



## **A self-conscious municipality**

What kind of local government should a municipality be for its inhabitants? This question already suggests that the role is different to what it used to be. Our answer, the Boekel answer: 'In everything that we do, we ask ourselves: what use will it be to the inhabitant?' Inhabitants of the municipality are given more responsibility and can contribute themselves to a community where the key focus lies on cohesion and quality of life. This is why Boekel remains perceptive with regard to abolishing unnecessary legislation. The contributions of our inhabitants are leading. As a municipality, we connect and bring parties together. We dare to let go without leaving the inhabitants to their fate. We will continue to work on that and we are proud of that. As every small municipality must be self-aware and proud, because small-scale results in commitment. We also like to show that. For instance, we wish to be and remain an innovative municipality.

The municipality of Boekel is a self-conscious municipality. As being independent is not an objective in itself. It is also true that a self-conscious municipality is not an objective in itself. For a local government, these are instruments, aids, for providing and realizing the right facilities, the most suitable products and the most efficient services for the inhabitants. Together with the inhabitants, we give shape and content to working, residing and living. This assignment is not only the responsibility of the local government. Precisely the contributions from the many parties determine the quality of working, residing and living. Entrepreneurs, education institutions, social organizations, and last but not least the inhabitants form a network society where they themselves contribute to the desired quality of life. It is important to form cohesion between the contributions of these partners. The interplay to find the balance between the partners ensures the good results. And yes, this must be managed, this has to be organized. Of course, you do not want to remain on the side-lines, but it is especially important that a local government must not wish to do everything itself.

The municipality of Boekel has recorded the future vision of the municipality of Boekel in a 2030 Strategic vision. There is emphatic contemplation of what Boekel was, what it is now, what it wishes to be in 2030 and how we wish to realize this. It forms a dot on the horizon. The objective is clear but how we reach it will be dynamic.

## **How does the municipality of Boekel operate and what does 'management municipality Boekel' mean and could give an example?**

Boekel remains perceptive with regard to abolishing unnecessary legislation. Inhabitants of the municipality are given more responsibility and can contribute themselves to a community where the key focus lies on cohesion and quality of life. During the past few years, that has led to a few concrete elaborations, known to many by the name 'Boekel's model'. For instance, the digital access to fibre connections for all the inhabitants of the municipality of Boekel. The initiative for laying a fibre network in rural municipalities is often taken by a market party. Outlying areas and industrial estates are not usually connected to the network. Not a single party could offer what Boekel was looking for: a network covering the municipality at market prices. The choice was therefore made to set up a foundation: BoekelNet. Financing was realized in the form of loans and bonds, with collaboration between entrepreneurs and the municipality. In this way, the foundation was able to enter into a collaboration, within the preconditions, with three market parties: the contractor for laying the network, the



supplier of the switching devices and the company supplying the cable services. The construction of the network was completed at the end of 2013.

As well as laying the fibre network, the foundation is also committed to the communal digital interests and local digital services insofar as possible. For instance, there is now also a public WiFi network in the centre of Boekel and customers of BoekelNet can call each other for free.

### **Do you have another moving example for us?**

Another local example is the foundation Stichting de Speeltrein “foundation the playground” . In the past, the playgrounds in Boekel and Venhorst did not receive enough attention from the municipality of Boekel and were deteriorating. The plan of the municipality was to reduce the number of playgrounds and thus keep a limited amount of good playgrounds with the same budget. Several inhabitants then took the initiative to take over the management of the playgrounds. For this purpose, they set up a foundation. Thanks to a large group of volunteers, the existing playgrounds were restored to their former glory and a number of new playgrounds were added. This is because the foundation can make its funds go much further than the municipality can. Thanks to Stichting de Speeltrein, children can play in playgrounds again in the whole municipality!

In short: the municipality of Boekel offers space to its inhabitants and creates trust by welcoming their initiatives with enthusiasm and goodwill.

We greatly value collaboration as you will also understand that we cannot do all of this on our own.

### **How is the provision of services experienced?**

The provision of services is on the whole experienced as very good by the people in Boekel. There are short lines between the inhabitants, the municipal council, the municipal executive and the administrative organization. The quality of residing, working and living is experienced as good and affordable by the inhabitants. The municipality of Boekel believes it can guarantee the social tasks for its inhabitants, and in the future too. In the municipality of Boekel, the future social tasks are considered as an opportunity, a challenge which we are happy to take on.

The considerable commitment from its inhabitants in associations and organizations and the accompanying volunteers makes the municipality of Boekel proud. Very proud. Due to the changing role of the municipality whereby connecting and trusting in people play a main role, we have a committed community. Now and in the future!