

## GWL-Terrein (Amsterdam - NL)

### Project description

GWL-Terrein is a large-scale community housing development built on the site of Amsterdam's former municipal waste water utility. The district was completed in 1998 and is located at 3 kilometres from the city centre.

GWL-Terrein is a compact neighbourhood consisting of high-density housing: 625 dwellings on 6 ha of land. The development is car-free in its interior and few parking spaces are provided for residents. The neighbourhood is well connected by the public transport system: bus, tram and train.

The developers retained and refurbished some of the former waterworks buildings, which has helped create a strong sense of local identity. The addition of a distinctive modern water tower provides an additional landmark to the area. GWL-Terrein has a mixture of ecological and social characteristics, like the use of rainwater, a ban on timber use from non-sustainable production, a series of linked public spaces, mix of different social categories etc. Local commercial units and services have been installed in the area such as small shops, offices, a restaurant, a common place for residents for diverse social activities.



### Objectives

The main objective of the project is to cope with the housing shortage in Amsterdam and to provide housing (mostly for families with children) with very low environmental impacts while including green spaces within the development. Due to shortage of land, green spaces in Amsterdam are very rare.

Another major consideration was the development of a car-free district (0.2 cars/apartment), which represents today the unique character of the neighbourhood, attracting various international visitors.

### Driving factors



Since 1945, residential neighbourhoods in the old part of Amsterdam had already limited or restricted parking places.

In 1992, a referendum was conducted in the favour of traffic reduction in Amsterdam and thus, the GWL-Terrein emerged as a large scale car-free demonstration project.

Generally, since the late 1990s, the Dutch government has been in favour of creating balanced neighbourhoods from a social point of view. GWL-Terrein has been built in compliance with the Dutch central policy, providing a

mix of both social and market rate housing.

### Partners & Roles

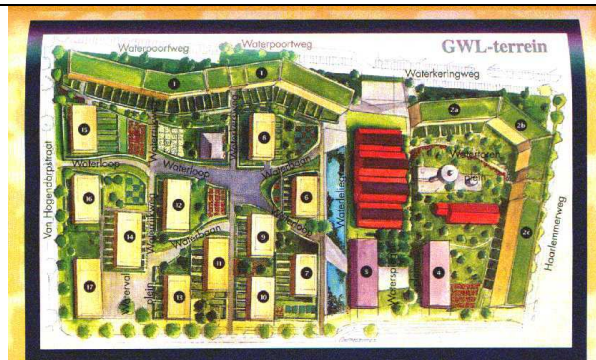
GWL was developed by the local municipality, Amsterdam Westerpark.


### Results/Achievements

**Transport:** only 20% of inhabitants in GWL-Terrein own a car. This is due to the high quality public transport, various bike lines and proximity to the city centre and Amsterdam Central Train Station. The inhabitants of GWL-Terrein need to subscribe to a waiting list to obtain a parking place; currently the waiting period is already 10 years long. GWL-Terrein. A car sharing company exists in the district and provides 5 cars for the GWL-Terrein residents.

**Water:** use of rainwater in 14 of the buildings on site for toilet flushing

**Energy:** the dwellings are supplied by a CHP unit and equipped with heat exchangers. Several buildings are equipped with green roofs to improve insulation and radiation of heat. All windows are double glazed and oriented so as to use natural solar heating.



	<p><b>Waste:</b> collected in underground containers and is separated into four fractions.</p> <p><b>Construction materials:</b> the demolition waste materials were reused for the new constructions at GWL-Terrein; timber use from non-sustainable production was banned.</p> <p><b>Social:</b> each building contains mixed apartments as follows: 50% of the dwellings represent social housing (allocated in 9 different buildings); 6 buildings contain market rate housing; 1 building contains apartments for elderly; and on the ground floor of 3 buildings there are specially fitted apartments for handicapped persons. The apartments offer the same quality in each building independent of their type (social, market-rate etc).</p>	
<p><b>Difficulties faced and solutions found</b></p>	<p>Without a continuous control of the caretaker, the GWL-Terrein district needs to cope sometimes with drivers not respecting the limited car access.</p>	
<p><b>Friendly advice to those who want to build new eco district</b></p>	<p>The GWL-Terrein is an example for future car-free neighbourhoods due to its special focus on sustainability. In order for such a project to be successful it is crucial to provide efficient public transport system at walking distance from all parts of the neighbourhood. It is important that residents have on spot commercial, leisure and educational facilities and services.</p>	
<p><b>Online information</b></p>	<p><a href="http://www.gwl-terrein.nl">www.gwl-terrein.nl</a>  <a href="http://www.cabe.org.uk">www.cabe.org.uk</a>  <a href="http://www.courses.umass.edu">www.courses.umass.edu</a>  <a href="http://www.istp.murdoch.edu.au">www.istp.murdoch.edu.au</a>  <a href="http://www.ecoattitude.org">www.ecoattitude.org</a></p>	
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