



“DE SINGEL IS ROND”

THE FUTURE OF URBAN PLANNING:
GOING FROM LANDSCAPE TO SENSESCAPE

MASTER THESIS 2024

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Dear reader,

My personal interest in the subject of sensory embodiment and the city comes from my own sensory perception of the city. The senses play a great role in my life as a neurodivergent. I was intrigued by the limited research that is available regarding sensing the city. Besides the senses I have a great interest in urban blue-green space, so I combined the two and found my way to the subject of the sensory experience of the Singel, Utrecht.

With pride, I present you my master thesis 'De Singel is rond'. This thesis will be the final piece of work that will grant me my master's diploma in Urban Geography at the University of Utrecht. I have been studying at the faculty since my bachelor's degree in Sociale Geografie & Planologie and am very excited to complete my student life with this final assignment. I have thoroughly enjoyed my studies and found my passion within urban geography.

I would like to thank my boyfriend, parents, siblings, roommates and friends for supporting me throughout this thesis, which has been more than challenging for me. They have always let me know that they believe in me, which has been incredibly valuable.

Finally, I would like to thank my amazing supervisor, Elisa Fiore, who has been sticking with me through this thesis for the past year. The meetings and shared excitement regarding Monica Degen and the senses have continuously inspired me.

To all the readers of this thesis, enjoy!

ABSTRACT

This research examines and analyses the integration of sensory experiences in policy documents and promotional communications related to the Singel in Utrecht. This was done through a recorded video of the Singel and an eco-linguistic research analysis. The findings concluded that there is limited mention of the senses in the policy documents that were analysed. There were a few mentions of 'ervaring', but the senses were mostly mentioned in illustrations that were added to the document. The inclusion and consideration of the senses in policy are important as it will create higher-quality urban blue-green spaces (Hamilton, 2020). In contrast, sensory experience was more comprehensive in the promotional communications related to the Singel. The spoken word text taken from the video 'de Singel is rond' included multiple sensescapes and used illustrative language to describe the Singel. The promotional communication can be an inspiration, or an addition, to policy documents to create healthier urbanisation. Furthermore, it is recommended that municipalities invest in creative media companies that create commercials in regard to (renewed) urban green spaces. Lastly, it is recommended that further research looks into the relationship between sensuous governance and healthy urbanisation.

Keywords: *urban blue-green space; sensescapes; healthy urbanisation; sensuous governance.*

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CHAPTER ONE: INTRODUCTION

1.1 De Singel, Utrecht and your senses

An important approach to promoting a healthy urban environment is to prioritise the availability of green and blue spaces in urban areas. Studies have shown that these spaces improve the physical and mental health of their visitors (Ha, Kim, & With, 2022). In recent years the recreational behaviour has shifted. This has led to a change in the role that urban green spaces play. For the purpose of this paper, land and water elements, such as fountains, trees, bushes, rocks, grass, gravel and canals are defined as blue-green spaces.

Urban environments worldwide are multifaceted, continuously changing, and inherently challenging. According to Spano et al. (2023) urban planning should be tailored to their citizens. It results in the development and improvement of different styles of urban aesthetics that meet the needs and preferences of their inhabitants (Degen, 2008). This includes improvements to accessibility, walkability, inclusivity, quantity and overall quality of these spaces (Venter et al., 2021). It is important to consider the needs and preferences to heighten the attractiveness of urban blue-green spaces and therefore to foster potential benefits.

Acknowledging sensescapes and sensory perceptions when planning and designing urban blue-green spaces can optimise the quality of the designed space. Our senses shape our understanding and perception of a place. As one of the first, Porteous (1985) argued that there needs to be a return to more intimate sensing, 'sensuous geography'. This area aims to investigate the role of the five senses – touching, smelling, hearing, seeing, tasting – in geographical contexts (Rodaway, 1994). A way to create more personalized urban green spaces is to look further into our senses and the environment. The investigation of an environments' sensory characteristics results in a sensescape. By considering the role of all the senses, city officials and urban planners can develop areas that are not only aesthetically pleasing and personal landscapes but, additionally, provide emotionally and physically rewarding sensory experiences for residents and users (Ackerman, 1990; Degen, 2008; Spano et al., 2023; Venter et al., 2021).

The municipality of Utrecht has experienced an overall shift in quality regarding these mentioned assets. The local administration recognises that the development of healthy urbanisation (“gezonde verstedelijking”) is essential. To obtain healthy urbanisation, an increase in the quantity and quality of urban green spaces is required (Gemeente Utrecht, 2021, June 17). The south side of the Singel renovation, which was completed in 2020, has been a significant project and was developed to increase the quality of the historic public urban park. It has connected several parks and waterways, forming a significant 5200-metre greenway circling the city centre (shown in Image 1) (Ontdek Utrecht, n.d.). The redevelopment of the Singel is grounded in scientific research, which states that an increase in the quantity and quality of urban green spaces provides their users with a positive experience (Amano, Butt & Peh, 2018; Ha et al., 2022).

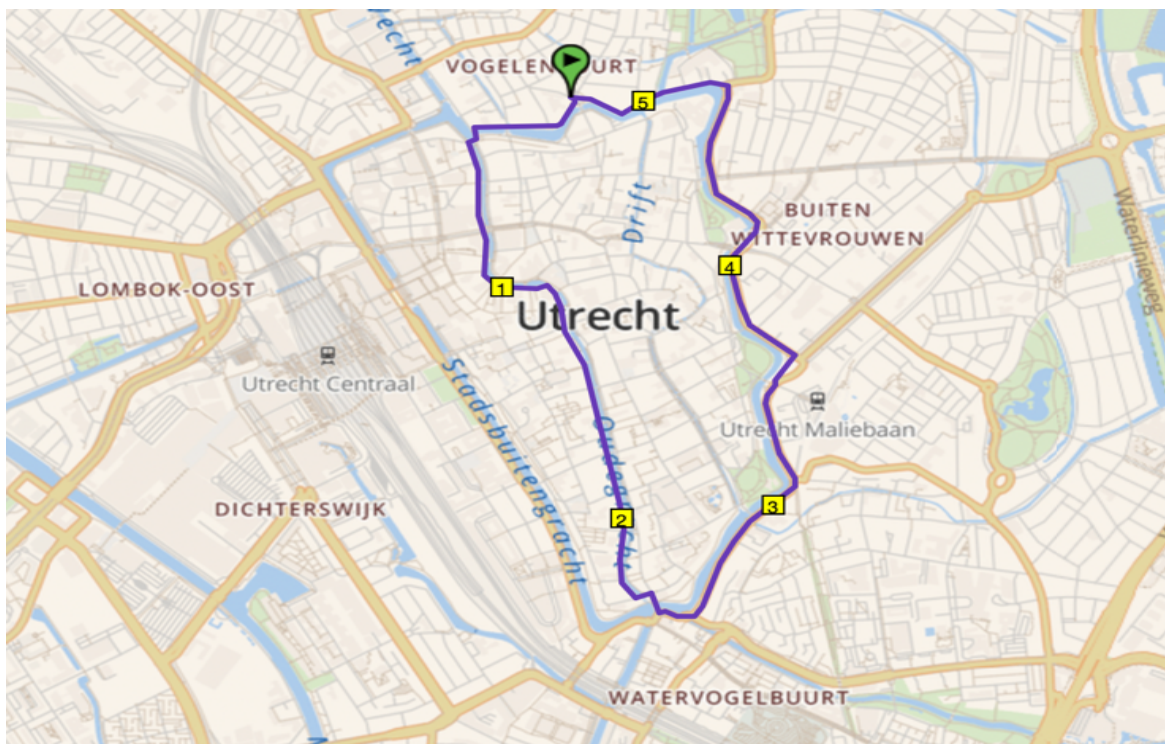


Image 1: The outline of the Singel. Source: Ontdek Utrecht, n.d.)

1.2 Aim of the study

This study aims to examine to what extent the policy documents and promotional communications of the City of Utrecht concerning the Singel incorporate sensory experience in their envisioning and branding of

the regenerated urban environment (Utrecht Marketing, 2020, September 12). It is crucial to broaden the understanding of sensory experiences within urban spaces to enhance the complete embodied experience and to heighten the quality of the urban blue-green space, resulting in an overall elevation of well-being of its users. A sensory rich urban blue-green spaces will contribute to healthy urbanisation. The study conducted will lead to more efficient and accurate policy planning in the future, involving all the senses, and will increase knowledge about the sensory perception of urban blue-green spaces.

The main research question to be addressed is;

To what extent is sensory experience integrated into the policy documents and promotional communication regarding the Singel in Utrecht?

The sub-questions will aid in addressing the main question;

1. How does the recorded sensescape of the Singel represent the sensory experiences of the urban blue-green space?
2. What specific sensory experiences and discourses are encountered within the urban blue-green spaces of the Singel, as found in policy documents and promotional communications?
3. Why do potential sensory experiences need to be included in policy documents and promotional communications?

1.3 Scientific relevance

The urban environment has a significant impact on the mental and physical well-being of the population (Amano, Butt & Peh, 2018). Urban green spaces, such as public parks, are a catalyst for social cohesion as they can make people feel more connected, generate public-private engagement and foster feelings of happiness (Folkert & Boonstra, 2017). Furthermore, the incorporation of blue-green spaces into urban planning has been found to enhance both mental and physical health (Vries et al., 2003; Maas et al.,

2009), reduce mortality by reducing circulatory deaths (Mitchell & Popham, 2008), increase levels of physical activity (Blair & Morris, 2009), and reduce maternal stress due to exposure to noise and air pollution (Dadvand et al., 2012).

Incorporating sensory features into urban planning allows for a more holistic approach to urban design. It recognises that people engage with their surroundings through different senses such as sight, sound, smell, touch and even taste (Cohen & Da Silva, 2010). By considering these sensory aspects, urban designers can create spaces that evoke positive emotions, promote relaxation and improve the overall quality of life for users. Further intention is to contribute to the body of work that aims to explore how the embodied experience of a space feels (Degen, 2012).

By neglecting the sensory aspect in policy making and urban planning, there is a missed opportunity to create truly immersive and enjoyable urban blue-green environments. Incorporating sensory considerations can lead to more inclusive and accessible designs that cater for a wide range of people, including those with sensory impairments.

Within scientific research and policy, it is essential to increase the use of multi-sensory approaches to reduce the ignorance of sensory experiences (Degen et al., 2008). There has been a development of knowledge about the use of the senses in the field of human geography over the last decade, but there is still a knowledge gap as the information remains niche (Rodaway, 2002). This thesis aims to reduce the knowledge and literature gaps concerning the inclusion of embodied sensory experiences in the design, policy and communication of urban blue-green spaces.

1.4 Societal relevance

Since the outbreak of the COVID-19 pandemic in 2020, the significance and value of blue-green space in urban areas has risen (Chen et al., 2022; Venter, et al., 2021; Zhang et al., 2022). This development has affected people's attitudes and behaviours towards the use of blue-green space in cities, including the city of Utrecht. The shift lies in the increased desire for nearby, inclusive, high-quality urban blue-green spaces (Gemeente Utrecht, 2021, 17 June).

The municipality of Utrecht aims to enhance the user experience of blue-green spaces in the city centre to improve the quality of life and health of the city. In line with Utrecht's policies and future visions, the quality and quantity of blue-green spaces have been identified as an important theme. Utrecht aims to create a greener and healthier city for its residents and users (Gemeente Utrecht, 2020, September 12). Over the past five years, the south side of the Singel in Utrecht has been renovated, not only due to deterioration, but simultaneously due to the change in attitudes and behaviour mentioned above (Gemeente Utrecht, 2021, June 17). According to one of the landscape architects from the city of Utrecht, new plans are being developed to renovate the northern side of the Singel. To create a unified park, rather than two separate sides, they consider it important to examine the already renovated south side of the Singel (personal communication, 26th July 2023). It will be interesting to investigate how the urban blue-green space of the south side of the Singel is experienced sensorily to contribute to the research of the plans for the northern side of the Singel. And additionally, whether this is in line with policy documents of the city of Utrecht.

1.5 Reading guide

Chapter One contained the introduction, research questions and the scientific and societal relevance of the subject. To answer the main and sub questions of this master thesis, a literature review will be shaped to outline the important concepts related to the senses within policy documents and municipal communications of the city of Utrecht (Chapter Two). In Chapter Three, the methodological choices are elaborated. In chapter Four the data will be analysed, and the discussion is included. The fifth and final chapter shall answer the research question and give recommendations.

CHAPTER TWO: LITERATURE REVIEW

The academic and theoretical literature relevant to this thesis will be examined in the chapter that follows.

The literature will help answer the imposed research questions.

2.1 Healthy urbanisation

2.1.1 Characteristics of a healthy city

Rapid urbanisation is an undeniable reality. It is projected that by 2025, 58% of the global population will live in urban areas (Kundu & Pandey, 2020). In order to improve urban design, cities are advised to

improve (public)transport systems, green and public spaces, air quality and physical activity

(World Health Organisation [WHO], 2020). The

WHO introduced a political project and multilevel movement in 2020 to guide cities in creating sustainable and healthy environments.

This rapport provides effective strategies and criteria for cities that aspire to become, or are working towards becoming, improving the health and well-being of their urban residents.

An interesting goal that is central in the report is “create physical and built environments that are

supportive to healthy and healthy choices”, meaning high-quality parks that stimulate physical and mental health. It is important to work towards a healthy city not only at a more accelerated pace, but additionally to ensure that the action domains are sustainable to maintain in the future (WHO, 2020).

Ultimately, the municipality of Utrecht has its own list of characteristics of a healthy environment that they deem as relevant. This list describes these characteristics of a healthy environment as; an

Table 1. Essential Healthy Cities action domains



Image 2: Essential Healthy Cities action domains.
Source: WHO, 2020.

urban space that encourages movement, social interaction, outdoor activities and sports. Additionally, the presence of greenery, water, silence and good air quality will provide a peaceful, silent, safe and tranquil space (Gemeente Utrecht, n.d.).

2.1.2 Calming environments

In this paragraph, the ideologies behind the calming effect and remedies of a natural, restorative environment will be discussed, as well as the importance of such effects. A space is considered restorative when it helps to relax and relieve mental or physical stress and fatigue (Thwaites, Heulleur & Simkins, 2005).

When researching blue-green spaces, the positive effects of encountering the environment are often immediately mentioned. Some of these positive aspects are a reduction of circulatory disease, reduction in stress, increase in positive moods and heightens feelings of connectedness (Dadvand et al., 2012; Folkert & Boonstra, 2017; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Ulrich et al., 1991). The study by Ulrich et al., (1991) mentions that well over 100 studies regarding recreational experience in urban areas found that stress mitigation is the primary benefit that is perceived by users when surrounded by blue-green space.

Another study by Ulrich (1984) mentions that hospital patients recovering from surgery have a more positive recovery period with shorter stays, less use of narcotic painkillers, and more favourable ratings from nurses, when they overlook green nature rather than buildings. Research by Kuo (2015) stated that spending time in gardens, parks, tree-lined streets and forested and agricultural lands has a positive effect on the overall well-being of a person who regularly visits these green areas (Alcock et al., 2014).

In the 19th century, architects like Olmsted and Vaux designed parks in growing Western cities, including the infamous Central Park in New York (Ebbensgaard, 2017). This park was created in response to the desire for more breathing spaces for residents, as industrialisation and urbanisation increased the pressure on liveability in the cities. Ebbensgaard (2017) states in his article that urban green spaces were meant to serve as “an escape from the city”.

Additionally, research by Wan, Sen & Choi (2020) shows that urban green spaces contribute to physical and psychological health. They can help reduce stress and improve social relationships. However, even when people are encouraged to visit urban parks, quality and quantity issues can limit the use of parks and therefore the positive effects. Therefore, it is crucial to pay attention to the perceived quality of these spaces to reach the envisaged outcomes (Wan, Sen & Choi, 2020).

Based on the aforementioned research, it can be declared that urban blue-green spaces can be categorized as restorative and therapeutic assets that enhance mental and physical health (White et al., 2016). They are essential in creating a happier and healthier city.

2.2 The senses in geography

The following section will begin by describing the history and relationship of the senses in urban geography before delving into the topic of sensescapes and sensory embodiment.

2.2.1 Sensuous geography

The concept of sensuous geography, also known as the *felt* geography, explores the everyday sensory experiences embedded in environments. It investigates the embodied and personal interactions we have with spaces and places (Rodaway, 1994). Rodaway (1994) further argues that the senses give us a greater understanding of space, place and time within a geographical context. The application of this geography can be found in a variety of environments and enables researchers to discover different deepening dimensions of experiences (López, 2019). An example, within the context of blue-green spaces, is walking through a forest, hearing the different sounds of animals, smelling flowers and trees, feeling the sun, wind and different textures of trees, tasting tea and apple-pie in the forest café and seeing all the different colours within the forest (López, 2019). This type of sensory stimulus can lead to the calming effect that natural landscapes offer. This research aims to expand on this field within geography, in order to increase our understanding of it.

2.2.2 The sensory turn in urban planning

The integration of sensory embodied experiences - a combination of sensory and spatial elements within a designed space that creates a human experience - within urban planning is a recent trend that received attention in the 1990's (Degen, Rose & Basdas, 2010). Howes (2006) described it as a 'sensory revolution' within social science, also known as, the sensory turn. The turn came after the industrial city, which was a city that was designed solely to maximize profit and neglected the well-being of its inhabitants (Antrop, 2004). It resulted an increase in noise, traffic jams, slums, air pollution and sanitation problems, causing people to moving away from the city, towards suburbs with more space and natural environments (Nagy & Hegedűs, 2016). Before the sensory turn, urban planners predominantly concentrated on visual aesthetics and functional aspects, neglecting the multisensory character of human experiences.

An example of an industrial city is Detroit, their main focus of urban planning was the automobile manufacturer Ford and the optimization of production (Águeda, 2009). This type of focus changed when the sensory turn came around. Urban geographers aimed to create a more holistic understanding of how people experienced their surroundings. Resulting in a transition from designing 'nature' to designing 'the sensation' of nature and challenging the dominant sight-centric sensory approach (Ebbengaard, 2017; Zardini, 2016). This transition indicated a greater focus on the creation of sensory experiences of nature to promote well-being in urban areas. Subsequently, the post-industrial city emerged. Edensor (2009) argues that the history of the senses in urban planning can be traced back to the early 20th century when theorists like Patrick Geddes highlighted that the choice in the kind of materials being used when shaping urban environments greatly depends on their sensory qualities.

Nowadays, urban geography increasingly recognises the role of the senses. A space turned into a place (Tuan, 1975). This led to the emergence of concepts such as, sensory urbanism, sensuous geography and the incorporation of sensory design principles to create more inclusive and attractive urban spaces. Palmese, Arribas & Altolín (2024) suggest that the role of the senses should be standardised and included within planning. This entails standing still and thinking about the space of the everyday that users try to work with an adjust to (Yuncu, Oner & Tuna Ultav, 2021).

An urban geographer that has made a significant contribution to this field through her research is Monica Degen. She writes on the sensory aspects of urban life and the role of emotions in shaping our experiences in cities. Her vision on urban planning goes beyond the planning of areas and dives deeper in the small details of the environment. Degen researches the sensory or sensorily engagement of people through qualitative research tools. She argues; *“The physicality of the city constantly interacts, supports and collides with our bodies”* (Degen et al., 2010, p. 60). Her work emphasizes the importance of considering the multisensory aspects of urban spaces and their impact on our well-being and sense of place. The concept of sensuous geography of place suggests that power relations are imbedded, exercised and resisted in public spaces. To understand these relations, we ought to explore public life as spatial-sensuous encounters (Degen, 2008). Degen views and examines urban public space through a prism of the senses, and by doing this she aims to create meaningful and sensorily pleasant urban environments.

2.3 The sensescape of urban blue-green spaces

In the upcoming paragraphs more scientific information will be gained about the embodied experiences people have in blue-green spaces, these are known as sensescapes. This refers to the sensory qualities of a place (Pink, 2008).

2.3.1 Sensescapes

Our senses make for us to be able to see, smell, touch, taste and hear the urban environment and its blue-green spaces (Holloway & Hubbert, 2014). These senses are also known as visual, olfactory, haptic, gustatory and auditory experiences that people can encounter while in any environment (Duppen & Spierings, 2013). When the senses and environment come together a sensescape is created. Bunkse (2012) defines a ‘sensescape’ as the multisensorial space which is distinguished, understood and valued by humans. The sensescape is an integration of a soundscape, smellscape, tastescape, touchscape and sightscape. It should be noted that senses are subjective experiences that can be differentiated according to impressions and values (Duppen & Spierings, 2013; Pink, 2006).

Even though the senses are inseparable, for analytical convenience they are separately introduced in the next section.

2.3.2 Sightscape

In this paragraph, the influence of visuals and aesthetics of blue-green space on the embodied experiences will be discussed. The most studied sense within urban geography and restorative landscape geography is sight. Extensive academic literature has shown that, overall, vision can have a positive effect on people's well-being (Bell, Hickman & Houghton, 2023; Jones, 2012). Gungor and Polat's (2018) research revealed that the visually aesthetic quality of the landscape contributes significantly to quality of life, they also stated that the quality of the landscape is explained in terms of visual quality, visual attractiveness, aesthetic quality, landscape preference, scenery quality, scenery value and aesthetic value. On top of that, Qiu, Jin & Scott (2021) argue that visual characteristics such as shape, colour, texture and topography can influence the perceived restorative environment.

Shortt, Rhynas & Holloway (2017) found that scenic views are associated with emotions such as tranquillity, gratitude, spirituality and a sense of home. This can be explained by the fact that they are associated with changes in colour, brightness, contrast and hue (Lengen, 2015; Mead, 2008). The colours of natural landscape are also associated with a sense of renewal and attractiveness (Lengen, 2015; Qui, Jin & Scott, 2021). In addition, academic studies have explored other specific qualities related to sight, such as the sight of trees swaying in the wind and waves rippling the water, which have a calming effect on people (Bell et al., 2015; Birch et al., 2020; Noszczyk et al., 2022). Severin et al. (2022) and Lengen (2015) discovered that reflections on water provide a sense of perspective and space, and that there is a fascination with finding patterns in puddles that dry up after rainfall. However, Lengen (2015) found in the same study that people with a mental disorder are more likely to be afraid of deep water, and therefore water harms their mood.

A balance between natural and cultural elements in a space will lead to a higher visual value, which will enhance the embodied experience. It is considered essential to maintain a balance between

physical and biological elements and man-made elements when designing a urban space (Gungor & Polat, 2018).

2.3.3 Smellscape

This section explores the influence of scent found in blue-green space, also known as nosenography, by creating a smellscape. Porteous was one of the first scientists that created the term 'smellscape' back in 1985, however only in recent decades there has been more attention for this type of sensory scape. Nosenography is the study of smells (Canniford, Riach & Hill, 2017), while a smellscape is the mapping of odours and looking into the relation between odour and environment. There are many ways in which odours can contribute to or disrupt our embodied experience of a blue-green space. The olfactory system, part of the brain that processes smell, is connected to many different parts; it can control your hunger, mood, memories and behaviour. Canniford et al., (2017) found how odours can make people feel more (un)connected to a space. Understanding the attributes of a smellscape can help determine positive and negative elements of an environment, which helps with creative future plans and designs (Xiao, Tait & Kang, 2018).

Smells are a fundamental aspect of a park. A smelly environment filled with a variety of natural scents indicated a strong and complex ecosystem (He et al., 2022). The presence of plants and flowers that emit pleasant fragrances can positively influence our embodied experiences of blue-green spaces (Franco, Shanahan & Fuller, 2017). The sense of smell is integral to the retrieval of memories, and therefore experiences in a park (Xiao et al., 2018). Trees and plants enhance air quality by absorbing pollution and producing oxygen. During spring, people may encounter the fragrance of freshly mowed grass and blooming flowers. As opposed to autumn being the time for aroma of damp soil after rainfall. Furthermore, each season introduces a unique set of scents that can give people a sense of vitality and connection with nature (López, 2019). A blue-green environment can be enriched by smells and odours, which adds depth and complexity to the sensory embodied experience of urban spaces.

However, the presence of unpleasant odours, such as from rubbish bins, traffic pollution or decaying natural elements, can harm the embodied experience of a blue-green space (Canniford et al., 2017). The fragrance of rotting trees and stagnant water can create a negative embodied experience and adds to the smellscape. Strong perfumes and food odours can also create an unpleasant experience for visitors to the urban blue-green space. There are some particular olfactory allergies, such as pollen and certain plant and flower scents, to which people may be allergic, leading to negative embodied experiences (Canniford et al., 2017).

With this in mind, scent should be taken into consideration more frequently when designing an urban blue-green space as it enhances our comprehension of cities, enriches our sensory experience and provides input for urban design (Xiao et al., 2018).

2.3.4 Soundscape

In this section, the influence of sounds of the blue-green space on the embodied experiences will be discussed. The definition of soundscape according to Pijanowski et al. (2011) is the collection of (all) sounds that come from landscapes.

Firstly, within soundscapes, some classifications provide context and help to quantify sounds found in landscapes. The three classifications are biophony, geophony, and anthrophony (Dein & Rüdiger, 2020; Pijanowski et al., 2011). Biophony relates to ecology, for example the sound of trees moving in the wind or birdsong. Geophony relates to the physical environment, including the sounds of rain or wind. It is known that nature sounds have a beneficial effect on human well-being (Abott, 2015). Specifically, enjoyable and soothing sounds such as rippling water and rustling leaves can lower levels of stress and anxiety, enhancing the positive influence of sound on the embodied experience of blue-green spaces (Ebbensgaard, 2017; Franco et al., 2017). Biophony and geophony enables a landscape to provide a restorative environment that promotes the overall wellbeing and relaxation of people who visit the space. Calming sounds, comforting and inviting landscapes create space for social interaction and connection.

Finally, the classification of sounds made by humans, such as car noise or speech, is referred to as anthrophony (Dein & Rüdissler, 2020). Anthrophony is often the category that causes noise pollution. Sounds that have an enormous negative impact on people are categorized as noise. These sounds include traffic, construction, loud music, and screaming (Palmese et al., 2024). Chronic noise can contribute to higher stress levels, helplessness, sleep disturbance, a decrease in social engagement, cardiovascular problems, memory problems and a shorter attention span (Franco et al., 2017). An often-found reason for people to visit (urban) parks is to find relief from city noise as these disruptive sounds lead to negative embodied experiences.

When designing an urban park, it is therefore essential to pay attention to the reduction of negative sounds and increase the quiet and natural sounds.

2.3.5 Touchscape

The following paragraph examines blue-green spaces and the embodied experience of touch and haptic movement. The touchscape refers to ever-reciprocating contact between our own body and the physical world, as described by Kabat-Zinn (2013). Additionally, activities such as playing sports, rhythm in which we walk and being pushed by people or the wind can also contribute to our sense of being touched (Borer, 2013)

According to Rodaway (1994), walking is a way of touching and perceiving space, extending beyond the touching of textured surfaces with one's fingers. Duppen & Spierings (2013) discussed the topic of ways of walking, where rhythm and pace can provide great insights into how people perceive and experience public space. Through the act of walking, one can discover a new city, as the pedestrian can follow his or her own path. Gibson's definition of touchscape goes further than physical contact with the outside world, but additionally considers the internally felt bodily state (López, 2019). Thus, the state of relaxation can be considered as touch. Sitting down, relaxing or playing outside are all considered part of a (personal) touchscape. With this definition in mind, climate then becomes a part of the touchscape as well. Where rain touches the body, so does heat and wind (López, 2019).

Borer (2013) mentions the role which the body plays in urban experiences. She further mentions that our bodies are often in embarrassingly close proximity to other bodies, from busy pavements to dense transport. This can occur in urban parks, particularly on a sunny day or when activities are planned in the park. However, the primary reason people go to urban parks is to escape the city and to take a break from the crowds.

To conclude, physical contact with blue-green spaces can be described as intentional bodily touch, such as touching a tree or walking on grass. However, many other elements such as climate are also part of our touchscape. Therefore, touch should be carefully considered when creating plans for urban park.

2.3.6 Tastescape

In this paragraph the tastescapes within urban green spaces is discussed. Taste can play an important role in sense of belonging to a space (Walmsley, 2018). However, taste is the hardest sense to comprehend as it is complexly objective, and it is difficult to distinguish as it cooperates closely with smell.

The tastescape of an urban environment is often tied together with many cultural and social elements and are often generalized. Su & Zhang (2020) discuss how heritage can be deeply rooted and imbedded in the tastescape of a region and attract tourism. Taste is often used for identifying certain cities or regions, regardless of if they are real or imagined stereotypes (Borer, 2013). For example, the tastescape in Italy consists of coffee, pasta and pizza, while the tastescape in New York consists of soft pretzels and bagels.

Morgan (2014) has noticed an increase in urban food production. The need for prioritising plant-based agriculture within the urban system through community-based initiatives such as community gardens, urban allotments, food forests and urban orchards has risen (Davis, 2021). If edible fruit trees are present in the environment, they contribute to the taste of the surroundings.

To conclude thusfar, considering all the senses in urban planning can stimulate inclusive and complex embodied experiences and create healthier, happier urban blue-green spaces.

2.3 Power of language in policies

Language is a powerful tool that can shape people's perceptions, discourse and attitudes of locations or situations. It acts as a frame, not only describing reality but rather helping construct it (Hajer, 2006). It is therefore important to consider it during this research.

2.3.1 Shaping discourses

In this research, the definition of discourse used is by Hajer (2006, p. 67). According to Hajer, discourse is 'an ensemble of ideas, concepts and categories through which meaning is given to social and physical phenomena, and which is produced and reproduced through an identifiable set of practices.'. Discourse is characterised by assumptions and knowledge claims that can have an influence on the behaviour of its actors as they move within the discourse. Language use can help generate an ideology or a desired discourse by creating associations and meanings around the use of a place (Simon, 2020). The use of emotive language, language that uses many adjectives and descriptive words, evoke emotional responses. There is also the use of pathos, where the writer (in this case the Municipality) wants the reader to feel connected with whatever is sold to them (Simon, 2020).

However, simultaneously, actors can shape the discourse in which they find themselves (Carstensen & Schmidt, 2015). Multiple discourses can co-exist, but if one of them is widely accepted, it can become institutionalized and infiltrate policies (Hajer, 2006). It is therefore worth researching to see if the senses are being mentioned within the policy documents, to determine if they are institutionalized at all. Understanding the power of language will help to emphasize the importance of including sensory experiences and paying attention to eco-linguistics in policy documents.

2.3.2 Gap within governance

The biggest actor that has control over the integration of trends, such as sensory embodiment, is governance. A category within governance that controls the environmental is, environmental

governance. This is a system that consists of laws and rules that manage the environment in all its aspects. In addition to environmental governance, you can find a category called sensuous governance. Sensuous governance, as defined by Hamilton (2020), refers to social institutions that shape and reshape subjects as conforming or breaking from recognized norms. Meaning, they establish the rules on what sensory activities are permissible and which are not. For instance, in public settings, this may involve prohibiting loud and disruptive behaviour (Plus, 2022). Hamilton (2020) aims to raise awareness of sensuous governance by bringing our sensory experience into language and legal consciousness and to align our bodies with the norms. He tried to include sensory experiences into policy, resulting in high-quality urban areas.

According to Heinrichs (2019) the multi-sensorial nature of people is disregarded within governance. Sensory experiences and embodied cognition are not systematically integrated in theoretical nor procedural policymaking. Heinrichs (2019) argues that addressing the weak points in (environmental) governance, related to the senses, will result in more inclusive and complex environments. To address this, there should be a collaborative effort to improve the awareness and integration of the embodied experience and sensory language in governance.

CHAPTER THREE: METHODOLOGY

In this chapter, the relevant methodology used for this thesis will be discussed. In section 3.1 the reasoning behind the location and overview of relevant research data will be displayed. In section 3.2 the concepts, methods and styles regarding the recorded sensory walk and the eco-linguistic critical discourse analysis are described. Furthermore, in section 3.3 the ethical implications will be discussed.

3.1 The Singel Utrecht as a case study

As an urban geographer who is highly interested in the quality and quantity of urban green space, there has always been a fascination with the park circling the inner-city centre of Utrecht. The selection and justification will be discussed in the following paragraph.

3.1.1 Background on the Singel

The Singel, Zoicherpark, and Stadsbuitengracht are all different names for the same 5,2-kilometer-long green park that surrounds the old inner city of Utrecht (Ontdek Utrecht, n.d.). The park has over 400 trees that date back to the very beginning of the park, making them more than 100-year-old trees (Schouten, 2020, September 12). As one of the oldest public parks in the Netherlands, it is labelled as a national monument. The park was designed by the well-known architect Jan David Zoicher around 1830 (Muis, 2020, September 14). It took him 40 years to complete, as confirmed by one of the architects of Utrecht (personal communications, 26 July 2023).

Zoicher created the Singel with a specific vision in mind. The width of the walking paths varied throughout, he is incorporating elevation differences and played with natural materials that produce sounds and he recognized the importance of greenery.



Image 3: The Manenburg 1978, as taken bij Fotodienst GAU. Source: The Utrecht Archives, 2024.

According to the Utrecht Archives the black and white image is taken between 1930 and 1940. The picture was taken by photographer F.F. van der Werf. It is the Lucasbolwerk garden.



Image 4: Lucasbolwerk garden, as taken bij F.F. van der Werf. Source: The Utrecht Archives.

In the 1970s, the first section of the Singel waterway was filled with dirt and converted into a road called the Catharijnabaan. What was once a quiet waterway had now been replaced with asphalt, concrete and vehicles. The Catharijnabaan underwent significant extensions over the years, and in 1977 it became known as the shortest highway in the Netherlands (Ontdek Utrecht, n.d.).



Image 5: Catharijnabaan in late 1990's. Source: Youtube

In 2002, after years of receiving significant criticism and backlash, the city of Utrecht imposed a referendum. The decision was made to restore the Singel and turn it back into blue space (Ontdek Utrecht, n.d.). However, it still took around seven years, until 2009, before the road was closed, and the first pieces of road were demolished. In 2016 the Singel was filled with water once again.



Image 6: Demolition of the Catharijnabaan in 2009. Source: YouTube

In 2024, after a major renovation completed in 2021, the south side of the Singel in Utrecht will serve as a relevant case study for urban geographers interested in sensory experience. This is due to the urban design, its unique characteristics and its innovative approach to creating a sensory-rich urban environment (Gemeente Utrecht, 2021, 17 June).



Image 7: Renewed Singel of Utrecht in 2024. Source: still taken from own recording.

The Singel is a historic canal that has been transformed into a vibrant urban blue- green space in recent years (Schouten, 2020, September 12). The design of the Singel aims to engage multiple senses, including sight, sound and touch. It features lush greenery, colourful flowers, and carefully selected plantings that create a visually appealing and ecologically well-balanced landscape (OKRA landschapsarchitecten, 2017). The canal's flowing water creates a soothing auditory element. In addition, the inclusion of tactile elements, such as benches, pathways and interactive installations, encourages physical engagement and touch. Ultimately, the Singel serves as an inspiring example for cities worldwide looking to enhance their urban blue-green spaces and promote a healthier, more sustainable urban environment.

3.2 Methods of analysis

3.2.1 Ethnographic videography

A research method that helps create a deeper understanding of sensory experiences in public urban blue-green spaces is ethnographic videography (Pink, 2007). Also, Paterson & Glass (2018) state that video production enhances urban research as it especially integrates the embodied experience. Visual data provides detailed insights into how individuals perceive and experience urban landscapes (Pink, 2006). By using video as a research tool, urban geographers can observe and analyze how people move through and engage with public parks, paying attention to details such as body language, facial expressions, sensory experiences and environmental sounds.

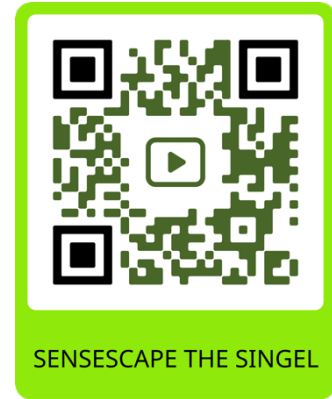
The work of Sarah Pink (2006) highlights the importance of including visual methods when trying to gain an understanding of urban blue-green spaces. However, it is argued that videography is too limited in capturing the rich sensory embodied experience that nature can bring. This is due to our inability to recognize sensations outside of our traditional senses (Paterson & Glass, 2018). Therefore, a second research method has been added. This research involves an eco-linguistics research analysis of policy documents and commercial communications by the municipality of Utrecht.

Through the use of video footage aspects of the data collection and analysis can be considered more integral. The video footage depicts one continuous shot of a walk that starts at the bridge near Hoog

Catharijna and ends at the large statue at Ledig Erf. In image you can see the route that was walked, in yellow.



Image 8: Route during the recorded sensescape. Source: Google Maps.



SCAN ME!
↻

There is a short introduction recorded to give the viewer context on place and time of the recording. The recording has been uploaded onto YouTube in 1080HD quality. It has been posted on private with the title 'Sensescape the Singel'. The video will be able to be accessed through the green qr-code that can be found on this page.

After data collection, the video was analyzed. This was done in a descriptive manner that considers each sense – hearing, sight, touch, taste and smell. The analysis includes a thorough description of the video. Through the addition of still images. transparency and a better understanding of context was created for the reader. There were no subjective descriptions and evaluations of 'possible' sensory embodied experiences. Only factual present elements were discussed, limited to the senses that were stimulated on the specific day, and only the elements as seen in the video.

3.2.2 Inductive Eco-linguistic Discourse Analysis

The analysis of data for this research involved the use of a research tool. This tool is an eco-linguistic discourse analysis that examined the environmental discourses and their ideology

concerning people and their environment. It considers the relationship between humans and the larger ecological system (Stibbe, 2015). It was an inductive, qualitative and interpretive method.

The aim was to find the ideological assumptions, patterns and weaknesses behind the words used in the text or speech (Blommaert & Bulcaen, 2000; Yuniawan et al., 2017). First patterns were observed, then an interpretation was developed and finally, a conclusion was drawn. According to Dash & Phil (2019), their perspective can be expressed by a quote from their article:

“Eco-linguistics strongly believes that people’s approach to languages, culture, and environment is formed by the stories they live by and language helps to tell and retell these stories and impact the beliefs.”

In essence, it tells people how to experience an environment and what kinds of feelings and values are connected to the space. To make people more aware of the beauty of nature and become part of the larger ecosystem, they need to be made more aware of the beauty and versatility of nature through language. This can be accomplished by informing the users how to experience and be a part of nature. The quote from Dash & Phil (2019) continues:

“It investigates the role of language in the development and possible solution of ecological and environmental problems (...) to develop linguistic theories which see humans not only as part of society, but also as part of the larger ecosystems that life depends on.”

The eco-linguistic research analysis tool examined the role of language. It was an interesting tool to use to reflect on the language used within the documentation regarding the Singel and identify communicational hiccups. This research examined the language and discourse found in policy documents and commercial information produced by the city of Utrecht and therefore aligns with its research tool.

3.2.3 Data collection of policy documents and communications

The policy documents and other forms of communication written by the city of Utrecht regarding the Singel were analysed to examine the language and discourses shaped by the municipality.

The analysis focused on documents and communications (Table 1), such as the YouTube video titled 'De Singel is rond', and the policy documents 'Omgevingsvisie Binnenstad Utrecht 2040', 'Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030', 'Zocher en singelgebied', among other relevant data (Gemeente Utrecht, 2021, June 17; Marketing Utrecht, 2020). If applicable and appropriate, the material was transcribed, hand colour-coded and analysed for both video and written formats.

To ensure a transparent, and visually interesting, analysis, still images from the videos and quotes from the commercial and policy documents were included. This data collection aimed to address the sub-question regarding the incentives and discourses proposed by the municipality of Utrecht in its communications on the Singel, Utrecht.

In the table below the relevant policy documents and communicational documents regarding the Singel are summarised. These documents were found through Google and Google Scholar searches, such as; “de Singel Utrecht”, “Omgevingsvisie Utrecht”, “parken Utrecht”, “toekomst Singelpark”, “plannen voor de Singel Utrecht”, “Zocherpark geschiedenis”, “De singel is rond” etc. The third and sixth documents were found as a reference in the second document. The fourth and fifth articles were located after searching on the website of the municipality of Utrecht. The complete analysed documents can be found in appendix one and two.

Table 1. Relevant policy documents for analysis.

	Name document	Format	By who	Published on	Page numbers
1.	Omgevingsvisie Binnenstad Utrecht 2040	Omgevingsvisie, policy document	Gemeente Utrecht	17/06/2021	8, 115 & 183
2.	Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030	Structuurplan, policy document	Gemeente Utrecht	08/03/2018	9 & 31
3.	Gezonde leefomgeving	Online article	Gemeente Utrecht	n.d.	n/a

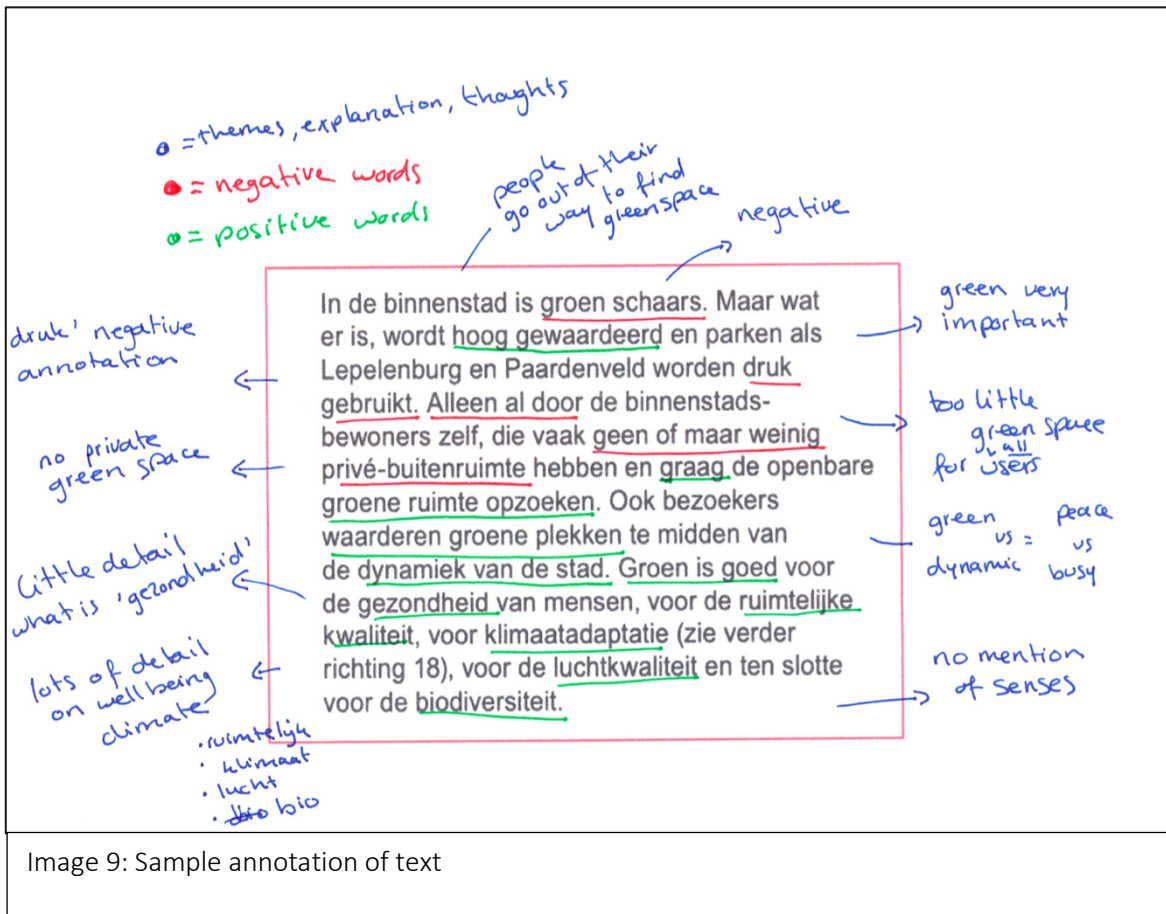
4.	Nieuwsbericht Gemeente Utrecht	Online news article	Gemeente Utrecht	12/09/2020	n/a
5.	De Singel is Rond	YouTube Video	Supersolid commissioned by Gemeente Utrecht	12/09/2020	n/a

3.2.4 Data-analysis

All documents were manually color-coded and analyzed. This was done through an eco-linguistic discourse analysis that looked for overlapping themes, patterns and structures within the texts and with existing theories explored in chapter two (Attride-Stirling, 2001). The coding was done with the use of keywords that are found in table 2. By doing this, the research can be considered more systematic and organized. The keywords stem from the literature review (chapter 2) which are embedded in scientific research.

Table 2. The keywords to support the eco-linguistic analysis.	
Discourses/themes	Keywords
Healthy urbanization	Healthy; urbanization; sustainable; blue-green spaces; social contact; urban parks; air quality; participation; nature, urban nature; environment;
Restorative space	Restorative; space; mental stress; physical stress; blue-green space; restorative; silence; positive; relax; stress-free; connectedness; positive mood; recovery; health;
Embodied experience/sensory experience	Embodied sensory experience; sensorily; senses; visual quality; attractiveness; movement; feelings; colors; smell; sounds; seeing; traffic; thermal comfort; calming; heat; cold; relax; movement; walking; at ease; taste; pollution; behavior; sunlight; attractive environment; safety; peace;

Image 9 provides a sample of the type of annotations that was made. The blue colour represents any themes, patterns, thoughts or explanations. The negative annotations regarding healthy urbanisation, restorative space and/or embodied experiences were highlighted in red and the positive annotation, regarding healthy urbanisation, restorative space and/or embodied experiences in green.



This method of inductive research maximizes the chances of discovering new and unexpected themes (Hennink, Hutter & Bailey, 2020). Chapter four and five will summarise the findings.

3.2.5 Ethical considerations

When conducting an ethnographic videography analysis and an eco-linguistic discourse analysis, it is necessary to take several ethical considerations into account to create transparency, privacy and validity.

To achieve transparency, researchers should provide a thorough and detailed description of the research design, methodology, data collection procedures and data analysis techniques used. This will enhance the accessibility and comprehensibility of the research and research process for both the academic community and the general public (Scheepers, Tobi & Boeije, 2016).

To ensure privacy and personal information, access to the YouTube link of the sensescape will be restricted to my supervisors at the University of Utrecht. On top of that the YouTube video will be

uploaded in 360p, rather than 1080HD or higher, resulting in the limitation of visibility of faces. Further privacy matters include the anonymity of one of the architects of Utrecht that has been spoken to. By following these ethical principles of transparency and privacy the research can be classified as ethical.

CHAPTER FOUR: ANALYSIS OF RESULTS

In the following section, the ecolinguistic discourse analysis will be done. In this analysis, multiple official documents of the municipality of Utrecht are analysed and will help answer the research question.

To what extent is sensory experience integrated into the policy documents and promotional communication regarding the Singel in Utrecht?

The relationship between use of language and experience of nature will be investigated, the aim is to get a better understanding of how language and experience are interconnected and influence each other.

4.1 Analysing the recorded sensescape

This section provides a comprehensive analysis of the sensescapes that are present at the Singel. The sensescape was recorded on a Wednesday morning on the 29th of February 2024. It was a rainy and windy day with a temperature of approximately 11 degrees Celsius.

The analysis focuses on five sensescapes that were found; sound-, sight-, smell-, touch- and tastescapes, and each sensescape analysis is done in chronological order. These sensescapes are based on the literature and theories from Chapter 2. The analysis of the recorded sensescape is relevant as it will answer the first sub-question; *'What specific sensory experiences and discourses are encountered within the urban blue-green spaces of the Singel, as found in the recorded sensescape?'*. The analysis of the policy documents is relevant as it will answer the second sub-questions; *'What specific sensory experiences and discourses are encountered within the urban blue-green spaces of the Singel, as found in policy documents and promotional communications?'*. Lastly, in the discussion section the interpretations and implications of the results are considered.

4.1.1 Soundscape

In every environment, there is a soundscape present. This includes all the sounds you do hear, but simultaneously all the sounds you do not hear. The soundscape you perceive is influenced by various

factors. Whether you are alone or with others, deaf or hearing, stressed or relaxed. Throughout the recorded video you can hear a few constant, continuous sounds. There are natural sounds, also categorized as biophonic and geophonic (Dien & Rüdissler, 2020); wind blowing (1:02), birds chirping (2:56), leaves blowing in the wind and the sound of rain. One also finds human-made sounds, categorized as anthrophony (Dien & Rüdissler, 2020); cars passing (9:52), people walking and talking (5:54; 13:30). These formulate the base of the soundscape that is present at the Singel and make up part of the total soundscape of the Singel. When not too quiet or too loud. A well-balanced soundscape can have a positive effect on health and welfare recovery (Engel et al., 2019).

The sounds that add variety to the base of the soundscape, are the sound of birds. According to Van Renterghem et al., (2020), birdsongs can offer relaxation to the users and visitors of park. The video captured the intricate communication between different bird breeds. When listening closely, one will hear a sudden change in birdsong at 4:25, creating an intriguing soundscape. The birdsongs are not the only pleasant sounds that are heard in the park, the constant sound of rain can have a calming effect on the visitors (Yu et al., 2016). Besides the birds you can also hear people running past due to the sound of gravel (8:36).

Although the sounds of nature are calming and pleasant, the presence of car noise plays a significant role in the soundscape. The continuous sounds of cars driving on the Catharijnabaan can be experienced as disruptive to the tranquillity of the restorative environment (Franco et al., 2017). It can lead to higher levels of stress and decrease in social engagement. The presence of the car noises fluctuates throughout the recorded soundscape. The noise from motorized vehicles can differentiate throughout the day, due to high numbers of traffic load during peak hours or less noise after dinner time (Ilya et al., 2019). As this soundscape was recorded at around 11 a.m., it is possible that the traffic noise was not at its peak.

Some individuals eliminate the natural soundscape in its totality and create their own by listening to their choice of entertainment through the use of headphones. Nevertheless, the soundscape of the Singel reflect a combination of natural tranquillity and noisy urban dynamics. It can be concluded that the

soundscape can be categorized as versatile, as there are many natural sounds present, simultaneously there are anthropic sounds present that can be experienced as disruptive (Palmese et al., 2024). It is up to the park users to either immerse themselves into the multi-layered soundscape or to create their own.

4.1.2 Sightscape

The sightscape is often the sense that gets the most attention within urban geography. The following section will dive into the visual landscape of the Singel as you virtually stroll through the park.

As seen in the still image (image 10) taken from the recording, one finds a broad light-coloured gravel path and, on either side, green grass. The park looks clean from rubbish and fairly empty. On the right side, one will find the Singel waterway (0:46). Due to the wind, you see the water rippling, creating an everchanging view of the water. The streetlights are new but are created to appear older.



Image 10. View of the lanterns at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

This can create the feeling of being in a time capsule and to (positively) disconnect you from the busy inner-city. Further along, you will find artworks (1:27 and 2:09) that are used to elevate the space, while

colorful flowers (1:38, 2:38) add color to the surroundings. The art tells a story and adds depth, imagination and complexity to the sightscape.



Image 11: Artwork at 1:27 found at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

Along the path you will encounter all kinds of historic elements, like a luxurious hotel Karel V (2:15), Manenburg or artworks. The bronze statue depicts a powerful woman that played a significant role in the demolition of the busy road, and vowed for the water to be brought back to Utrecht. These elements offer a glimpse into the past and enrich the sightscape. (2:15).



Image 12: Artwork at 2:09 found at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

As you move along the path, you come across a crossing, it gives the user of the park the choice to pick different pathways. There is a narrow path on the right side with a slight decline, a broad path that continues straight ahead, and a path that curves to the left. All pathways offer a different sensory experience.



Image 13: A three-way crossing at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

At 3:47 and at 7:57 it can be observed that some trees are not vertical, but rather horizontal. This was a deliberate design choice made by the architect Zocher to create a playful and unexpected environment, as well as facilitate the movement of wildlife (OKRA landschapsarchitecten, 2017, p. 8).



Image 14: Horizontal tree planted at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

The objective of Zocher was to create an urban park with varying elevation levels, water elements, bridges, curved paths (12:44) and trees that were purposefully planted sideways (7:59; 12:36).

Furthermore, at 4:21 a combination of a seating area and a docking area can be seen, which runs alongside a large part of the Singel. The natural-looking wooden dock fits seamlessly into the landscape and provides a welcoming spot for users of the park and water to sit down, unwind and relax.

At multiple points throughout the video (5:30;), you will find ‘Olifantenpaadjes’ of which the translation means paths created by elephants. They are created when people find the need for shortcuts and deviate from the original path (Omgevingspsycholoog, 2022, December 22). One of these paths can be seen at 4:58, on the right side of the path, near the bush, was made by people.



Image 15: Example of a trashcan found at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

There are trashcans conveniently placed along the path (0:26, 0:48, 2:56, 5:33, 5:52 etc.) creating opportunities for people to keep the park clean and add to the sightscape. A clean park helps in creating a safe space. Image 16 is a still taken from the video, at 7:29. It shows a hilly elevated landscape, with a slanted tree on the right side of the image. At the park there are two different paths with distinct textures.

The path on the left side of the image is narrower and made with dark sand, while the pathway on the right side of the image is broader and made with concrete and gravel.



Image 16: Hilly landscape at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

These different elements add to the sight-, smell-, sound- and touchscape as it looks different, it smells different as the smell of dirt is more present, it sounds different as the gravel makes more noise and it feels different under your feet. There is a completely different sensescape depending on which path you take.

As you approach Ledig Erf you will come across many blossom trees. The creamy white blossom on the trees is a striking contrast to the rather empty, leafless trees around them (Image 17). It can be perceived as the beginning of spring and a new season that is about to start. Overall, it was not particularly busy at the park on this day and could have had an influence the sightscape.



Image 17: The blossom trees found at the Singel. Source: still image taken from own recording.

4.1.3. Smellscape

On this day, the smellscape of the Singel was not very intriguing or complex. It is worth mentioning that smell can vary depending on the seasons and can greatly influence the smellscape of the park. During February, when this video was recorded, no flowers nor trees were blooming yet that could add to the smellscape. The most significant smell present was the smell of wet grass, with elements of rain and gravel and dirt adding to the scent.

Although, there were few distinct smells, the smellscape also consists of odours that are not (immediately) noticeable. For example, there was no odour of garbage, most likely due to the many garbage cans that are placed alongside the path. Other penetrating or overpowering smells were not experienced at the Singel. The smellscape of the Singel is likely to be considerably more profound and complex in the summer when there are more fragrant flowers and trees in bloom.

4.1.4 Touchscape

In this section the touchscape that can be seen in the recorded sensescape will be analysed. There is a large variety of elements present that all add to the touchscape, making it more complex.

To begin with, the drizzling rain provided a refreshing sensation on the skin and enhanced the overall sensory experiences, the touchscape, of the environment. In the park you can touch tree barks, the grass and the art. When recording the sensescape, the researcher walked at a relaxed, constant pace and just strolling through the park. It was not particularly busy at the park on this day. According to López (2019), the drizzling rain adds to the touchscape. This is crucial information for the touchscape, as encompasses the idea that the touchscape is not only physical touch, but also the movement of the body (Borer, 2013; Duppen & Spierings, 2013). The park users' body language appears to be in a relaxed state, and a casually strolling pace while taking in their surroundings.

A variety of walking rhythms can be observed, from people jogging through the park (1:39, 8:38) and others walking their dog, to couples (romantic or platonic) strolling through, as well as individuals enjoying a moment alone. At 9:23 you see a couple walking past while holding hands, this elevates their personal touchscape. The park includes an 'off-leash' area for dogs. Dog owners are seen walking with their pets (5:10, 8:15, 8:52; 9:20), and visitors may be able to pet the dogs and contribute to the touchscape of the park.

Zocher designed the park with features of elevation and pathwidth varieties. These elevation differences are still present and can be seen at 10:17. The slight decline followed by an incline may cause an increase in heart rate and breathing. This experience is personal to each individual's health and mobility, creating a distinct touchscape. When you walk further along, you see an intersection with large stones places alongside the path. These add elements of touch and visual aesthetics.

Besides the playfulness with evolution, there are also different paths one can choose that will feel different when walking. At 7:06 a more natural, narrow, sandy path is taken. The path is slippery because of the rain, creating a different touchscape under your feet. The curving path at 12:34 is inviting and can create curiosity for what can be found around the corner.

Overall, the touchscape of the Singel in Utrecht can be considered complex and inclusive.

4.1.5 Tastescape

During the observation period and recording of the sensescape at the Singel, no food vendors or fruit trees were present at the park (Davis, 2021). This results in a lack of (possible) taste experiences and therefore a lack of tastescape. Furthermore, none of the park visitors seem to be consuming any food or beverages, which also resulted in a lack of personal taste experiences. At this time in February 2024, the tastescape of the Singel park could be considered non-existent.

To conclude, through the use of videography, it could be stated that there are complex, inclusive and broad sound-, sight- and touchscapes experienced at the (recorded) urban blue-green space the Singel. Yet, the sensory experience of the smell- and tastescape was significantly less existent, or present, on this day in February 2024.

4.2 Analysing the policy documents

The upcoming sections will highlight any references to senses and sensescapes in order to determine the extent to which policy documents include them. In addition, to gain a better understanding of the relationship between language use and experiences of nature, the relationship between the two will be explored.

4.2.1 Sensescapes and discourses

During the analysis of the policy documents, it was clear that sensescapes and embodied experiences were hardly directly included in the written text. The 'Omgevingsvisie Binnenstad Utrecht 2040' indirectly referred to the senses by describing the changes that would be made to the blue-green urban space to create a more pleasant stay. There is a mention of thermal comfort, and therefore the touchscape, by including the presence of shadows to offer a more pleasant environment.

“In 2040 zijn er meer hete dagen, maar ook meer hevige buien. Doordat er meer groen is dan in 2021 en minder verharding, kan water beter worden opgevangen. Bomen nemen

dit water op en zorgen voor schaduw. Dit maakt de binnenstad klimaat-robuster en voegt tegelijkertijd iets toe aan de verblijfskwaliteit.” – page 8

The touchscape and the sightscape are referred to later in the text. The accessibility of urban blue-green spaces has been improved by the installation of new bridges. This improves the touchscape for people with and without mobility issues, as well as increasing the availability of green space, which contributes to creating healthier cities. The policy text briefly mentions 'the experience'.

“Ook over de singel liggen een paar nieuwe parkbruggen, waardoor mensen uit de omliggende wijken op een comfortabele manier naar de binnenstad kunnen lopen en die het gebruik en de beleving van het singelpark verbeteren.” – page 8

The 'Omgevingsvisie Binnenstad Utrecht 2040' emphasizes the value of urban green spaces for users and citizens of the city of Utrecht. The text mentions the touchscape, highlighting the inviting nature of green spaces for movement and social encounter. Additionally, the sightscape is discussed, noting that the sight of blue-green spaces can contribute to people's relaxation.

“De gezondheid van mensen is op verschillende manieren gebaat bij groen. Groen nodigt uit tot bewegen en ontmoeten in de buitenlucht. Ook heeft het zicht op groen en water een ontspannende (soms zelfs troostende) werking en helpt groen mensen bij het herstel van fysieke of emotionele tegenslagen (...) Er zijn verrassende binnentuinen bijgekomen, waar je overdag doorheen kan lopen of even kan gaan zitten.” page 115

The municipality of Utrecht acknowledges the positive effects of urban blue-green spaces and the importance of providing areas for relaxation within them. However, the document outlining the future vision of the Singel does not directly mention the senses and sensescape. It is important to include this

aspect to fully consider the experience of visitors to the area. Further analysis notes can be found in Appendix two.



Image 18. Infographic 'Actualisatie groenstructuurplan 2017-2030'. Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2018

However, the 'Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030' document contains more traces of sensory experiences. Notably, the text includes more illustrations that help to visualize the different sensory experiences that can be explored in urban blue-green spaces. For example, image 18 and image 19 includes the soundscape, touchscape, sightscape, and tastescape, but does not include the smellscape.

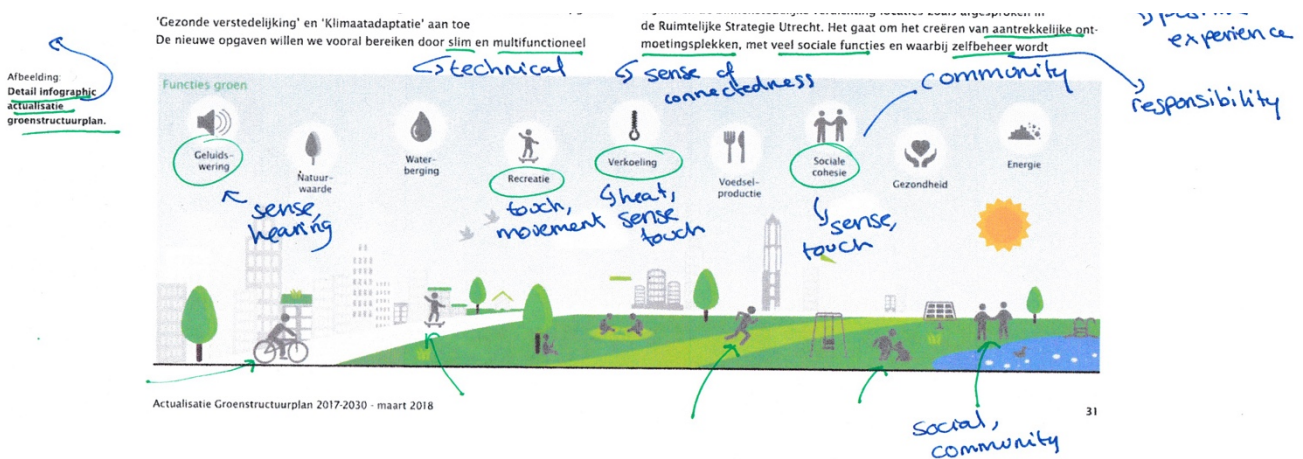


Image 19. Infographic 'Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017 – 2030'. Source: Gemeente Utrecht, 2018

On page 31, the policy documents state their aim to create attractive meeting spaces with an emphasis on movement and relaxation.

“Het gaat om het creëren van aantrekkelijke ontmoetingsplekken, met veel sociale functies en waarbij zelfbeheer wordt gestimuleerd en een fijnmazig groen netwerk van routes voor beweging en ontspanning. We versterken de ecosystemen en benutten die ook voor luchtzuivering en voorkomen van geluidhinder.” - page 31

Additionally, they aim to strengthen existing ecosystems, improve air quality, and reduce noise. The whole sensescape is considered in relation to this last point on page 31. The language regarding urban green space is positive, as they consider the power that urban green space can have on the population.

4.2.2 Use of language

The text presents a future vision of sustainability and environmental resilience, with a focus on urban planning, climate adaptation, and ecological restoration. The municipality emphasizes the interplay between nature, history, culture, and personal narratives within an urban context. The discourse promoted by the municipality is centred on the idea of being able to relax in an urban blue-green space. The municipality mentions that you can use the urban blue-green space as a place to meet socially, walk, run and even skateboard. Official policy documents express pride and see opportunities in the upcoming urban blue-green space. Examples of this can be found within the policy documents;

“De kwaliteit van groen en blauw is een kans voor het goede vestigingsklimaat van Utrecht.”

“Groen en blauw inzetten voor de verbetering van de ruimtelijke en sociale kwaliteiten van de stad “

“Er zijn verrassende binnentuinen bijgekomen, waar je overdag doorheen kan lopen of even kan gaan zitten. “

“Utrecht kiest ervoor, bestaand groen uit te breiden en nieuwe groene plekken in te richten, passend bij de schaal, functie en ecologische eigenschappen van de ruimte.”

It is notable that the municipality makes use of the words ‘groen’ and ‘blauw’ creating a very visual and sensory element within the policy documents. Furthermore, the pride of urban blue-green space is enticing, as seen in the previously mentioned quotes taken from policy documents. The description of the park shows the inclusion of sensuous governance, like Hamilton (2020) described. It shows that the municipality considers the availability, quality, and quantity of blue-green spaces essential in creating a healthy urban environment. These discourses are portrayed to let people know how they can make use of the renewed public space. Discourses are a powerful tool to help stimulate the use of public parks.

The policy documents mostly contain indirect references to the sound-, sight-, taste, touch- and smellscapes. Yet, the illustration helps with the direct mention of the sensory scapes. Therefore, it can be concluded that the municipality should include more infographics and illustrations when trying to include the senses more.

4.3 Analysing promotional communication

The upcoming sections will highlight any references to senses and sensescapes to determine the extent to which promotional communication includes them. In addition, to gain a better understanding of the relationship between language use and experiences of nature, the relationship between the two has been explored.

4.3.1 Spoken word

A video commissioned by the municipality of Utrecht features a poetic text written by spoken-word artist Tom Strik, which can be found in appendix one.

The sense of storytelling is the first characteristic of the text that catches one's attention. The text is structured into paragraphs, each consisting of two sentences, and it is written in Dutch. There is some repetition at the beginning and end of the text, creating a repetitive moment. The content refers to the

past, present and future experiences that can be found at the Singel. The text articulates the important and versatile role that urban blue-green space plays as a place for connection and personal experiences.

“Binnen een paar stappen ben je gevluht van de drukte. Een uniek stuk rust dat onze Binnenstad omarmt”

The spoken text begins by highlighting the need to escape the city within a few steps, creating a restorative space discourse, while the term ‘omarmt’ refers to the sensescape of touch. Tom suggests that the hustle and bustle of the inner city is something you need to be able to escape from. He also makes a mention of the previous role of the Singel, the highway, as discussed in the previous chapter. It has now been resorted to its original state as a waterway. This is due to the collective effort of the Utrecht citizens.

“Gedempte straten worden weer water en dat doen we samen.”

Further along the poetry, the sense of renewal and harmony with **nature** is mentioned. The references to watching the sunset and sunrise suggest a peaceful atmosphere and effectively addresses the sightscape.

“De ideale plek om uit te brakken na een avond goed stappen. De zon zien opkomen en zien ondergaan, ik heb dat vaak genoeg gedaan “

The choice of words reflects how the municipality recognizes the importance of an ‘escape’ from the city and to have an area where one can see the sun rise and fall. The text focuses on reminiscing and a personal significance to the city of Utrecht. There are many emotions to be found within the text that highlight solitude, reflection and community.

“Vroeger toen het nog kon naar de markt op het Paardenveld. Naar nu, oevers vol groen “

Compared to the policy documents, this text has a greater emphasis on history, culture, and personal dimensions. It aims to evoke nostalgia, a sense of community, and individual experiences within the urban landscape. The senses are mentioned sporadically in different contexts, and the concept of embodied experience is introduced in the context of changes in urbanization and seasons. There is a focus on visual perception and the sightscape. For example, the observation of the banks having turned onto green vegetation and seeing the changes in the surrounding environment over time.

“Je ziet het verstrijken van de tijd, de jaargetijden, de groeiende wijken. Vanuit het water is het zo divers met elke meter een nieuwe omgeving en beleving”

Additionally, the text suggests a theme of community through the sharing of emotional stories and interactions. The Singel's urban blue-green space functions as a central point and catalyst for these various activities and social interactions. The importance of social interaction within the park is repeatedly suggested highlighting the range of emotions that can be experienced there, including feelings of security, love and community.

“We kunnen varen en rennen, delen verhalen en kennis. Een plek om te ontmoeten, relaties te verbreken of juist om liefde te delen”

The text evokes this sense of love and community by describing them. It mentions various ways to experience the park, such as viewing it from a boat or running through the urban blue-green space. The text suggests that there are multiple ways to enjoy the park and engage the senses at Singel.

To conclude, the main themes are the connection with nature and the city. The word choices and poetry create this immersive historic and sensory experience of the blue-green space. There were several

mentions of sensory-embodied experiences. The spoken word text mostly included the touch- and sightscape during their storytelling and left the mentioning of the taste, sounds and smell- scapes behind.

4.4 Sub-conclusions

This section of the results chapter provides answers to the sub-questions. The answers are based on the analysis in combination with the literary review. It will not be able to generalise the answers to the questions as it is specified to the Singel, Utrecht.

4.4.1 Answer to sub-question one;

The first sub-question was;

What specific sensory experiences and discourses are encountered within the urban blue-green spaces of the Singel, as found in the recorded sensescape?

The specific sensory experiences and discourses found within the recorded urban blue-green space of the Singel are divided into five sensory landscapes. There are the sound-, visual-, smell-, touch- and tastescapes.

Firstly, the soundscape of the Singel can be categorised as both disruptive and restorative. This is due to the constant anthropic sounds of cars, and other loud sounds made by humans. The presence of biophonic and geophonic sounds, birdsong, blowing of the wind, sound of water and rustling of leaves, is constant and continuous creating a restorative blue-green space.

Secondly, there is a wide range of variety regarding the visualscape of the Singel. It has mostly positive elements. The grass is green, minimal rubbish, there are many trees present, the waterway is highly visible and there are intriguing, playful elements added by architect Zocher (OKRA landschapsarchitecten, 2017). A negative element within the sightscape is the busy road of the Catharijnebaan, however, there is a balance between physical, biological elements and man-made elements (Gungor & Polat, 2018).

Thirdly, there were no distinctive smells, creating a rather pleasant but not profound smellscape.

Furthermore, the touchscape of the Singel has a large variety of elements. There are physical elements, such as being able to touch tree barks, the grass and the art that can be seen at the beginning of the recorded video. Movement of the body is also considered as part of the touchscape (Borer, 2013; Duppen & Spierings, 2013). Zocher designed the park with elevation features, which can lead to an increase in heart rate and tensing of muscles, which add to the touchscape of the environment.

Lastly, there was a barely existent tastescape present at the Singel. There were no food vendors nor fruit trees (Davis, 2021). The visitors were not seen with food or beverages.

The sensory scapes that were found through the recorded sensescape were the touch-, sounds- and sightscares. However, the two sensory scapes that were greatly absent were the smell- and tastescapes.

4.4.2 Answer to sub-question two;

The second sub-question was;

What specific sensory experiences and discourses are encountered within the urban blue-green spaces of the Singel, as found in policy documents and promotional communications?

There was a significant gap found between the mentioned sensory experiences as found in the promotional communications and those found in the policy documents. This suggests that the policy documents of the municipality of Utrecht lack a sensuous approach to governance (Hamilton, 2020). The text analysis revealed few mentions of the term 'experience' and buzzwords such as 'blauw' and 'groen'. There are some quotes found in the policy documents that portray a discourse of relaxation. However, there were no direct references to sensory experiences found in the policy documents.

Per contra, it was interesting to see that the illustrations in the policy document 'Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030' did refer to sensory experiences. The simplicity of the illustrations helped. Therefore, it can be suggested that illustrations can be a valuable asset in policy documents when trying to include the senses. The eco-linguistic analysis revealed that the availability of urban blue-green space is highly valued by the municipality of Utrecht. The use of positive wording showed direct respect

and virtue towards urban blue-green space. Moreover, it is stated that the municipality has allocated a significant portion of their means and policies to the quantity and quality of its blue-green spaces.

On the other hand, the promotional communication of the Singel makes great mention the sensory experiences, particularly in the spoken word text of 'de Singel is rond'. An eco-linguistic analysis reveals the city's pride in its blue-green spaces. Examples are, 'de ideal plek', 'een nieuwe omgeving en beleving' and 'gedempte straten'. These quotes represent the importance, value and sensory experience of the blue-green space. The poetry, the reminiscing, and the different perspectives (from water or land) of the Singel is more visualizing for the reader and are detailed described discourses.

4.4.3 Answer to sub-questions three;

The third sub-question was;

Why do potential sensory experiences need to be included in policy documents and promotional communications?

Potential sensory experiences are needed within policy documents and promotional communication because they create more inclusive and complex urban environments (Heinrichs, 2019). These urban environments will, in turn, help increase the overall quality of urban blue-green spaces and therefore create healthy urbanisation. Furthermore, including potential sensory experiences will ensure inclusivity of all individuals and create more equality.

Additionally, language and the way of describing (urban) nature and talking about nature have a large effect on people's perceptions of urban blue-green space and its significance in urban areas (Simon, 2020). It is essential to inform people how to experience environments for them to feel connected to a space (Dash & Phil, 2019). Specifically, policy documents should include sensuous governance. Sensuous governance is the inclusion of the senses in urban planning and policy-making (Hamilton, 2020). When the senses are consistently included in policy documents and promotional communications it can lead to a common discourse, resulting in the institutionalization of high-quality urban blue-green spaces, which will lead to healthy urbanisation (Hamilton,2020). And high-quality urban blue-green spaces will lead to

less mental health problems and better physical health of urban park visitors (Amano, Butt & Peh, 2018). Therefore, it can be concluded that it is essential to include the senses into policy documents and promotional communications.

4.5 Discussion

In the discussion section, the results found in the previous chapter will be interpreted and explained.

4.5.1 Key findings and interpretations

The research aim was to investigate to what extent sensory experience is integrating into policy documents and promotional communications regarding the Singel in Utrecht.

There was an expectation to find some mention of the senses within the policy documents and was rather shocked when these seemed to be barely present at all. The limited research done on sensory experience within urban nature was intriguing as well.

One of the findings in the research results was the very enriched sightscape, touchscape and soundscape that was found through the recording of the Singel. There was a great lack and insignificance of the smellscape and tastescape at the Singel. Because of this gap, it can be said that there is still room for improvement in these sections of the sensory experience to enrich the park further and heighten the quality and inclusivity of the park.

Furthermore, another key finding was the ultimate lack of sensory mentions within the policy documents that were researched. It can be concluded that there is a significant gap between the recorded video and the policy document. Moreover, within the promotional communications creative ways of mentioning and involving the senses were found. Namely, through the format of spoken word.

Lastly, the gap between promotional communications and the recorded sensescape appears narrower compared to the gap between policy and the recorded video.

So, how can these findings be interpreted? Based on the research and results it can be understood that there appears to be new insight. There seems to be a relationship between sensuous

governance and healthy urbanisation. The inclusion of sensory experience in policy can help with the creation of healthy cities. Understanding the power of high-quality sensescapes can lead to high-quality urban blue-green spaces. High-quality blue-green spaces are important for urban areas as these can lead to a decrease of mental health problems and an increase in physical health among park users (Amano, Butt & Peh, 2018; Dadvand et al., 2012; Maas et al., 2009; Mitchell & Popham, 2008; Vries et al., 2003). And, as the gap between the experiences of sensory experience at the Singel and the mention of the senses in the policy is significant, it can be said that healthy urbanisation in the city of Utrecht has room for growth. Healthy urbanisation is important to the municipality of Utrecht as they have a list of characteristics that they want their city to meet. This list includes urban space that encourages movement, social interaction, outdoor activities and the presence of greenery and silence on top of providing a safe, peaceful and tranquil space (Gemeente Utrecht, n.d.; WHO, 2020). By ensuring sensuous governance, these characteristics can be met (Hamilton, 2020).

However, it is important to consider alternative possibilities and reasons for the exclusion of sensory experiences in policy documents. A possibility is that the senses are subjective and therefore do not belong in policy documents, as these are to inform about detailed and objective urban plans. In this case, it is understandable that the promotional communications include a higher rate of sensory experiences to support and add to the objective policy plans.

4.5.2. Limitations

The completed research did encounter a few limitations.

The first and foremost limitation was found within the research method. The recorded sensescape was a momentary representation of the urban blue-green space the Singel (Scheepers et al., 2016). It was a single recording that was taken on the 29th of February 2024, so the data and results taken from this video cannot be generalized. Furthermore, it is important to understand that this research does not analyse or consider the effect of seasonal changes on the sensory experience of place. Further research on the effect of seasons on sensescapes needs to be recorded and analysed to gain a deeper

understanding. It is therefore suggested to conduct longitudinal research where seasonal changes are documented.

The second limitation was also identified within the research method. The recorded sensescape was recorded and analysed by the researcher, which introduced unintentional subjectivity and bias into the recording (Hennink et al., 2020). For further research, it is recommended that a focus group that will undergo a sensory walk through an urban blue-green space. Through this objective sensory walk, more accurate and versatile sensory experiences can be recorded.

Despite the limitations the research still has value as it has helped narrow the knowledge gap regarding the integration of sensory experiences within policy documents of urban blue-green spaces.

CHAPTER FIVE: CONCLUSION

5.1 Conclusion to the research question

This study has found an answer to the research questions;

To what extent is sensory experience integrated into the policy documents and promotional communication regarding the Singel in Utrecht?

Based on the research and results it can be concluded that there is limited mention of the senses in policy documents. In the text of the policy documents there are a few mentions of words, such as 'beleving' and 'ervaring', nevertheless it fails to fully capture the importance of sensory experience. However, there are some illustrations found in the policy document 'Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030'. The images included in the policy documents are valuable, but they do not compensate for the lack of attention given to the senses. These illustrations do portray the sensescapes of touch, sound, sight and taste. The only sensescape that was excluded from the illustrations was the smellscape. This is a sensory experience that the municipality of Utrecht can pay more attention to.

In the promotional communication regarding the Singel in Utrecht the integration of sensory experience is more adequate and present. The spoken-word that was taken from the video 'de singel is rond' included many of the senses and used illustrative language to describe what it is like to experience the renewed Singelpark.

It is important to include all the sensescapes, the touch-, taste-, sound-, sight- and smellscape, in policy documents and promotional communications, as this will heighten the quality of urban blue-green spaces. When the quality of urban blue-green spaces is high, the mental and physical health of the park users improves as well. The improvement of the mental and physical health is part of the 'healthy urbanization' trend that the municipality of Utrecht is participating in. It is therefore essential for the senses to be more including into policy making, as this will help create a happier and healthier city for all.

5.2 Recommendations

The findings of this research can help create high-quality urban green spaces. This is because there is a better understanding of the importance of including sensory experience in policy documents and promotional communications. Based on the sub-conclusions and the discussion, it is suggested to include more illustrations in policy documents as these tend to integrate the senses easily.

Furthermore, it is recommended for municipalities to invest in creative media companies that will help create commercials of (renewed) urban blue-green spaces as these can be of high-value in addition to policy documents regarding the (renewed) urban blue-green spaces.

Moreover, visitors to urban blue-green spaces should be encouraged to use their senses. This could be done through signage, such as, 'feel the trees' or 'listen to the wind and birds'. By doing this, you make the users of the urban parks more aware of their senses.

Lastly, further research regarding sensuous geography, sense geography and sensory experiences within policy is recommended to help understand the importance of incorporating sensory experiences in these documents and to contribute to healthy urbanisation.

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APPENDIX:

Appendix 1: De Singel is rond, spoken-word.

“Binnen een paar stappen ben je gevluht van de drukte.

Een uniek stuk rust dat onze binnenstad omarmt.

Wij hebben geschiedenis geschreven.

Gedempte straten worden weer water en dat doen we samen.

Ik weet het nog goed: 's ochtends vanuit de Zeven Steegjes een rondje schaatsen in m'n eentje.

De ideale plek om uit te brakken na een avond goed stappen.

De zon zien opkomen en zien ondergaan, ik heb dat vaak genoeg gedaan.

Vroeger toen het nog kon naar de markt op het Paardenveld.

Naar nu, oevers vol groen.

De dagelijkse hardlooprondje.

Een rondje singel is een vast begrip.

En tijdens het lopen zie ik de geschiedenis.

Je ziet het verstrijken van de tijd, de jaargetijden, de groeiende wijken.

Vanuit het water is het zo divers met elke meter een nieuwe omgeving en beleving.

We kunnen varen en rennen, delen verhalen en kennis.

Een plek om te ontmoeten, relaties te verbreken of juist om liefde te delen.

De Stadsbuitengracht.

Een uniek stuk rust dat onze binnenstad omarmt waarmee Utrechtse historie is thuisgebracht.

De singel is rond.”

Appendix 2: All analyzed documents

rhythm in reading, poetry

always closeby
something to run from
sense

Binnen een paar stappen ben je gevlucht van de drukke.
 Een uniek stuk rust dat onze binnenstad omarmt.
 ↳ love, community ↳ loving, sense

Wij hebben geschiedenis geschreven. ↳ history
 Gedempte straten worden weer water en dat doen we samen. ↳ community

Ik weet het nog goed: 's ochtends vanuit de Zeven Steegjes
 een rondje schaatsen in m'n eentje. ↳ sense

De ideale plek om uit te brakken na een avond goed stappen.
 De zon zien opkomen en zien ondergaan, ik heb dat vaak genoeg gedaan.
 ↳ sense, seasons change ↳ come back

Vroeger toen het nog kon naar de markt op het Paardenveld.
 Naar nu, oevers vol groen. ↳ what has been ↳ sense, green

De dagelijkse hardlooprondje. ↳ movement, sense
 ← Een rondje singel is een vast begrip. ↳ community, everyone knows

En tijdens het lopen zie ik de geschiedenis. ↳ history
 ↳ sense

Je ziet het verstrijken van de tijd, de jaargetijden, de groeierende wijken.
 Vanuit het water is het zo divers met elke meter een nieuwe omgeving en beleving.
 ↳ nature ↳ changing environment !!! ...

We kunnen varen en rennen, delen verhalen en kennis. ↳ community
 Een plek om te ontmoeten, relaties te verbreken of juist om liefde te delen.
 ↳ share emotions

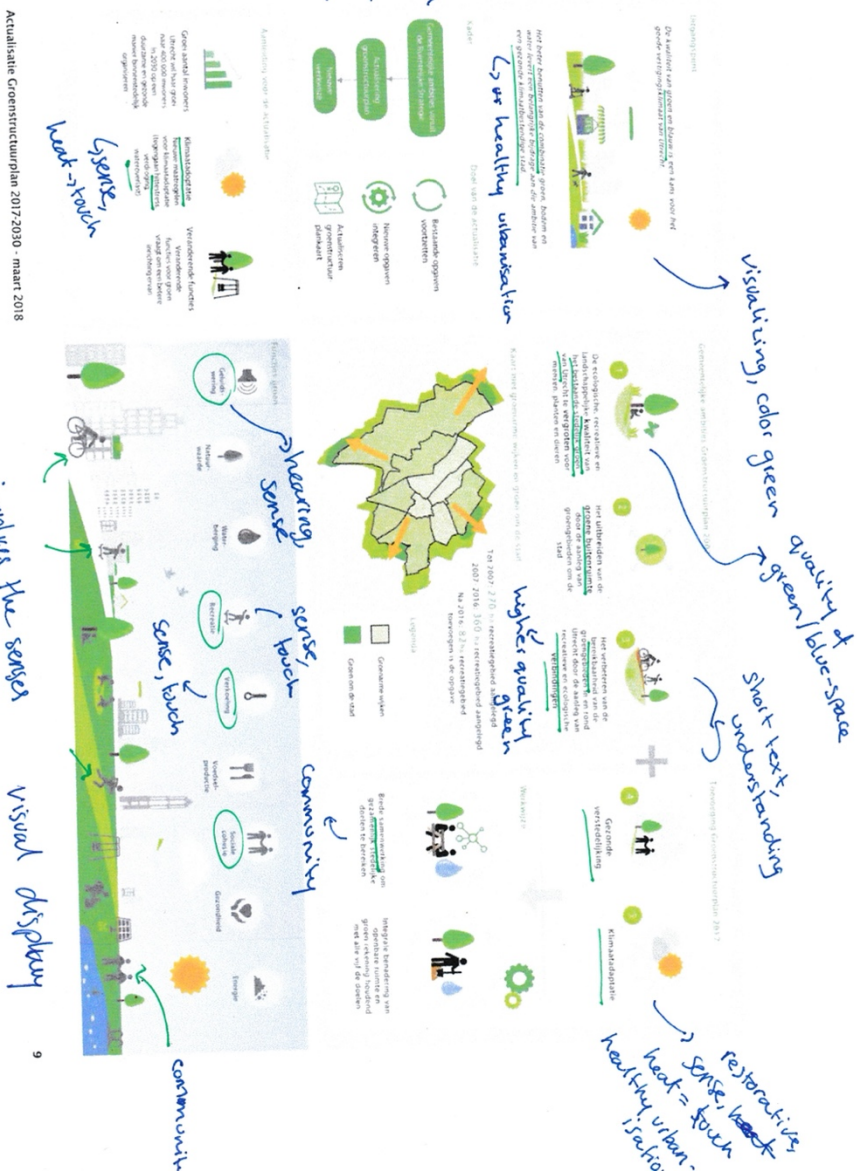
De Stadsbuitengracht.

repetition, their slogan! ↳ Een uniek stuk rust dat onze binnenstad omarmt,
 waarmee Utrechtse historie is thuisgebracht. ↳ loving, safety, sense, community
 ↳ home

almost fairytale-like
↳ the everyday use of the Singel.
2 sentences at a time

key themes: community, changing seasons, peace & quiet, sensing

compact
informative
visualization
easy to understand
stand layout
usage.



Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030 - maart 2018

4. Uitwerking Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030

In dit hoofdstuk geven we aan langs welke lijnen we de stedelijke groenstructuur ontwikkelen om in te spelen op de nieuwe opgaven die er op de stad Utrecht afkomen. Daarbij bouwen we voort op de ambities en resultaten van het Groenstructuurplan 2007 en zoeken we naar innovatieve oplossingen voor bestaande en nieuwe opgaven. Aan de hand van de visie en visiekaart wordt beschreven hoe dit groenstructuurplan uitwerking in de stad vindt, door integratie van de principes uit dit plan in gebiedsontwikkeling en beheer, door uitvoering van het Meerjaren Groenprogramma en door te blijven experimenteren, leren en innoveren.

4.1 Toevoegen 'Gezonde verstedelijking' en 'Klimaatadaptatie'
 Zoals aangegeven in hoofdstuk 2 en 3 gaan we verder met de drie bestaande groen opgaven 'Meer en beter groen in de stad', 'Groene verbindingen naar buiten' en 'Meer groen om de stad' en voegen we daar de twee nieuwe opgaven 'Gezonde verstedelijking' en 'Klimaatadaptatie' aan toe. De nieuwe opgaven willen we vooral bereiken door slim en multifunctioneel

gebruik van de ruimte en de diverse functies en kansen van groen gecombineerd te gebruiken. Groen en blauw inzetten voor de verbetering van de ruimtelijke en sociale kwaliteit van de stad met Nature Based Solutions.

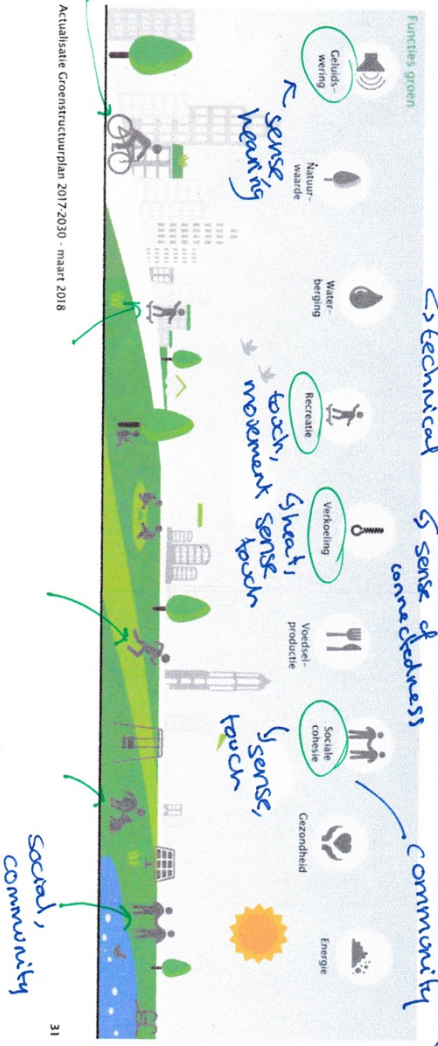
4.1.1 Gezonde verstedelijking

De ambitie hierbij is dat voor iedere woning op redelijke loopafstand een park of groenstrook beschikbaar is en op fietsafstand een groengebied. In onze bewoners en gezondheidsmonitor wordt beschikbaarheid en kwaliteit van het groen gekoppeld aan de tevredenheid van bewoners. Hoe hoger de kwaliteit hoe hoger de tevredenheid. Sinds 2010 laat deze bewoners tevredenheid een stijgende trend zien. De ambitie is dat deze stijgende tevredenheid zich voortzet.

We richten ons hiervoor in eerste instantie op de groenarme wijken, aandachts-wijken en de binnenstedelijke verdichting locaties zoals afgesproken in de Ruimtelijke Strategie Utrecht. Het gaat om het creëren van aantrekkelijke ontmoetingsplekken, met veel sociale functies en waarbij zelfbereid wordt

bin for high quality green
 availability
 sense scape
 green space
 restorative space
 positive experience

responsibility



Actualisatie Groenstructuurplan 2017-2030 - maart 2018

illustration
 Afbeelding
 Detail infographic
 actualisatie
 groenstructuurplan.

healthy urbanisation

more in ~~city~~ ^{sting} experience

more visual ^{cake slice, sense}

loved, valued, respected
though little green
high value & importance

missing depth
examples, no senses
movement, sense

16. Singelpark rondom vergroten

Voor gezond stedelijk leven in de binnenstad is meer groen nodig en moet de biodiversiteit worden vergroot. Dat kan ook in de dichtbebouwde binnenstad door de bestaande groenstructuren te verbeteren en door betere verbindingen te maken voor mensen, flora en fauna met de groen- en waterstructuren rondom de binnenstad. Dat betekent dat de oevers en kades van de singel rondom de binnenstad worden omgevormd tot een singelpark, dat sleg en hoven worden vergroend en stralobomen worden gekoesterd.

In de binnenstad is groen schaars. Maar wat er is, wordt hoog gewaardeerd en parken als Lepelburg en Paardenveld worden druk gebruikt. Alleen al door de binnenstadsbewoners zelf, die vaak geen of maar weinig privé-buiteruimte hebben en graag de openbare groene ruimte opzoeken. Ook bezoekers waarderen groene plekken in de midden van de dynamiek van de stad. Groen is goed voor de gezondheid van mensen, voor de ruimtelijke kwaliteit, voor klimaatadaptatie (zie verder richting 18), voor de luchtkwaliteit en ten slotte voor de biodiversiteit. → **missing senses**

De gezondheid van mensen is op verschillende manieren gebaat bij groen. Groen nodigt uit tot bewegen en ontmoeten in de buitenlucht. Ook heeft het zicht op groen en water een ontspannende (soms zelfs toestand) werking en helpt groen mensen bij het herstel

varietijd groen, sight

power of green explained

van fysieke of emotionele tegenstellingen. Je zou kunnen zeggen dat natuur zowel een stad als een mens verkrachtiger maakt. Zeker als dat groen gevarieerd is. Helemaal staat de biodiversiteit in Nederland, in de hele wereld, op dit moment juist zwaar onder druk. Ook op een op het eerste gezicht niet zo natuurlijke plek als de Utrechtse binnenstad. Groen in de openbare ruimte is een belangrijk instrument om bij te dragen aan het vergroten van biodiversiteit. → **water goal**

Utrecht kiest ervoor, bestaand groen uit te breiden en nieuwe groene plekken in te richten, passend bij de schaal, functie en ecologische eigenschappen van de ruimte. Het groen moet de ruimtelijke kwaliteit verbeteren en goed kunnen worden beheerd. Op dit moment bestaat de groenstructuur van de binnenstad uit het singelpark (Zochterplantsoen), het Moreelsepark (het buiten de singel, binnentuin) en bomen op straat, op werfven en pleinen. Door middel van een aantal maatregelen wordt deze groenstructuur versterkt en deeler verbonden met de groen- en waterstructuren in de rest van de stad en het landschap daar omheen (zie richting 24).

→ **strong framing nature**

Key themes: visual diversity, power of greenery, positive

Wat zie je in 2040?

- Langs de singel kun je door het groen rondom de binnenstad lopen. → **movement, park**
- De binnenstad is groener en steeds meer vogels en insecten komen al op de nieuwe beplantingen. → **watering, sand**
- De waterkwaliteit is beter, er zit meer vis in het water en de oeverbeplanting is gevarieerder. → **sight**
- Dankzij speciale zorg voor zowel bomen als erfgoed, verkeren werfven en werfbomen in uitstekende staat.
- Er zijn verrassende binnentuin bijgekomen, waar je overdag doorheen kan lopen of even kan gaan zitten. → **movement, bush**

nieuwsbericht gemeente Utrecht

12-09-2020

→ Symbolic?

De singel is weer rond! De Catharijnesingel werd in de jaren zeventig gedempt om ruimte te maken voor de auto, maar die 'fout uit het verleden' is na jaren van slopen, bouwen en graven hersteld. De binnenstad wordt weer omsingeld door water en groen. Utrecht schrijft daarmee geschiedenis. De terugkeer van de singel wordt vandaag gevierd met een digitale opening.

experience

connected

→ something to celebrate, pride

Door de terugkeer van het water is de hele singel weer een plek waar je graag wilt zijn. Je kunt een rondje varen om de stad en de oude resten van kasteel Vredenburg bekijken onder Hoog Catharijne. Door de natuurvriendelijke oevers is er bovendien meer ruimte voor flora en fauna, en is er veel groen teruggebracht in de stad. Ook het Zocherpark ter hoogte van het Willemsplantsoen is hersteld in de geest van de ontwerper Jan David Zocher Jr., die het park rond 1830 heeft ontworpen.

→ history / historic significance

→ room for green

Van sloop tot wederopbouw

De herstelde singel markeert de afsluiting van de eerste fase van de transformatie van het Utrechtse Stationsgebied. Twee gescheiden delen water zijn weer met elkaar verbonden door een vaarverbinding onder Hoog Catharijne te maken. Hiermee heeft Utrecht ook het eerste overdekte winkelcentrum van ons land waar je onderdoor kunt varen.

"Wat begon met de sloop en wederopbouw van Muziekcentrum Vredenburg tot muziektempel TivoliVredenburg, de vernieuwing van Hoog Catharijne, de bouw van het Stationsplein met daaronder 's werelds grootste fietsstalling en de sprong over het spoor met de bouw van kantoren en woontorens eindigt met het terugbrengen van het water. Een prachtige grootse afsluiting van de eerste fase. Niet alleen voor mij, maar ook voor al mijn voorgangers die verantwoordelijk waren voor het Stationsgebied én natuurlijk al die betrokken Utrechters die zich jaren hard hebben gemaakt voor de singel", aldus Eelco Eerenberg, wethouder Stationsgebied.

No mention of Senses,

Sensescape more historical? technical

Singel als voorbeeld stadsontwikkeling

Op bijna geen andere plek in Utrecht zijn er zo veel veranderingen geweest als aan de singel. Een klooster stond aan de basis van het Academisch Ziekenhuis, dat later werd getransformeerd tot woningen en kantoren. Een ander klooster werd een militair hospitaal en uiteindelijk een hotel. Een schouwburg en korenbeurs werden samen de Jaarbeurs en later kwam daar Muziekcentrum Vredenburg voor in de plaats. Een oude stationswijk werd Hoog Catharijne. En met de komst van de spoorwegen werden grote kantoren van de NS aan de singel gebouwd.

→ Symbolism

Wethouder Eerenberg: "De singel kun je zien als een soort caleidoscoop van moderne stadsontwikkeling. Het blijft uniek dat een autoweg, met ruimte voor twaalf rijbanen, weer plaatsmaakt voor water en groen. En nu de singel terug is van weggeweest, verbindt deze weer op prachtige wijze allerlei belangrijke stedelijke functies. Onder andere het station, een poppodium, theater en groen hebben hun plekje aan het water gevonden."

De Utrechtse singel is een monument. Samen met de bruggen, het aangrenzend groen, de monumenten en de historische resten die zich aan weerszijden van de oevers bevinden, bestrijkt de historie bijna 900 jaar. Met het herstel van het laatste deel van de Catharijnesingel is de singel eindelijk weer 'compleet' en is er weer een hoofdstuk aan het singelverhaal toegevoegd.

Digitaal feestje

De opening van de Utrechtse singel op zaterdag 12 september wordt door de coronamaatregelen noodgedwongen digitaal gevierd. Om 13:00 wordt er een ode aan de singel gelanceerd in de vorm van een video op www.CU2030.nl/singel en www.emmertjeutrecht.nl waarin Utrechters samen de singel vullen. Om 14:00 uur is de singel officieel geopend voor publiek en kunnen Utrechters weer een rondje om de stad varen.

→ community

water as symbol of reawakening

Het Utrechtse creatieve bureau Supersolid maakte een campagne waarin Utrecht samen de singel vult en de opening viert. Op basis van mooie gesprekken met, en anekdotes van Utrechters maakten zij met spoken word artist Tom Strik een ode aan de singel. Deze ode komt tot leven in de video. De singel is rond en is gemaakt met een volledig Utrechtse filmcrew. In de video doen vele Utrechters symbolisch samen een bijdrage aan het vullen van de singel met een echte Utrechtse emmer. Met de emmer doen zij een bijdrage aan het waterpeil van het nieuwe stuk en leggen zo het fundament voor de toekomst. De afgelopen week is de emmer al op verschillende plekken in de stad opgedoken als cadeau voor de inwoners en verscheen er zelfs een reuze-emmer bij Hoog Catharijne. Ook de reuze-emmer is gemaakt in Utrecht, door Brandwacht en Meijer, en is de komende week nog te bewonderen aan de singel.

→ community effort

multiple meanings

the video as on YouTube.

De stadsbuitengracht:

Een uniek stuk rust

Dat onze binnenstad omarmt

Waarmee Utrechtse historie is thuisgebracht.

De singel is rond (uit: video De singel is rond)

Meer informatie is [hier](#) te vinden.

keywords: Round / connected / verbindt



Gezonde leefomgeving

Een gezonde leefomgeving is een omgeving die mensen als prettig ervaren en waar gezonde keuzes makkelijk zijn.

Kenmerken van zo'n omgeving:

- ruimte die uitnodigt tot bewegen, spelen en sporten → touch, movement
- aanwezigheid van groen en water → visual blue-green
- ruimte die uitnodigt tot ontmoeting en sociale contacten → community
- ruimte waar mensen zich prettig en veilig voelen → through senses? feelings of belonging, sense of place
- een goede luchtkwaliteit → health, sense, sight & touch
- niet te veel geluid; plekken met stille en rust → hearing sense

Kortom een aantrekkelijke en gezonde omgeving waar mensen graag willen wonen en verblijven.

Wat doet de gemeente Utrecht aan een gezonde leefomgeving?

Utrecht is de enige gemeente in Nederland waar adviseurs gezondheid altijd meedenken met ruimtelijke plannen. Deze adviseurs werken vanuit de afdeling Volksgezondheid. Hoe zij dat doen, leest u op de pagina Werken aan een gezonde leefomgeving.

Wat kunt u als bewoner doen?

U kunt zelf bijdragen aan een gezonde omgeving. Bijvoorbeeld door vaker de fiets pakken in plaats van de auto. Door te zorgen voor een groene tuin of balkon of dak. U kunt uw wensen voor de omgeving ook laten weten aan het wijkbureau.

Hebt u vragen over uw woonomgeving?

Hebt u een gezondheidsvraag over uw leefomgeving? Bijvoorbeeld over asbest, schimmel en vocht in huis, stank, bodemvervuiling of elektromagnetische straling. De GGD regio Utrecht helpt u graag.

Meer weten en lezen?

Op ggdleeuomgeving.nl vindt u informatie over onder andere asbest, rook en gezondheid in huis.

> Gezondheidsbeleid

easy to find this online

senses, discourse

their aim and how to influence positive discourses

sense of place

active theme for municipality

all kinds of senses that are a concern.

→ important theme regards to the senses

→ influence of discourse

feelings of belonging, sense of place

→ desired place

→ attention to healthy urbanisation

→ own responsibility,

encourages to take action

key theme's: senses, sense of place,

own responsibility influence discourse