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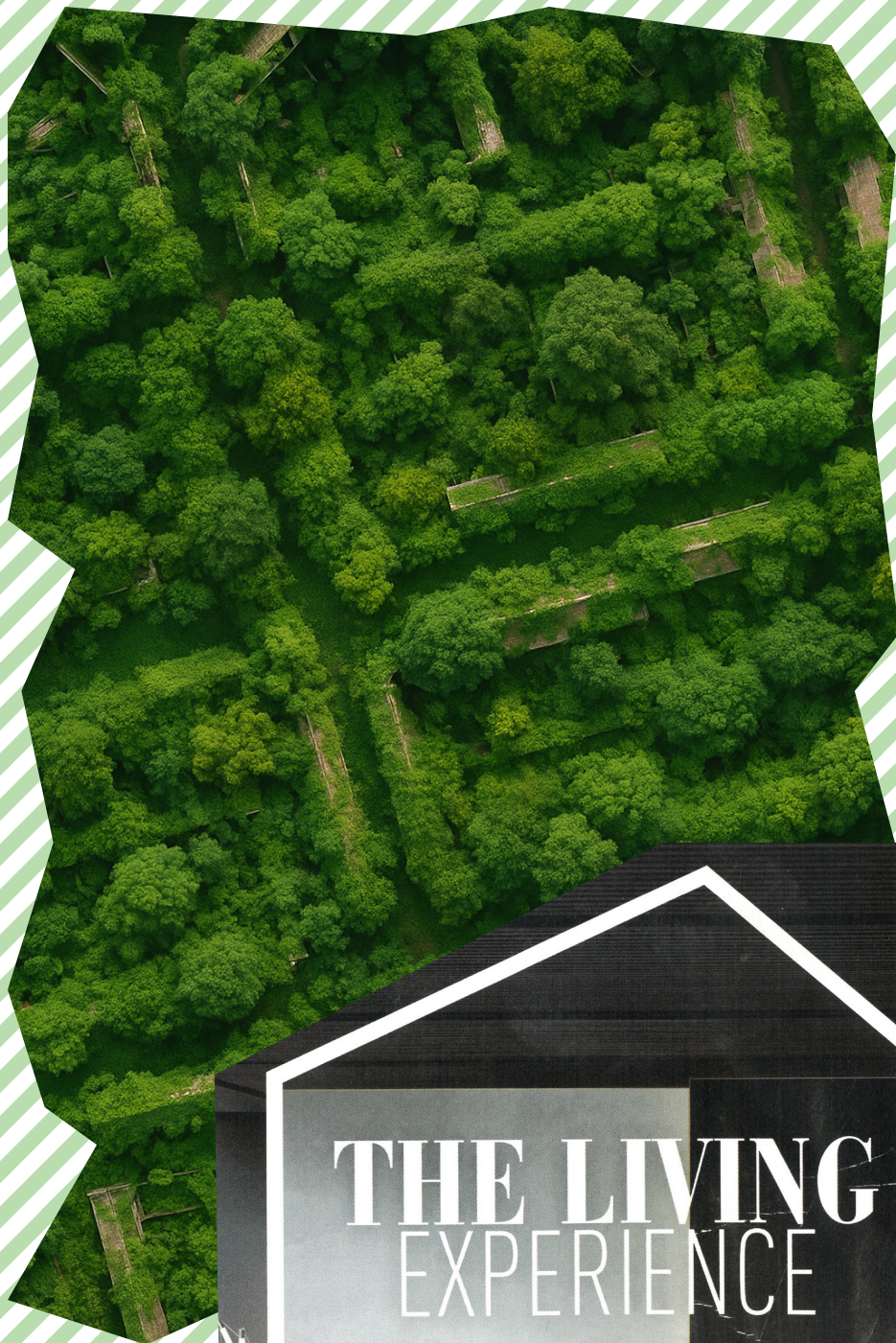
FUTURES

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GARDEN



THE LIVING EXPERIENCE

Foreword

Living in 2050: no private backyard, yet surrounded by green

In this issue, we take you into the shared urban garden. Since the 2020s, much has changed. Where green spaces used to be privately owned, they are now shared by everyone. Gardens have been opened up, and with the decline of car traffic in city centers, greenery has returned to the streets.

This zine looks back on that transformation. It gathers fragments of news articles, old interviews, and current perspectives on living together with urban nature.

Alongside more greenery, there is renewed attention for animal and plant species that had long disappeared from the city, once driven away by unsafe and hostile conditions.

This zine examines that change and celebrates how far we've come. It also offers tips for continuing the greening process, and thought exercises that invite you to think from the perspective of plants and animals rather than humans alone..

Edited by Messy Futures 2050

The texts and images in this publication were developed with the help of ChatGPT..

“We’re Only Halfway There”

Mayor Laila van Dijk on 25 Years of Urban Greening in Eindhoven

It's a sunny morning in Eindhoven. From her office in City Hall, Mayor Laila van Dijk overlooks a sea of green. Where there was once a car park, birch trees now sway and wildflowers bloom. By 2050, Eindhoven has become internationally known as one of the first major European cities to fully embrace shared green management and nature-inclusive building. We spoke with Van Dijk about what has been achieved — and what still lies ahead.

Mayor Van Dijk, Eindhoven looks very different today compared to thirty years ago. What do you see as the biggest change?

Van Dijk: “The biggest change is really in how people think about green space. Back in 2020, we saw it as something you owned — your garden, your hedge, your private patch of grass. Now it’s something we manage, use, and protect together. That hasn’t just made the city greener, but the community stronger too.”

How did it all start?

Van Dijk: “It started small: a few community gardens, car-free streets,

pilot projects around Trudoplein. But when the first ecological corridors began showing real impact on biodiversity and quality of life, things took off. Residents, businesses, and the province all got behind it. By 2035, we’d reached a turning point — 60% of the city’s green spaces were under shared management.”

“An instinctive connection to nature, that’s perhaps the greatest gift we can give the next generation.”

What are the benefits you personally notice most?

Van Dijk: “Honestly? The quiet. You hear more birds than cars now. The air quality has improved enormously too. And I see children growing up with an instinctive connection to nature. That’s perhaps the greatest gift we can give the next generation.”



Are there challenges as well?

Van Dijk: “Absolutely. Managing shared green spaces requires genuine collaboration. There are always debates about maintenance or which plants belong where. And housing remains a challenge — we still need to build, but in ways that strengthen both people and nature. We’re not perfect at that yet.”

And where do you see Eindhoven in 2080?

Van Dijk: “I hope it will not only be a green city, but also a climate-resilient one. With cool spots in summer, safe water storage, and perhaps even urban forests where industrial estates

once stood. But above all, I hope the idea of shared green will be so normal that no one can imagine it was ever different.”

The mayor has to move on — there’s an opening of a new “green roof square” in Woensel. But as she unlocks her bicycle, she smiles and adds one last thing: “We’re proud of what we’ve achieved. But honestly? We’re only halfway there.”



Diary of a Resident

10/7/'28

From my balcony in the Trudo Tower, I can see how the site next to the building is changing. Yesterday, construction workers were laying a new foundation, while a few residents chatted about the disappearance of small patches of greenery. Today, a row of old houses was demolished. It immediately created an open space where, according to the signs, the municipality plans to introduce "new biodiversity". A little later, a few house seekers stopped by, asking why new homes weren't simply being built here. Different interests overlap. I'm curious to see how this will unfold.

29/7/'28

On the square, a group of people were talking to a site supervisor. The discussion was about balancing housing and green space. From time to time, I heard the word "compensation greenery". It wasn't exactly an argument, but there was no clear agreement either. Later that day, work simply went on: diggers on one side, someone planting young trees on the other.

17/8/'28

It's quieter than usual. Construction has paused for the summer break. Instead of building noise, I mostly hear birds. From above, I can see a low wooden fence has been put up, with a few perennial plants alongside it. Probably temporary, but it looks tidier than the construction fencing that used to be there.

4/9/'28

This afternoon, there was a meeting by the site containers with local residents, a few municipal representatives, and the project developer. They discussed "nature-inclusive building" and "modular housing". Not everyone seemed familiar with those terms. No concrete decision yet, but it seems the plan will include space for both greenery and new homes.

Green Eindhoven 2050: Guided Walking Tour

Length: 7.5 km

Duration: 2 hours

Best time: Afternoon

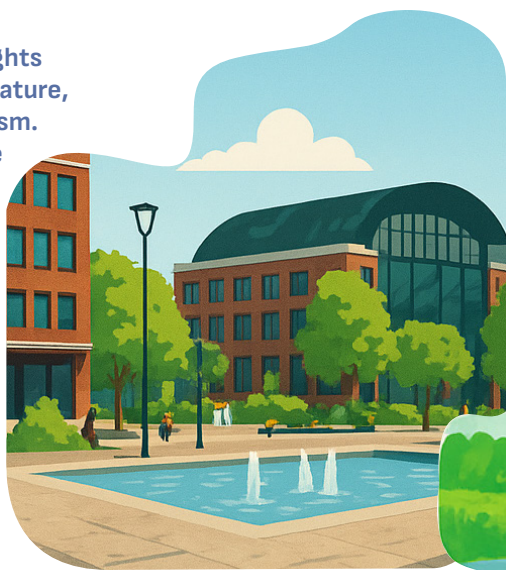
Welcome to Eindhoven, the year 2050!

Today we'll take you along the city's highlights as you've never seen them before: rich in nature, layered with history, and touched by futurism.

Follow our guide and discover how heritage and ecology intertwine.

Starting point: 18 Septemberplein

Here, where stone and concrete once dominated, you now stand among fragrant herb beds, blooming lavender fields, and low fruit trees. Between the greenery, the old shopfronts remain, now covered in green façades that change colour with the seasons. Look out for the bee hotels on the lampposts — a small detail with a big impact on biodiversity.



Stop 2: De Trudo Tower

What began as a landmark residential building at Strijp-S has become a vertical ecosystem. Green balconies full of native plants attract songbirds and butterflies. Look up and you'll see swift nesting boxes cleverly built into the façade.

Fun fact: The tower is a prime example of architecture and ecology working hand in hand — residents share a rooftop garden where vegetables and herbs are grown for the whole community.



Stop 3: The Klokgebouw

Continue towards the striking Klokgebouw, where the iconic white façade now contrasts with colourful vertical gardens. Inside you'll find a market selling local produce: mushrooms grown on recycled coffee grounds from the nearby café, honey from the city beehives, and herbal teas from the communal picking garden.

Stop 4: The Dommel Park

Follow the path towards the Dommel, now flowing freely through the city once again. The park is a lush mosaic of reed beds, wildflower meadows, and open water. The gently sloping banks are designed for both children and waterbirds to enjoy safely.

Listen: you'll hear ducks splashing, dragonflies buzzing, and perhaps even the distant tapping of a woodpecker.



End point: The Lichttoren

Finish your walk at the Lichttoren. The building literally glows in the evening light, powered by solar cells that store energy for its illuminated façade art. On the square in front, music performances and creative gatherings often take place — right in the middle of the greenery.

Best moment: Just before sunset, when the sky turns orange and the vertical gardens are softly lit.





simon_sloopkogel




1 932 likes

simon_sloopkogel 🌟👊🌟 CALL FOR DEMONSTRATION 🌟👊🌟

Residents of Bloemstraat and the surrounding area: join the demonstration against the plans of the government and environmental organisations to demolish our beloved neighbourhood and replace it with fewer apartments!

 Date: 13 September 2025

 Time: 12:00

 Location: Stadhuisplein, Eindhoven

[View all 18 comments](#)

6 days ago



simon_sloopkogel



2 025 likes

simon_sloopkogel 🔥 THANKS EVERYONE! 🧠🙌

Yesterday, we showed the government with a large group that choosing nature alone is not an option! 🚫 Thank you to everyone who came — keep going! ❤️


boosendakloos Yessss well done! 🔥🔥🔥

bloomer2002 #justiceforbloemstraat 🚩

[View all 32 comments](#)

2 days ago





**When we lose
sight of nature and its
splendour, we lose the future.
Without nature, our
existence ends.
For too long, we have
prioritised constant progress.
For too long, we have
placed our greed for
money above all else.
But now it is time for
nature. We let biodiversity
flourish to safeguard
our future.**

Opinion

FROM THE ARCHIVES: JOURNAL **VOORUIT NATUUR**
SATURDAY, 22 MARCH 2031

LIVABILITY

A city in bloom, a village in calm

I watch Eindhoven with mixed feelings. Not because it's declining — far from it. The city grows greener by the month. Where car parks once glimmered in the sun and traffic never ceased, there are now meadows of wildflowers, with winding paths for pedestrians and cyclists in between. Gardens are open to the public, façades covered in greenery, balconies transformed into hanging gardens.

Two worlds side by side

From my village, a fifteen-minute cycle away, I can see it happening. I live on a street where every garden has a low hedge, each lawn is neatly mown, and the apple trees stand in perfect rows. Here, green space is private: cared for, bounded, predictable.

But it's not all idyllic, this personal ownership of greenery. It also means fences, gates, and limits.

Paths that abruptly end because someone has marked 'private property'. Gardens that could contribute to biodiversity but are mown every week until only a green expanse remains. It means that neighbours or passers-by are excluded from pieces of nature that, in essence, belong to everyone. Sometimes, it even means that valuable greenery disappears because the owner has other plans: a driveway, a shed, or simply more paving. Personal ownership gives control, but that control can restrict nature.

The flip side of the green paradise

When I cycle into Eindhoven, it feels like entering another world. The change is impressive, but also unsettling. Yes, biodiversity is crucial. Yes, a greener city is healthier and happier. But I also see the other side: residents losing their familiar surroundings, houses



demolished to make way for parks, and the feeling that something is disappearing that won't simply return. Not everyone agrees that 'everyone's' really means 'everyone'.

Private versus public greenery

In my village, the greenery is yours. You decide what grows and how it looks. It feels safe, but sometimes stifling. The monotony is visible: less birds, less buzzing, and a silence that can be overwhelming. Eindhoven, on the other hand, is alive — literally. You hear the rustling of leaves, the songs of birds long absent, and the soft hum of bees searching for nectar.

Between admiration and preservation

I wonder if I would ever want

to trade places. Here, I have my privacy, my patch of land, my order. There, they have freedom, wildness, and shared responsibility. Perhaps the answer lies somewhere in between — a balance of personal and collective, control and letting go. Until then, I continue to watch from afar. With admiration for what Eindhoven dares to do, but also with the quiet conviction that not everything that grows is meant for me.

JO VAN AALST

LOFTPRINCIPE

This zine was visually, textually, and conceptually created by
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samen

