

# IN GRAZ ON AUGUST 22<sup>ND</sup> 2019 ALLOTMENT GARDENERS WERE HONOURED FOR THEIR COMMITMENT

## 7 ALLOTMENT SITES RECEIVED AN OFFICE DIPLOMA

### I) The diploma for ecological gardening was awarded to:

**The allotment association “KGV Steinfeld” received the diploma for ecological gardening**

This allotment site was founded in 1914.

The site has a surface of 34.150 m<sup>2</sup> and the association has 243 members. This garden is characterised by a lush vegetable cultivation. Here, gardening in the original sense is still highly valued.

So it is just natural, that every gardener grows his own compost.

But also, by the setting up of three to four rain barrels on each plot and the associated water saving, resources are handled very carefully.

Of course, all of the paths of this site are not paved, but only gravelled.

It is a green, ecological oasis in one of the most heavily built-up areas of Graz.





## The garden park “De Smallen Entrée” in Torhout (B)

This young project arises in 2014 where the city council was looking for a new spot for a new allotment because of the long waiting list on their first project.

This old orchard, nearby the city centre having an ideal soil, was the ideal spot. Their first condition was to create an ecological allotment.

The trees from the old orchard, that were still alive, were saved.

A long-term plan was made for all green areas separately e.g. trees, floral borders, the ditch, etc. and the annual jobs to make them richer in biodiversity.

A garden was sacrificed for a mutual green area with bee-friendly plants and host plants for wild animals. With the pruning of the trees a dead hedge was made.

A demo-garden was created.

Every 3 year they do a soil analysis to prevent over-fertilizing.





## **The natural garden park of “Nooit Gedacht” in The Hague (NL)**

In August 2013 “Nooit Gedacht” has won the National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening with three dots. The fourth dot has been added in October 2018.

On the property are many flowers and plants that are attractive to birds and insects. There is an insect hotel, a bee garden, a butterfly garden as well as a forest path, a herb garden and a flower meadow.

There are three beekeepers on the bee garden and a biological beekeeper with two beehives.

The Natural Gardening committee is closely involved in the weekly general maintenance of the garden park.

Communication about natural gardening takes place via the website, the club magazine, the digital newsletter and Facebook.

A project has been started with a primary school for various workshops with the youth concerning the subject nature.

There are also school gardens where weekly children from an after-school come for gardening. The association receives children from a school and after-school care to teach them about nature, bees, plants and flowers and gardening.





## **The garden park “Nut en Genoegen” in Amsterdam (NL)**

Garden Park “Nut en Genoegen” started with natural gardening at the end of 2015 with an analysis of the existing soil and water qualities, and the existing vegetation. They then made plans with an eye for an attractive image. The result is the creation of a series of different natural areas: Marsh and Bird Groves, Pond gardens, a Lupine bank and a Butterfly garden.

In addition, the following teams are active for nature & education, a selling shop, a nursery garden, the water quality and birds nesting.

At the end of 2017 99% of the members voted during the General Assembly to follow the course set.

Via social media, a renewed website, e-mailings and flyers “Nut en Genoegen” involves interested parties “from the outside”.

The garden park is part of the Amsterdam ecological network.

At the entrances of the site there are maps and walking routes and there are information boards on the park about, facilities, plants and animals. There are benches on nice places and there are natural play areas for children.





## **The allotment association “De Pioniers” in Utrecht (NL)**

In 1935, the allotment association “De Pioniers” was established to grow potatoes, vegetables and fruit. The garden park in Utrecht now has a social, recreational and ecological function.

Because of the large variety of vegetation, water and the way of gardening, nature is strikingly diverse. The park is part of the ecological network of Utrecht. Nature observations have been kept since 1997.

In 2015, the garden park was awarded the National Quality Mark for Natural Gardening with 3 dots. In 2018 a reassessment took place and 4 dots were awarded.

By offering lectures and workshops by all kinds of nature and environmental organisations, more and more gardeners are switching to natural gardening. At this moment, about 70% of the members practice natural gardening.

“De Pioniers” realises that they have a role as partners in the society. So they make their club building available to neighbourhood activities.

The association has an annual program with various activities; some of them are inspired by national campaigns in the field of nature conservation by volunteers.

All these results in a peaceful place in the neighbourhood can no longer be ignored. A garden park with added value and that is loved by the members and by the people living around it.





## II) The diploma for innovative projects was awarded to:

### **The allotment site “KGV Schönau” received the diploma for innovative activities**

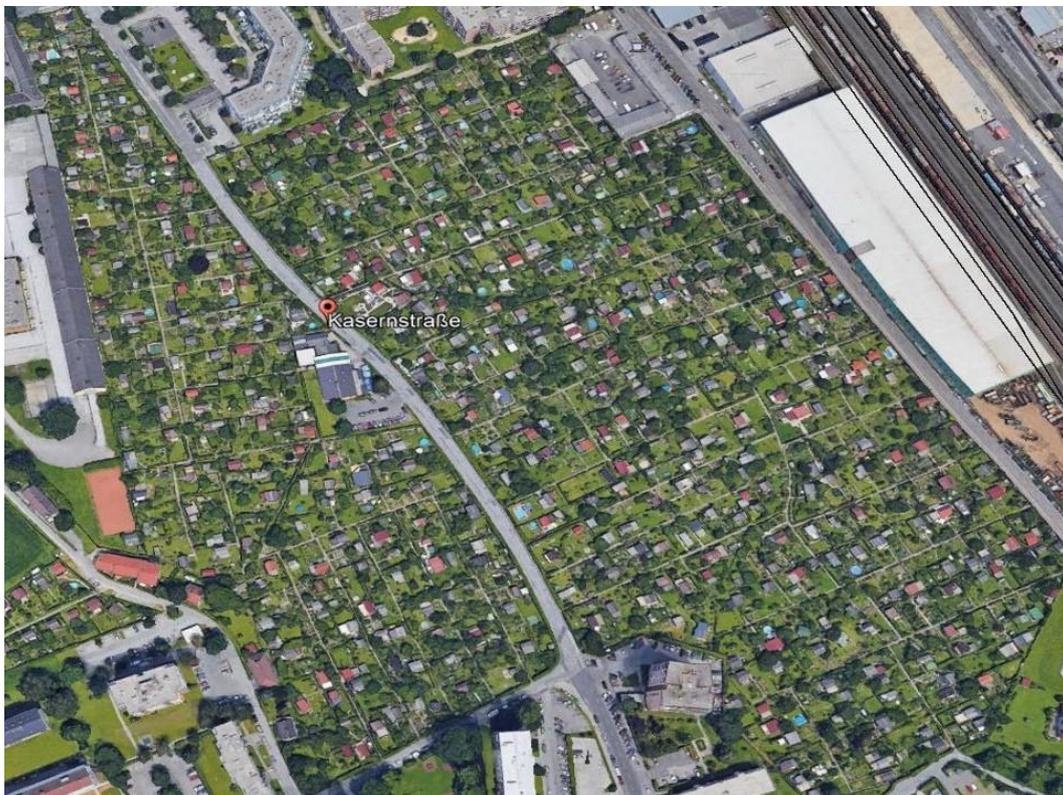
The allotment site “Schönau”, founded in 1915, at 104 years old is one of the oldest in Graz.

With 520 members and 134.672 m<sup>2</sup>, this site is and always was the largest allotment site in Styria.

By constant improvements of the infrastructure, but also by changes of the Graz allotment garden regulation, the self-catering gardens, which at the time served to feed the population, became today’s leisure paradise for many people in Graz.

It is particularly worth mentioning that already in 1989, in an ecologically far-sighted way, a club-owned apiary was built.

At present there are 4 beehives with approx. 800,000 bees on the site. These are professionally cared for by a beekeeper, and the harvested honey can be bought cheaply from the association by the members.





### **The allotment association Herttoniemi (SF)**

The Herttoniemi Allotment Garden Association, founded in 1934, manages a 7.5 ha area with 182 plots, all equipped with a small cottage.

The association made the project “Give the Flowers and Plants a New Life”

This project is a good example of how an allotment garden association can also enrich the environment outside the area it manages. By hard work and with plant donations, the allotment gardeners have improved the habitat of the more than 100 elderly living in a service home.

The social instructor of the service house actively searched for partners, who could help in the vast and wild garden area of the facility.

After discussions and a visit to the facility, the allotment gardeners stated that the desolated garden needs soil, watering, new plants and a big amount of work. It was agreed to first renovate the largest planting area in the yard. It is a visible ensemble and the inhabitants are often seated beside it.

The project will continue in the spring of 2019, with the intention of renovating smaller planting areas and adding compact cultivation of herbs to the garden.



