Urban Gardening as an Opportunity for Occupation-Based Participatory Citizenship

a presentation by students of HAWK Hildesheim, BSc Degree Course Occupational Therapy
Lecturer: Dr. Sandra Schiller

Anne-Sophie Arens, Viviane Constabel, Rebecca Heim, Carla Liebig, Vera Probst
Structure

• The Neighbourhood: Hildesheim Nordstadt
• Occupational Therapy And Community Gardening
• Looking For Suitable Sites
• Kick-off-Project: Raised Bed
• Concept: International Garden
• Conclusion
The neighbourhood: Hildesheim Nordstadt

- Community development initiative in a poor neighbourhood
- This neighbourhood is Hildesheim-Nordstadt

http://www.immobilenpassion.de/data/images/ortsschild.png
The neighbourhood: Hildesheim Nordstadt

- One aspect of community development is the initiation of community activities through the design of public space

- In Nordstadt there are people of different cultures, ages and social backgrounds

- There are few parks and green areas

Picture: Anne-Sophie Arens
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Occupational Therapy and Community Gardening

• Community gardening as a possibility of recognition and inclusive of people with a migration background

• Health-promoting effects

• Support in the development of personal initiative


Occupational Therapy and Community Gardening
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Looking For Suitable Sites

• Brainstorming to find ideas for putting our project into practice

• Basis for any further planning we needed to locate suitable sites for urban gardening projects in nordstadt

• Those should provide the opportunity to lay out different gardens with public access
Looking For Suitable Sites

• The search took place in various ways:
  • Talking with a community worker
    • He drew our attention to a playground which will be dismantled soon
  • We ourselves went for walks and bike rides in this part of the city to get an overview about possible gardening sites
    • the search resulted in several potential sites
  • We contacted various housing companies
    • they were not able to help us with a suitable site
Looking For Suitable Sites

• All potential sites were collected in a list

• Basis for future urban gardening projects by students and other interested persons in the neighbourhood
Structure

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The Raised Flower Bed

Picture: Dr. Sandra Schiller
The Raised Flower Bed

• Collaboration with the „neighbourhood shop“
  • We decided to jointly build a raised flower bed in front of the “neighbourhood shop“

• Therefore we....
  • drew a sketch of the raised flower bed
  • prepared a plan for possible flowers and eatable plants
  • wrote a list of the materials needed and a cost estimate

• Sponsors:
  • hardware store, garden centre, wood supplier, allotment association
The Raised Flower Bed

Picture: Carla Liebig
The Raised Flower Bed

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Picture: Rebecca Heim
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Picture: Anne-Sophie Arens
The Raised Flower Bed

Picture: Norbert Jaekel
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Picture: Rebecca Heim
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Picture: Hildesheimer Allgemeine Zeitung
The Raised Flower Bed

Picture: Hildesheimer Allgemeine Zeitung
The raised flower bed

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The Raised Flower Bed

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International Garden Hildesheim

- playground in municipal ownership
- imminent closure because of financial conditions
- concept for re-use needed
- dialogue with representative of the town: endorsement of the concept → positive feedback
International Garden Hildesheim

- Utilization Concept
  - inspection of the area
  - identification of given conditions
International Garden Hildesheim

Entrance to the future garden

Picture: Dr. Sandra Schiller
International Garden Hildesheim

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International Garden Hildesheim

• Utilization Concept
  • discussion with active gardeners
  • seeking of professional opinions and advices
International Garden Hildesheim

• Utilization Concept

• construction of an exemplary utilization concept:

  • central useful range with raised beds: well in the middle, four sections around

  • areas for passive usage of the garden and for social gatherings: places for BBQ, picnic, relaxation, sunbathing, table-tennis

  • herb spiral witch also can be used as scent- and touch-garden
International Garden Hildesheim

• Utilization Concept

  • flower field
  • boundary and plantation under trees with bushes, honey plants and edible wild herbs
  • construction of a compost
  • construction of a garden shed (idea: mobile cottage for selling fruit and vegetable)

• specific concept will be issued in collaboration with future project participants and cooperation partners
International Garden Hildesheim

• Clarification of basic conditions – further steps
  • finding of interested participants
  • introducing the project in the neighbourhood
  • talks with interested individuals and institutions
  • involvement of people:
    • who lack meaningful occupation
    • experience limited social participation
  • founding of an association
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Conclusion

• Using and expanding professional skills
• Gain experiences with occupational therapy in gardening and in the community
• Build a network and instruct community activities
• Gardening as health promotion
• The Garden as a meeting place and a topic of conversation
Conclusion

• Reflection of the whole process of the project with the “neighbourhood shop“
  • Formulate a common outcome
  • Clarify everyone’s requirements and expectations
  • Good planning and preparation
  • To encourage collective activities many people have to be brought together
  • Specific gardening skills are necessary
Conclusion

• Client-centred approach and community development approach
  • participatory relationship with shared decision making

• More self-initiative on the part of the members of in a community setting
  • They saw us as experts of the project
  • Different distribution of roles came about
  • Collaboration was then rather based on partnership

• This process presents new challenges for our work as OT’s in the setting “community"
Conclusion

Thank you very much for your attention!