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Out of place? Emotional ties to the neighbourhood in urban renewal in the Netherlands and the United Kingdom

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8. Case Study: Hoogvliet, Rotterdam, the Netherlands

8.1 Introducing Hoogvliet

In the Urban audit (ECOTEC, 2007) Rotterdam is typecasted as a Gateway city: a larger city with dedicated (port) infrastructure, handling large flows of international goods and passengers. These cities are the platforms for freight transport, distribution and related industries and services. In addition, a wide variety of trade-related activities have been developed - Rotterdam has been successful in building (financial) services, particularly in the insurance industry. Despite all the achievements, this strong specialisation gives rise to a number of specific challenges. Port activities are becoming increasingly capital-intensive and automated, providing an ever narrower employment base. Unlike Transformation Poles (see chapter 8 on Manchester), Gateways are still firmly locked into their traditional port functions - and this can hamper the pursuit of new opportunities and diversification initiatives. Due to their physical appearance Gateway cities are often less attractive to tourists, investors and residents alike.

The Rotterdam city borough of Hoogvliet was built after World War Two to house the increasing demand for workers in the harbour and the nearby petro-chemical industry in the Botlek-area. Starting as a small dike town, it quickly developed into the first Dutch satellite town with more than 35.000 inhabitants. Employment was

surging and many new workers were attracted to the newly built maisonette houses, set amidst an abundance of green public space. The fortune of Hoogvliet changed in the seventies and eighties with the large scale automation and computerisation of the industry and an economic crisis, followed by reorganisation and an explosion at the site of the oil manufacturer Shell, which dramatically

Figure 8.1 Map of Rotterdam, the Netherlands



reduced the number of jobs in the area. Unemployment soared and the close proximity to the industry was no longer perceived as an asset but a threat; air and light pollution by the industry earned the area a bad reputation.

Moreover, Hoogvliet lost the battle for the middle classes to the neighbouring boroughs of Spijkernisse and Hellevoetsluis, who preferred the family homes in these booming urban areas over the large number of apartments in Hoogvliet. This further reduced the number of inhabitants and left behind the residents who could not afford to move. Between 1976 and 1985 almost 6.000 inhabitants left Hoogvliet, and particularly the north of Hoogvliet turned into a peripheral spill over area for the city of Rotterdam; the borough became known as 'the sewer (waste pipe) of the regional housing market'. The area was characterised by a large number of void properties and an accumulation of social deprivation problems. Young people were hit hardest and were reported to be trapped in a culture of unemployment, expressing themselves in vandalism and juvenile behaviour (Heeger & Van der Zon, 1988).

The tide turned in the nineties after a television documentary branded Hoogvliet as a 'terminal station' for its residents with no hope for the future. However, the documentary achieved the opposite by catalysing the cries for renewal. Under the command of the residents' party IBP and in coalition with the city council, local residents joined together to address the issues of degeneration and deprivation in Hoogvliet. In 1998 the city council and two local housing associations devised plans for large scale demolition and renewal of the housing stock. Almost 5,000 homes (nearly half of the cheap stock and a third of all the housing in Hoogvliet) were to be demolished and replaced by a larger number of new and more attractive homes. Part of the new build was reserved for social housing although the size of social housing in Hoogvliet was to be reduced from 62% to 45%. They would be replaced by building more expensive owner-occupied housing, and by selling parts (1,500 homes) of the social housing stock. Ultimately, the plan's aim was for 60% of the residents should to own their own house in 2010, compared to the small minority of 20% owner-occupiers in 1998.

These plans made Hoogvliet one of the largest regeneration sites in the Netherlands. The city council and the two housing associations put their vision for Hoogvliet on paper in the urban renewal programme titled 'Hoogvliet, Self-Willed

(wilful) City', in which they set out the guidelines and main areas to focus on in the urban renewal of Hoogvliet for the next ten years. The plan demonstrates clear ambitions to achieve more than improved housing by stressing social and economic goals. This becomes evident by the five themes that are laid out in the plans:

1. Desired Living
2. Living Together
3. Education and Employment
4. Care and Social Security
5. Establishment for Businesses

Although these themes are fairly general, they show a strong focus on the socio-economic mobility of its residents. In a revised version of the plan (2000) more detail is added by stressing three renewal principals:

- Maintaining social cohesion throughout the urban renewal process;
- Every resident who wants to stay in Hoogvliet, should be able to do so;
- Not only the borough of Hoogvliet should improve, but *every* resident in Hoogvliet should reap the rewards.

This is clearly a very ambitious strategy and relatively unique in the Netherlands. Social mobility is not often quoted as a motive for urban renewal; most programmes focus exclusively on spatial mobility and/or social cohesion and when attention is given to social mobility this is usually at the aggregated level of the neighbourhood. Is the neighbourhood improved by mixed tenure, increased education and employment qualifications for residents and less deprivation? Hoogvliet turn this around by starting with individual residents: are residents who already lived in the neighbourhood at the start of the urban renewal programme in 1998 more socially mobile in 2006 and where do these changes occur in individuals' lives? The changes in people's lives should bring out a change in the whole neighbourhood; if residents' lives are improved, life in the neighbourhood should improve with less vandalism and crime, and more safety and neighbouring. Therefore, it is deemed important to maintain the social bonds between residents during the urban renewal process; neighbourhood life should proceed as normal as possible. Moreover, the emotional ties of residents to their neighbourhood are

taken into account; residents who would like to stay in the neighbourhood should be able to return to their renewed house or else be relocated elsewhere in their neighbourhood to maintain neighbourhood affection and connections. Residents who have left the area were invited to return.

The three guiding principles in Hoogvliet echo the three distinct social goals of urban renewal, social cohesion, social-emotional ties and social mobility, and are connected to each other in the urban renewal programme. Those that feel at home in Hoogvliet will maintain stronger bonds with other residents and need to stay in the neighbourhood to help the weaker. Place attachment to the area is also directly stimulated; the building plans were based on images, constructed with a wide variety of participants, which projected the present and future identity of the municipality. In the execution of these plans innovative projects were designed to record and influence people's place identity. For example and in a similar way to the day of memories organised in Emmen, special days were organised in which residents' memories of the neighbourhood were visualised in plays written and performed by the locals, to help residents part with the area that they were forced to leave due to the demolition of their homes.

8.2 Designing Place Identity

Place identity has been actively stimulated in Hoogvliet. Hoogvliet was one of four experimental zones for an innovation programme, called "Identiteit en Branding" (Neighbourhood Identity and Branding), set up by two large housing associations in the Southwest of the Netherlands, Woonbron en Staedon, and supported by the Dutch department of Housing. Concerned with what they defined as "a degrading quality of neighbourhoods, a lack of recognisability of the living environment, and a concentration of deprivation" both housing associations sought new ways to regenerate these neighbourhoods by profiling them according to well-defined user groups with specific characteristics and demands. To achieve a better match between people and places, they choose the identity of an area as the guiding principle for their developmental plans. The 'emotional logic' of four carefully selected neighbourhoods needed to be located and used as an inspiration for the

physical regeneration and urban renewal of these areas in so-called ‘conscientious’ neighbourhood plans. Four pilot projects were set up: two in The Hague (Mariahoeve en Schipperskwartier) and two in Rotterdam (Hoogvliet en Nieuwe Westen). In Hoogvliet the project consisted of three research phases:

- Historical research;
- Branding sessions with local professionals and residents; and
- Life style sessions.

In the first part of the project The History Story conducted delved into the historical roots of Hoogvliet. The results are described in the report “*Hoogvliet: Bloem zonder Wortels*” (Van den Brink 2003). The report was not overenthusiastically received by its commissioners, as it painted a rather gloomy. I described the borough as a physically, economically, socially and politically defragmentated place with a strong dividing line between a mixed but socially and economically weak dense south on the one side, and a more homogeneous richer northern part of Hoogvliet on the other side where space and green was more abundant and costly.

Next up was Real Time Branding, whose task it was to come up with a new brand for Hoogvliet that would put the neighbourhood back on the map and in the market of popular places to live. To speed up this difficult task the company applied a so-called pressure cooker-method; 50 representatives of the neighbourhood, ranging from residents and social workers to housing association staff, police officers and council employees were put together for three days in a big conference room on the south coast of Holland. Here they debated on numerous hot issues, such as the most favourite places in the neighbourhood and the wishes, values and associations people attached to the ideal neighbourhood environment with the ideal neighbour. The representatives were supported by two advisers and a creative team of drawers/ designers, whose task it was to translate the outcomes into visual images. The result was a metallic ‘brand’ book, which depicted five key values for Hoogvliet: base camp, self esteem, community, strong minded and adventure.

To test whether these key values resonated with the residents back in Hoogvliet, the SmartAgent Company organised a number of sessions with local

residents in which they were presented with different images of possible social climates in Hoogvliet according to street layout and type of housing. The key values were used to locate the new Hoogvlieter whose lifestyle would make him or her strongly focussed on the neighbourhood where he lives and the people that live there. The sessions resulted in six living arrangements, which suited the different value orientations in Hoogvliet. The first one, called the private neighbourhood, was designed for people who did not like to constantly run into their neighbour, while the second one, labelled the living square, consisted of houses located round a cosy communal space while each home could enjoy their privacy in their secluded backyards. In contrast, residents who opted for 'the freedom street' could pretty much do as they pleased without disturbing their neighbours. Three arrangements were specifically designed for the new Hoogvlieter: in 'the protected collective' children were able to play together, while neighbours could exchange the nitty gritty of daily lives over the fence, whereas in 'the home in the city'-design all sorts of people could mingle in an urban designed environment. The different designs were to be used as dream images that could inspire the physical and social regeneration of Hoogvliet.

In spite of all the efforts and colourful design books, strikingly little of the results of the project have found their way into project plans and urban renewal activities in Hoogvliet. The results of the four different pilot projects were presented at a conference in The Hague in the summer of 2006, where it became clear that this translation would not happen anywhere soon. The only visible result is a marketing campaign by the city council with the motto "Helemaal Hoogvliet" (Totally Hoogvliet), which uses the key values and living arrangements as a inspiration for the promotion of new build housing in the borough.

A programme that has materialised more visibly in the urban renewal of Hoogvliet is the work of a group of architectural historians who started in 2001 after the International Architecture Exhibition held in Hoogvliet. The exhibition carried the motto "Welcome In My Backyard!" (WIMBY!), playing on the well known defensive response of residents when unpopular facilities, such as homeless shelters and rehab centres are added to their neighbourhood; "Not In My Back Yard". What was meant to be only a virtual city architect, enabling a large scale

vision for the transformation of Hoogvliet, developed over the years into a small-scale and hybrid network of public and private actors, who in joint ventures developed artistic projects to change the outlook and appearance of the physical structure of the city. For instance, for the project “Inside Out”, homes that were nominated for the sledgehammer were wrapped up in real size computer animations of local residents in their home environment. The banners were supposed to make private lives part of the public city life, although not all residents were able to recognise themselves on the banners. More recently, the groups designed and built a ‘recreational villa’ in the middle of the area to *“revamp the empty and quiet live in the streets by providing residents a place to meet and gather”* (www.wimby.nl). Most of their work is strongly symbolic and aesthetic, used for visual communication. Architecture is used to visualise and highlight the physical and social diversity of the city.

The group also developed plans that tried to change the physical infrastructure of Hoogvliet. WIMBY! redesigned four maisonette flats in the neighbourhood of Oudeland. Their design aimed to create new housing collectives which *“redefine the borders between public and private space by creating opportunities to meet and interact with different ethnic groups”*. The balcony areas were designed as living space and the communal spaces were to be fitted with glass walls to enable social control of these spaces. So called ‘cluster zones’ should allow residents to interact with each other or separate themselves from others (privacy management) by shifting walls around. Potential tenants were to be recruited from different walks of life and to be assigned to different parts of the flats. Young people would be located above elderly residents, while single parents (mostly from the Dutch Antilles) would be living next to ‘free spirits’, ‘pre-Yuppen’ (young, urban but not yet professional residents) and ‘short stayers’ who work on a temporary contract for a local company. The execution of the plan experienced considerable delays due to ‘capacity problems’ at the involved housing association. The plans were further undermined by a city council decision in 2006 to reserve part of the flats for the housing of former prostitutes from the now closed tipping zone on the Keilerweg in Rotterdam. The society responsible for the care of these ladies preferred separated floors for their clients instead of the mixed and shifting borders design intended by the WIMBY! architects.

Unfortunately, and in spite of all the efforts to incorporate place identity into the urban renewal of Hoogvliet, little remains of all the research and designs. Evidence of a changed area reputation for Hoogvliet, particularly in the eyes of people living outside the borough, is lacking so far. Although the city council conducted a survey on the image of Hoogvliet among residents and outsiders (people living and working elsewhere in the Greater Rotterdam area) at the start of the urban renewal in 1999, this research has not been repeated to establish changes in the reputation on the area. What the research conducted for the Strategisch Communicatieplan Herpositionering (Strategic Communication plan for Repositioning, 1999) did show was a striking difference in the perception of Hoogvliet between insiders and outsiders; the image of residents living in Hoogvliet differed considerably from the image of the area held by other Rotterdam inhabitants and commuters, in that residents are far more positive about the reputation of the area, with 90% claiming they do not want to leave the area and two thirds stating they will live in Hoogvliet until the day they die. Outsiders are much less familiar with the area: three quarters of these respondents could not think of any (positive or negative) association with the name Hoogvliet.

Other evidence on the lack of progress in area reputation comes from the Leefbaarheidsmonitor (Liveability Survey) regularly repeated under a representative sample of Rotterdam residents. When residents in Hoogvliet were asked in 2001 to rate their own neighbourhood and the borough of Hoogvliet on a scale from 1 to 10, the borough received an average rating of 6.8 with a similar score for the neighbourhood. When repeated in 2005 the scores almost remained the same.

Tabel 8.1 Average Scores for Neighbourhood and Hoogvliet

<i>Area</i>	<i>2001</i>	<i>2005</i>
Own Neighbourhood	6.8	6.8
Hoogvliet	6.8	6.7

Source: Leefbaarheidsmonitor Rotterdam 2001, 2005

In sum, there is no proof of an effective redesigning of place identity in Hoogvliet has in urban renewal. However, the possibility remains that other more indirect attempts have been more successful. Next to direct attempts to change the place

attachments of residents, the urban renewal programme in Hoogvliet has tried to increase the social mobility of residents. Is it possible that this attempt has been more successful and in doing so has influenced the place attachment of residents? Is there an indirect effect of social mobility on place attachment? This is not an unlikely connection as the experiences in Emmen in the previous chapter have shown: by combining relocation with social activation residents demonstrated more progress. Does improved social mobility in urban renewal increase the emotional ties to the neighbourhood; do more mobile residents feel more at home in their neighbourhood? In short, are human capital investments more effective in (indirectly) stimulating the place attachments of the original residents?

8.3 Social Mobility in Hoogvliet

The rest of this case study is concerned with evaluating the results of the urban renewal programme in Hoogvliet, with a particular focus on the socio-economical mobility of individual residents. To do this, the changes in socio-economical status for residents still living in the area were assessed between 1998 and 2006 on five dimensions: employment, education, income, housing, and independence and health.

1. *Employment*: changes in the amount (hours per week) and type (qualification level) of employment and job career, as well as changes in volunteer work, job training and entrepreneurship
2. *Education*: changes in school attendance and qualifications (including exam scores)
3. *Income*: changes in amount (increases and decreases) of earned and spendable annual household income, and saving money
4. *Housing*: change in type (tenant or owner-occupier), price and size of property, with respect to changes in household composition
5. *Independence and health*: changes in dependency on care and benefits and changes in perceived amount of control over ones own life and that of any children. Are residents living more independent and healthy?

These five dimensions were chosen to define social mobility and map onto the five urban themes selected by the Hoogvliet council and the housing associations. With these dimensions, it was possible to distinguish between different patterns of mobility for residents still living in the area. Is social mobility more likely on certain dimensions and what are common combinations? Does not only the quality of housing improve for individual residents, but also their employment or educational qualifications? Do they feel more in control of their lives and what are their expectations for the future? Furthermore, are there differences in social mobility between different residents' groups and different neighbourhoods in Hoogvliet? And if so, does this lead to different mobility patterns? Does improved housing provide stimuli to improve ones income or does a hefty mortgage make it more difficult for residents to make ends meet? Is job training the best way to improve employment or is it more about who you know in the neighbourhood for job referrals?

In the relatively short time span of the research (1998-2006), it is unlikely that large improvements will have occurred in the social mobility of residents on all dimensions. To increase the time span of the research and to make (more modest) behavioural changes visible, the research also focuses on changes in the ambitions of residents. Do residents assess their chances for social mobility differently after eight years of urban renewal? Is there a change in work ethics visible from a culture of poverty to culture of achievement)? Are they more ambitious for the future, both for themselves and for their children? After establishing changes in social mobility and ambitions for the future, the next question is what causes these changes? Is urban renewal responsible for these changes and which projects contribute the most?

Since controlling data for similar areas where no urban renewal has taken place is lacking, strong causal connections are hard to establish. However, by comparing between different residents' groups and neighbourhoods in Hoogvliet plausible connections between urban renewal and social mobility can be explored.

Methodology

Based on an extensive literature review indicators were selected and developed on each dimension, resulting in a comprehensive questionnaire. This questionnaire was

subsequently used in 24 open interviews with residents who have lived in Hoogvliet since the start of the urban renewal in 1998, to record their changes in socio-economic status and to investigate the sources of their reported changes. Residents were selected on three criteria: 1) residency since 1999 in one of four areas, where the majority of the urban renewal projects took place, 2) ethnicity and 3) age.

The three criteria allowed for comparisons between the different target groups of the urban renewal policy in Hoogvliet; original white Dutch residents versus ethnic newcomers, particularly residents from the Dutch Antilles, on the one hand, and young people growing up in the neighbourhood versus elderly residents on the other hand, who liked to remain in the neighbourhood, in spite of their growing care needs. All selected candidates were characterized by a low education and low income, as it was anticipated that the effects of the urban renewal projects would be largest among this group of residents. Residents were approached by local community workers. Out of 32 potential interview candidates 24 were interviewed. Interviews lasted on average 1.5 hours and were conducted face to face in the respondents' homes. The interviews focused on different routes of social mobility: which dimensions of social mobility are affected by urban renewal?

8.3.1 Employment, Income and Education

Since respondents were selected on low socio-economic status-scores, most residents that were interviewed had little money to spend. The majority was without a job and received social benefits. Those who were employed often worked in a so-called ID-job or as paid volunteer staff for the local community (OK-bank). The average income ranged from 1350 to 2050 euro net a month. Some households had to make ends meet with less than 1000 euro a month. The interviewed residents complained about a loss of income over the period 1998-2006 with increasing housing costs (rent, bills and insurance) reducing their spending power. The introduction of the (expensive) Euro in 2001 was partly blamed for the increased costs of living. None of the respondents had increased their income since 1998, with some residents even experiencing a reduced income by losing their job in the last eight years. In particular, residents in Nieuw Engeland and Meeuwenplaat complained of loss of income. Several residents experienced the

poverty trap; by acquiring a job they lost access to benefits and grants, which made them worse off in the end and forced them to quit their jobs.

There was a time when I needed to make ends meet with 80 guilders per week and a son. If I succeeded, I was very proud. I was doing fairly well then. I had access to many facilities and received for instance housing benefits. My son's sport tuitions were partly paid by the government and I was able to take up courses that were offered to me. [...] I enjoy more income now, but my costs of living have increased and I am not entitled any more to the same benefits" (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

In general residents found it more difficult in 2006 to make ends meet. Few residents have improved their income by finding a job or a partner who contributed to the household budget.

Educational qualifications were equally low for the interviewed residents; most residents had no further qualifications after MBO (GCSE equivalent). However, they were satisfied with their education level and, therefore, felt no incentive to improve their qualifications. What residents did notice was an increase in the ethnic mixing of schools in Hoogvliet, although this trend was not noticeable in every neighbourhood. According to the residents, the primary schools in Meeuwenplaat attracted more pupils from the ethnic population than schools in Zalmplaat where the majority of pupils was still white. Official statistics, however, showed that more ethnically mixed schools were a minority case: 3 out of 11 primary schools have increased their ethnic student population, while 3 schools have witnessed a decrease in their number of ethnic students, and 5 schools report no change at all. Ethnic mixing of the schools in Hoogvliet is, therefore, more pronounced in the experience of the Hoogvliet residents than in the official statistics.

8.3.2 Housing

Residents who were forced to move due to the demolition of their home were more satisfied afterwards with their new house. More space and facilities, both inside (larger bathroom, lift) and outside (balcony, garden), are appreciated by the new

tenants. An increase in the rental price was taken for granted, since residents receive more space and facilities in return. However, a considerable number of these residents admitted they would have preferred to stay in their demolished house. They felt at home in their house and with the people living around them, and did not share the same urgency as the housing association for demolition. They dreaded the move to the new place, but in hindsight are happy with the result; their new home.

Until 1999 I lived in Meeuwenplaat. I just had to leave there: it was small, damp and ridden with fungi and the flat had only stairways. I deliberately choose a new house in a mixed neighbourhood. My house is a real palace, honest. You won't find a similar sized house anywhere else. I never want to leave from here (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

Not feeling safe and a bad area reputation were most often quoted as reasons for moving²⁰. One respondent moved into the Waaierflats in 1968, where different ethnic groups were packed together. This led to tensions and ultimately gun violence between ethnic groups. Therefore, the respondent decided to move out of the flats to the adjacent neighbourhood of Johannapolder. After her marriage she moved back to Nieuw Engeland, because “the biggest problems had been solved”.

I wanted a bigger house, but did not really want to move to Nieuw Engeland. This has always been a neighbourhood with a bad reputation, lots of nuisance and junkies. They shoot cats on the streets from their balconies, and I have cats!” In the end she decided to remain in the neighbourhood: “With the demolition of the flats the neighbourhood has improved. The quality and size of the house and the low rent made me decide to stay. It is just a beautiful house with a large garden! (Resident from Nieuw Engeland)

Residents who did not experience the demolition of their homes are usually long term inhabitants of the area; they feel strongly connected to the neighbourhood

²⁰ At the same time, improvements on the issues are a reason to return to the neighbourhood.

and would prefer to stay in Hoogvliet for the rest of their lives. Financial reasons are part of this decision:

We feel very fortunate. The house in which we live is built with urban renewal funds and the rent is set accordingly. Therefore, it not appealing to move (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

I never even considered moving out of Hoogvliet. Hoogvliet is familiar; there is lots of green space, great for the children, who enjoy playing in it (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

Living in Hoogvliet was for most respondents a conscious decision; the accessibility to work and family or friends were important advantages of living in this part of Rotterdam, especially for immigrants from the Dutch Antilles who travelled to the Netherlands to build a new life for themselves and their children. One respondent lived from 1975 to 1986 in Amsterdam, while working on a shipyard. When the shipyard hit rocky waters, he applied for a similar job at Shell in Rotterdam and moved to Hoogvliet.

It's very quiet here. There is a good underground connection with the centre and the south of Rotterdam. Job opportunities are also good: Shell, the Botlek area. At least you don't have to sit in traffic jams to get to work (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

Another respondent moved in 1998 from Curaçao to the Netherlands. Her daughter was already living in the neighbourhood of Zalmplaat and, therefore, she moved in with her daughter and grandchildren until she acquired an apartment of her own in 2000. She moved to the Netherlands to provide her two sons with a better future and to support them when they were studying.

While the new neighbourhood was a marked improvement for these residents compared to the one they left behind, their arrival was met with less enthusiasm by their neighbours. The residents who were already living there experienced a negative change in their living environment and complained about increased levels

of noise pollution, nuisance and lingering. As the new residents were often former immigrants, they introduced a different way of life to the neighbourhood, which collided with the norms and values upheld by the original residents. In Oudeland and Meeuwenplaat particularly, residents complained about their new neighbours from the Dutch Antilles. Much less is known and visible to the original residents were the new arrivals of middle class families, attracted by the new and often more expensive rental opportunities and housing for sale. Existing residents' attention (and complaints) focused primarily on the lower income groups that caused noise pollution and nuisance; contact between the different income groups was predominantly absent.

When Shell expanded in the past, people from Drenthe moved up here. When they moved up the societal ladder, they moved to a bigger house, freeing up their old houses. The new people who moved into these so-called "Shell houses" turned them into a ghetto. Who could afford to leave, moved out of the neighbourhood. People with a low social status, but also criminals and drugs addicts moved in (Resident from Oudeland).

This process of new arrivals and rising tensions between old and new residents' groups was repeated several times during the urban renewal of Hoogvliet. Demolition of housing in adjacent neighbourhoods caused a flow in of residents who could afford a home in a better off neighbourhood, which was perceived by the existing residents as a decline of 'their' neighbourhood, causing them to consider moving to another neighbourhood where "life was better". This set a chain of movements in motions with perceived loss of reputation and house prices in its track, which became a self-fulfilling prophesy for urban renewal and demolition. When urban renewal plans were presented turnover rates increased, changing the neighbourhood composition and causing nuisance and loss of reputation for the residents who lived there. If possible they moved out of the neighbourhood, leaving behind, in increasing frustration, those who could not afford to move. This chain started in the early nineties in Nieuw Engeland and was followed by a moving flow to the other three neighbourhoods in Hoogvliet. When urban renewal started in

Meeuwenplaat at end of the millennium, similar complaints and concerns were raised from the white population in the neighbourhood.

An increasing number of immigrants from the Dutch Antilles moved into the neighbourhood, older Dutch residents moved out; they were afraid of the immigrants. These people have another way of life; they talk much louder. Some people get frightened by that (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

Later on it was Zalmplaat's turn to be concerned when residents from Meeuwenplaat whose houses were demolished moved to this adjacent neighbourhood. According to the residents, the neighbourhood was declining rapidly.

Zalmplaat had a name for being the best neighbourhood of Hoogvliet. [...] Zalmplaat used to be white and Meeuwenplaat predominantly black; the other side of the underground station was out of bounds. [...] The neighbourhood reputation has deteriorated slightly in more recent years. Many residents left the neighbourhood out of precaution, leaving void properties behind in the flats. The flats have become more prone to vandalism (Resident from Zalmplaat).

Next to new residents, the demolition brought noise, nuisance and often crime to the adjacent neighbourhoods.

The waste skips are still there. They attract people from other neighbourhoods, who come to dump their waste here. Within a year's time the neighbourhood visibly changed. Nieuw Engeland used to be the ghetto, now all these people moved over here [Meeuwenplaat]. All of a sudden a drugs dealer lived among the white elderly residents in this flat. 11 year olds came round to score drugs (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

However, not every resident judged the new arrivals a disaster for the neighbourhood:

The neighbourhood has become more amiable, the neighbourhood has opened up. You can witness this in schools and on the streets; they are more colourful (Resident from Zalmplaat).

It's more fun in the summer; there are more people outside. Many activities are organised for children, there is more contact between residents (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

And for some it was a process of getting used to the new environment:

There used to be more fear among residents. Before 1999, foreign voices on the street were rare. Nowadays that is perfectly normal (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

Time appears to be a healer; in Nieuw Engeland, where demolition started already in the early nineties, neighbourhood reputation is on the up again. Residents, who fled the neighbourhood at the first strokes of the demolition hammer, are slowly returning to their original neighbourhood and speak proudly of the improved area. For them Nieuw Engeland is no longer the ghetto of Hoogvliet.

The living environment has improved; it's safer, because residents act differently and the green spaces are prettier. The police patrols more often and the housing association keeps in touch with residents" (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

When family used to visited, they used to be frightened by the neighbourhood in which I lived. This is no longer the case: the visitors are pleasantly surprised (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

Although, scepticism remained and the old image of Hoogvliet held by outsiders was more resistant to change and likely to changed more slowly.

Many residents moved out of the neighbourhood. It's not clean and safe. [...] There are green spaces in the neighbourhood, but they are used by foreigners who play baseball, or occupy the space by the hundred and just sit there and moan. They also sell beer from the houses. [...] The neighbourhood, in which we live now, has recently been renamed into "The Turning Point". I find this an apt name: you should turn around here and get out as quickly as you can (Family from Nieuw Engeland).

The area reputation has improved; it is now a nice quiet street. I recently spoke to someone, who said she never ever wanted to live in Nieuw Engeland. I explained to her that the neighbourhood is doing much better now, but the bad image of the Waaier-flats remains in the heads of people outside the neighbourhood (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

In spite of the promise made by the borough council and the involved housing associations, the interviewed residents did not expect every resident to return to the neighbourhood when the urban renewal was completed. Some residents were believed to be either better off elsewhere or to be unable to return. Also, respondents were sceptical about the promised affordable rent prices of 500 euro a month and less.

Many residents, who lived in the demolished houses, do not return to the neighbourhood. They were offered a spacious flat in Zalmplaat and do not wish to leave anymore. Although, there are so-called "shoppers", people who move from one demolition house to the next to collect the moving premium (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

8.3.3 Independence and Health

The residents that were interviewed were asked about their independence and their ability to manage their own affairs. Are they able to stand up for themselves and able to get access to the right people to help them solve their problems they meet in their daily affairs? One of the major ways residents improved their independence was by participating in volunteer work; it provided volunteers with

problem solving knowledge and useful connections for support and access to public agencies. The process of demolition and moving caused stress for many residents and being active in volunteer work and resident participation helped them to cope with the stress and anxiety.

It was a tumultuous time, which was not good for your body and soul. I built up self-confidence by cooperating with social work in the neighbourhood. Through this work other Hoogvliet residents got to know me and they recognised and appreciated my contribution. Residents and organisations involved with the demolition are much more accessible now; I know where to go when there is trouble (Resident from Meeuwenplaat).

Other residents went through a similar process due to more personal problems like over exhaustion, work fatigue and extreme anxiety, which forced them to take control back over their life and taught them to stand up for themselves. Urban renewal acted as trigger for their personal problems, but also as a stimulant to find help. Some of these residents received support from a social worker, although most of them said they preferred to do it alone and did not like to admit they needed or received help. When residents failed to enlist help and support, they reported feeling less independent and able to manage their lives.

In the streets four to five year old children called me a whore. I couldn't handle that and looked for help. The police referred me to Victim Aid, but they asked me: "Why are you here?" and I left instantly. Now I find it even more difficult to ask for help (Resident from Nieuw Engeland).

Finally, older residents were worried that they would be less able to look after themselves and the house (maintaining the garden) in the future. They worried about having to move again to more supported housing and feared that no affordable housing alternative would be available to them at that time.

8.4 Discussion

The interviews conducted for this research were part of a larger research project conducted for the borough of Hoogvliet, in collaboration with the University of Amsterdam and the OTB research institute in Delft (Veldboer et. al., 2007). The research project consisted of three parts: an extensive literature review to explore topics for half-structured interviews with a sample of residents, which were consequently developed into questions for a large scale survey among all residents in Hoogvliet who have lived in the area since the start of the urban renewal programme. The results of the interviews were, therefore, used as input for a larger survey among all original residents in Hoogvliet. The results of the survey largely confirmed the findings of the interviews and elaborated a number of issues raised in the interviews. For a more detailed discussion of the survey residents see the report written by Veldboer, Kleinhans and Duyvendak (2007).

Both the interviews and the survey indicated that success was present but limited to certain aspects of mobility. Most residents benefited from improved housing quality, but little direct progress was visible on the other dimensions of socio-economical status. Work, income and education of residents were not improved for the majority of residents. Some did find a job or start an education with the help of the programme, however, for most residents their disposable income was not increased and more often they found it harder to make ends meet. Residents who already enjoyed a working life noticed little improvement and, by and large, residents were already satisfied with their education in 1999 and had little aspiration to pursue additional qualifications.

Ethnic groups, in particular immigrants from the Dutch Antilles, fared better: they improved their socio-economic status more often by participating in on-the-job training programmes, although some times enforced by social services. Also, more progress was made by volunteer work. Although varying considerably in degree, almost all respondents participated in some kind of volunteer work. Particularly for residents with limited opportunities on the labour market due to disabilities, volunteer work proved an alternative career; in stead of being a stepping stone for better job prospects, volunteer work boosted their self

confidence and strengthened their feelings of independence. By participating in the programme, residents increased their contact with other residents and made even more their contact with local professionals from social work, housing associations and the city council. In some occasions, volunteer work developed into something more, allowing residents access to subsidised jobs (ID-banen) and special job training programmes. However, it proved difficult to uphold this newly acquired status in the long run when grants and training programmes came to an end. There appeared to be an inverse relationship between volunteer work and job prospects; without a job residents had ample time to participate in volunteer work, however, once in a job their ability to participate diminished quickly.

Another dimension which showed considerable change was neighbourhood reputation with, on one side, the existing residents who complained about loss of reputation and problems of deprivation caused by in flow in of residents from adjacent neighbourhood who houses were being demolished and, on the other hand, residents who returned after a number of years to their renewed neighbourhood and speak proudly again of the improved area. This is one of the most profound changes quoted by residents; a new sense of achievement in the area.

Where residents before showed signs of fatalism (no one cares, nothing matters), there are now few who reside in their deprivation. The general consensus among residents is that achievement is possible and that society is willing to listen and help. There is no longer a culture of underachievement, in which residents lose faith because there are no opportunities (Veldboer et. al., 2007:43).

Many residents appreciated the efforts of the borough council and the housing association to improve their quality of life, even if this had far-reaching consequences for them, such as being forced to leave their home due to demolition. The research showed that changes in the neighbourhood and the personal lives of residents were connected; neighbourhood mobility generated individual mobility (Veldboer et. al., 2007:44). It is no coincidence that the two groups of residents who demonstrated the most progress were also the most mobile

residents: 'upscalers' (who go upmarket) and former immigrants from the Dutch Antilles. Interestingly, residents who went upmarket attributed their improvements primarily to their own efforts and less to the urban renewal efforts of the city borough. Few residents linked their achievements to changes in their wider environment, such as improved retail options in the area or the availability of more motivated volunteers at the local leisure centre, while these conditions are often vital for residents to improve themselves. Immigrants from the Dutch Antilles, on the other hand, are more aware of the wider changes around them and contribute their achievements more often to the urban renewal programme. The specifically designed projects for this group are not only effective in this respect, but are also recognised as such by these residents.

This points to a crucial factor in the urban renewal programme of Hoogvliet: mobilising residents was not sufficient; they also had to be made aware of other potential changes in their lives. This is one of the key findings of the research:

When residents were forced to move, they became more aware of other opportunities for change in their lives. Moving house became a moving to opportunities, while remaining (when possible) in the same neighbourhood (Veldboer et. al., 2007:44).

However, according to the research, this is not sufficient in itself. Social professionals who work in these neighbourhoods have the important task of making residents aware of these potential changes and to support them in achieving these opportunities by tailor-made socio-economical projects. Next to mobilising residents, social professional have to direct them to other opportunities (Veldboer, et. al., 2007: 44). When residents are forced to move due to demolition, they can support them with additional social investments aimed at improving their educational and job qualifications and, most importantly, their self-esteem to discover and act upon new opportunities in their lives.

The urban renewal programme in Hoogvliet has brought about a process of improved self-esteem for a considerable amount of the residents by combining new housing opportunities with assertive social policy (Veldboer, et. al., 2007: 43). This does not lead (yet) to many objective improvements in the quality of their lives

when measured in terms of education, income and jobs, but “*does make a substantial number of the Hoogvlieters feel they can achieve more in their lives and feel more proud of the neighbourhood they live in*” (Veldboer, et. al., 2007: 43). Both feelings appear to be connected; a more viable and safer living environment (to be proud of) is important for residents to feel able to change their lives and face long-term standing problems of deprivation. Neighbourhood improvement becomes an important condition for social mobility.

Starting with bricks and mortar is not a bad approach, although the opportunities (and threats) created by the housing programme need to be ceased (and counteracted) by socio-economical and social-emotional programmes. The link between social mobility and neighbourhood attachment perceived by the borough council and the housing associations is in fact turned upside down: instead of improving individual lives as a precondition for improving area reputation, improved area reputation improves individual’s self-esteem and their willingness to become socially mobile. For the more ‘arrived’ resident groups urban renewal offers an opportunity to return to their ‘old’ neighbourhood.

8.5 Place Attachments in Emmen and Hoogvliet

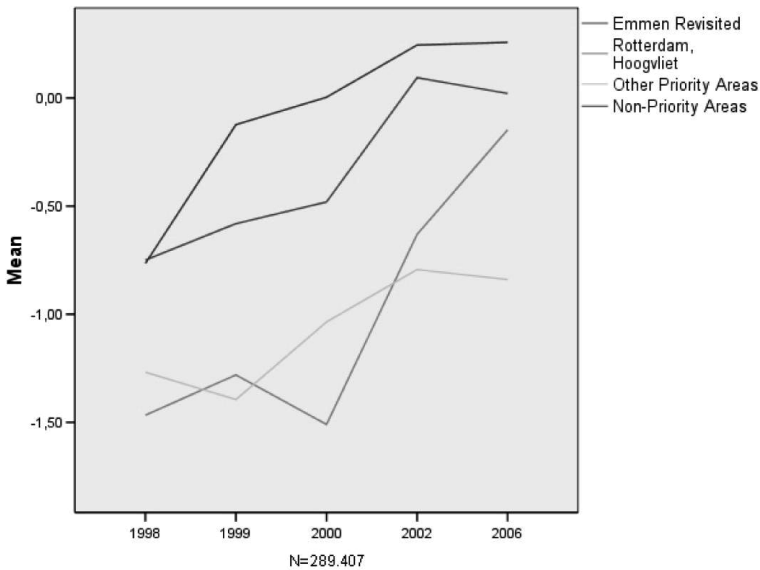
Both Hoogvliet and Emmen illustrate that there is a complex relationship between the different goals of urban renewal in the Netherlands. Urban renewal is more than bricks and mortar, but what to do with the residents? Is it more important to increase neighbourhood cohesion, as Emmen Revisited decided to do, or does it matter to them more when their social mobility is increased as Hoogvliet argues? High expectations in both cases were disappointed: residents got more housing for their money in Emmen, but experienced limited improvements to their social wellbeing. The social cohesion in Emmen improved only a little, while other indicators like neighbourhood tidiness, nuisance and safety showed deterioration. In a similar way, the residents in Hoogvliet showed few signs of improved social mobility; their job prospects, income and educational qualifications were not significantly improved.

Reviewing more subjective indicators, demonstrated more progress in both case studies: in Hoogvliet residents became more aware of the possibilities offered by the urban renewal programme to improve their neighbourhood and also their personal lives and as a result felt that they could achieve more in their lives. In Emmen, particularly Bargeres, residents did no longer want to leave their neighbourhood in spite of the social problems they still experienced. A considerable group of residents even decided buying their house from the housing association; since 1991 Woomcom has sold more than 3,200 of their properties to tenants. Buying your home as a tenant is an important indicator for physical attachment and illustrates that residents feel more at home in their neighbourhood. The subjective results in Emmen and Hoogvliet indicate that urban renewal can have a positive effect on the emotional ties of residents, making residents more proud of and attached to the place where they live. However, clear evidence of this is still lacking in both case studies.

More evidence on the effects of urban renewal in Emmen en Hoogvliet on the emotional ties of residents is available from the Housing Needs Survey used in chapter 4. Both areas are sufficiently represented in the data to allow for additional analyses on the neighbourhood level. Which changes are visible in the place attachments of residents living in both areas between 1998 and 2006 and what does this tell us about the likely effectiveness of the different approaches to the social dimension chosen in Emmen and Hoogvliet?

When the physical attachment of residents is considered first, it becomes clear that Emmen is more similar to the non-priority areas in the largest 30 cities, while Hoogvliet closer resembles the more deprived areas. Residents in Emmen are more physically attached to their neighbourhood and these ties increased further between 1998 and 2006. However, the physical ties of residents became weaker after 2002, while they were still on the up in the non-priority areas.

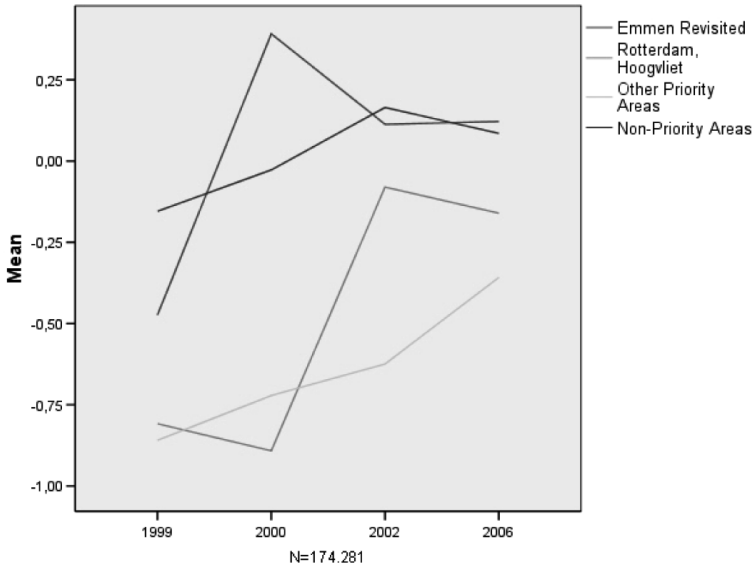
Figure 8.2 Rootedness in the Neighbourhood in Emmen and Hoogvliet, 1998-2006



The largest growth in attachments to the neighbourhood, however, can be witnessed in the borough of Hoogvliet; after a loss of physical affection between 1999 and 2000, the residents increased their physical ties considerably, up to the point of closing in on the amount of physical affection displayed by the residents in Emmen.

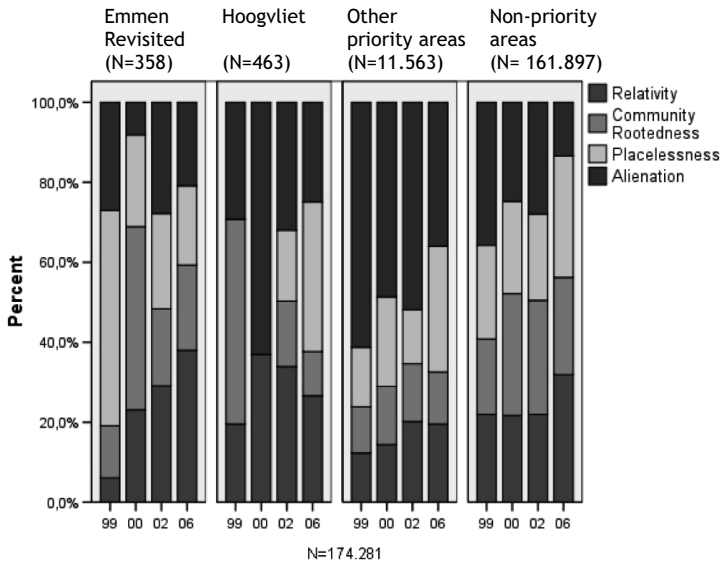
The same holds true for social attachment; residents in the borough of Hoogvliet demonstrated the largest increase in bondings to their neighbourhood, particularly after 2000, while in the same period residents in Emmen lost social affection for the area where they live. This loss of affection in Emmen took place after a sharp increase of social attachment in the years before, between 1999 and 2000, when residents in Hoogvliet were experiencing a loss of social affection for their neighbourhood. The trends in both areas are opposite to each other: when Emmen is improving the social emotional ties of its residents, the people living in Hoogvliet become less socially attached; and when these ties are on the up again in Hoogvliet, they decline in Emmen. However, the net result is an increase of social and physical attachment to the neighbourhood in both case studies. Emmen shows earlier sign of improvement, although Hoogvliet boast the biggest growth in neighbourhood attachment.

Figure 8.3 Bonding to the Neighbourhood in Emmen and Hoogvliet, 1999-2006



The different trends in neighbourhood attachment are even more pronounced when patterns of attachment are considered. Although the patterns fluctuate considerably over time, on average feelings of alienation are reduced in both case studies. Again opposite trends can be witnessed; while in 2000 Hoogvliet residents became more alienated from their neighbourhood, a large number of the residents in Emmen reduced their feelings of alienation. An interesting difference between both areas is the percentage of residents who established relative ties to their neighbourhood: in Emmen this group increased considerably over the years (from 6 to 37%), while in Hoogvliet a reduction of relative ties was visible, particularly after 2000. Apparently, the residents in Emmen became more satisfied with the place where they live and felt more at home over the years, without developing any specific affection for their neighbourhood, while in Hoogvliet feeling of placelessness developed more strongly. The Hoogvliet residents were less negative about the place where they live and felt more neutral towards their neighbourhood; it did not play an important role for their emotional wellbeing.

Figure 8.4 Patterns of Attachment in Emmen and Hoogvliet, 1999-2006



In spite of the larger increases in residents' attachment, both physically and socially, to their neighbourhood in Hoogvliet, Emmen Revisited appears more successful in increasing the strength of the emotional ties to the area where residents live. While Hoogvliet becomes a less negative and more neutral place to live for residents, Emmen is able to transform feelings of detachment and alienation into more affectionate feelings for the area, although not specifically tied to the neighbourhood. The residents in Emmen are happier with where they live and feel more at home.