

Saying farewell to the initiator of Area Development

Friso de Zeeuw and Agnes Franzen

2016: a memorable year, a year in which, in line with the University Rules, we say farewell to you in your capacity of professor at Delft University of Technology. It's also the year of Brexit, when a majority of the British people voted in favour of leaving the European Union during the Brexit referendum. In a context with developments that also manifest themselves in the Netherlands. The government has been scaling down its involvement for some time now, businesses take fewer risks, citizens become more active and the gap between population groups on higher or lower incomes or educational levels grows wider and wider. The political search for a renewed connection with part of the population is clearly demonstrated at this Brexit moment. And like the UK, the Netherlands too has regions that show both growth and contraction.

Exciting times ... also for us, with you, our global citizen, leaving us. You've been working at the Faculty of Architecture in Delft since 1991. In line with pension regulations, now is the time for a B-exit, taking formal leave of the Faculty of Architecture. But, the door will of course always stay open to you. We've come to know you as someone who's busy 24 hours a day, someone you can always rely on. This is the perfect moment to stand still and look back. The Area Development department can look back on a period of more than ten years with you.



***Hans an early
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In 2003, you were one of the initiators of the successful MCD study programme. The MasterCityDeveloper, a post master degree for professionals in area development and Erasmus University Rotterdam, Delft University of Technology and the Rotterdam Development Corporation. You were also the driving force behind 'Integrale gebiedsontwikkeling: het stationsgebied 's Hertogenbosch', a publication from 2004.

Talking to Chris Kuijpers, director-general for Space of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment, you, in your capacity of professor in Real Estate Management and Development, also put Area Development on the agenda during this period. One of the key questions was, and still is, how to organise the collaboration between public and private more effectively. One of the results is the practical chair of area development, which came about in 2006 as an externally funded chair by the then Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment and a number of private parties. All this took place under the banner of Area Development Knowledge Foundation (SKG). As we speak, it has more than 20 public and private members. The objectives of the foundation include responsible contracting by the government and market parties, learning from project practice, optimising the preconditions in, for instance, legislation and study programmes, establishing connections between relevant disciplines, as well as improving quality awareness, market focus and project tempo.

During the past decade, the MCD and Practical Chair have built up a curriculum for education and research, with a strong focus on Dutch practice. Last year, the international and scientific dimension was further strengthened with the arrival of Professor Ellen van Bueren on the Urban Development Management chair.



Throughout the years, we've come to know you as a passionate, ambitious, people-focused, creative and dynamic person. An early bird full of energy. A true Rotterdammer. Rotterdam: City of go-getters and daredevils, city of reconstruction, the period of the redevelopment of the Netherlands, including the Delta Works. A time during which spatial planning came into contact with social planning, something you still enjoy to this day. In 1998, spatial planning and spatial development were soon followed by the term area development. The end of the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment was already in sight and became final at the end of 2010. Under the Rutte I government, the Ministry of Housing, Spatial Planning and the Environment was combined with the Ministry of Transport, Public Works and Water Management, forming today's Ministry of Infrastructure and the Environment. The decentralisation of spatial development was a fact.

After the fall of the Lehman Brothers, our profession also suffered from a 'crisis' for years. And it was here that you spotted an opportunity to introduce the 'False Start' principles. Under your inspiring chairmanship, we organised our first SKG conference under that title. We discussed recognisable key themes that are still topical today. The importance of a jointly supported future ambition, well organised contracting, a planning process with clear steps, linked to a decision-making process, feasible business case. And you referred to urgency, perseverance, nerve, attention for each other's interests and a flexible attitude as vital.

During subsequent years, you regularly gave critical feedback and you contributed to various publications, such as 'De Engel uit Graniët', which reflected on the years of crisis. Area development in a different reality, now what? And your 'Slim Vlottrekken' and 'Werkzame strategieën' publications. You were also the driving force behind the international publication Management of Urban Development Process, highly appropriate and 'as such' still in use at schools.

Change is part of life. We doubt your statement 'that the world has changed to such an extent that the experience of the elderly is useless' is true. You've always had a vision. At the end of this year, you will act as chairman of the day at our annual conference for the seventh time. For God, the number seven equalled rest, after earth was created during the previous six days. It's a good time to ponder and reflect, which fits in with the theme of this year's conference: the impact of technological developments on area development. The Area Development chair started in 2006. This year, we will be celebrating our tenth anniversary at our annual conference. Thank you for your commitment, for putting social issues on the agenda and for the beautiful and exciting partnership.

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