin to recognise the scale of the opportunity.

Municipalities and energy collectives are working hard to establish well-organised local implementation processes. With an integrated neighbourhood approach, we can shape this process effectively in the years ahead.

Let's make those 7 million homes truly sustainable. Time to get started!

The integrated neighbourhood approach works — as demonstrated by the real-world examples shared in this publication. The level of participation, the scale, the component-based offerings, the flexible entry points, and the long-term commitment result in more progress towards sustainability than other well-known methods. Residents become involved and inspire their neighbours to join in.





This publication was produced as part of the EU funded project **AT LAST** (*Accelerating Transition of Local Authorities through Support and Training*). The programme aims to support municipalities across Europe in structurally accelerating and scaling up the energy transition in municipalities and their neighbourhoods. As part of this project, Klimaatverbond Nederland is facilitating a Community of Practice with ten Dutch municipalities.



Disclaimer: Co-funded by the European Union. Views and opinions expressed are however those of the author(s) only and do not necessarily reflect those of the European Union or CINEA. Neither the European Union nor the granting authority can be held responsible for them.

Images

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Colophon

Would you like more information about the integrated neighbourhood approach? Or are you curious to learn how your municipality or neighbourhood could get started? Feel free to contact us:



Energie Samen

Energie Samen is the national umbrella organisation and advocacy group for energy cooperatives in the Netherlands. We support sustainable energy initiatives launched by citizens and local entrepreneurs through advocacy, services, and knowledge sharing. Energie Samen also facilitates the *Community of Practice Scaling Up*, part of the *Participatiecoalitie Aardgasvrij*.



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BouwhulpGroep

Since 1978, BouwhulpGroep has been working on sustainable renovation and smart housing management. We support governments, (professional) homeowners, and community associations in making neighbourhoods more sustainable. Drawing on experience from over half a million homes, we combine strategic housing management, social design, and technical expertise to build support and deliver integrated, replicable renovation plans. BouwhulpGroep supports Klimaatverbond in organising the *Community of Practice Neighbourhood-led Sustainability*, as part of the European project AT LAST.



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Klimaatverbond Nederland

Klimaatverbond Nederland is an association of local and regional governments, founded in 1992. The association currently has 150 members, including municipalities, provinces, and water authorities. Together with our members, we work on active and impactful climate policy at local, regional, national, and international levels. In doing so, we act as a pathfinder, connector, and independent partner. Klimaatverbond facilitates the *Community of Practice Neighbourhood Driven Sustainability* as part of the European project AT LAST.



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An integrated neighbourhood approach

for a future-proof living environment

Aligning the energy transition with climate adaptation, housing policy and liveability for resilient neighbourhoods.



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Nederland

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Renovatie expert sinds 10/78



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