

Pilot fiche O1.3

Vitality Boulevard

Part 1: The pilot

Pilot name: Vitality Boulevard

Located: Cadzand, Zeeland



Figure 2: Map of region in which Cadzand is located

Operational context

Cadzand is a town in the Dutch province of Zeeland and is within the municipality of Sluis. However, although small the village of 730 inhabitants in 2019 it is divided into 2 parts; Dorp Cadzand and Cadzand-Bad, areas which are about 2 km apart. Dorp Cadzand is the part of the village where most of the population live. A large proportion of this population is older (60% aged over 45 years and 30% aged over 65 years) as younger residents have moved away to find affordable first-time homes. Dorp Cadzand has few facilities with only a bakery and no shop to buy groceries from. The village also lacks a bus service and therefore residents either need to be able to drive to get groceries or have someone who will take them. There were some activities for older people that provided opportunities to socialise, but many were sedentary activities such as playing cards or listening to talks.

The other area of the village, Cadzand-Bad, is located near the beach and caters for tourists and second homeowners. Therefore, this part of the village has facilities such as hotels and restaurants.

The aim for the future is to better integrate the two presently distinctive parts of the village. One mechanism to do this had been identified as developing the natural assets of the area alongside the well-being of the population to create a destination that is perceived as a place that could improve health and wellbeing. Creating a health resort of this nature would be a unique innovation and the only one on the north-west coast of the Netherlands. This is a wider, longer term strategy for the area. Cadzand was the focus for two SAIL pilots Vitality Boulevard and Healthy Food Chain.

Pilot overview

The Vitality Boulevard pilot was an opportunity to help focus upon the health and well-being issues of the older people living in the village of Cadzand. Compared to some of the other pilots, at the start there was limited understanding of the community because it had not been the subject of previous research. This meant that there was a need to conduct primary research to better understand the needs of the area and assess how these might be addressed by SAIL. Thus, the Explore Phase involved conducting interviews with various stakeholders including inhabitants, entrepreneurs and tourists and distribution of a survey to inhabitants over the age 55 years.

Through this process of data collection, the pilot manager began to develop a better understanding of what was needed. As a result, Vitality Boulevard came to focus upon:

- Finding sustainable solutions that keep the elderly active and increase their long-term health and wellbeing.
- Encourage active aging within the village by developing new businesses or service models.

The community where the SAIL pilots were based is small and the implication of this was that the project aims needed to gain the acceptance of community. The approach taken by the project staff was to personalise the message that healthy lifestyle choices were important to ensuring long-term health and wellbeing. This was achieved by introducing the opportunity for older people to take part in a health check and receive advice based upon their results. These results revealed that 40% of adults were overweight which was above the average for Zeeland and there were also a significant number who had high cholesterol.

Key issues for the Pilot

As the pilot evolved it became apparent to pilot staff that their initial approach which had been based on previous experience of project management had hampered their early progress. In previous schemes there was a need to quantify in monetary terms the potential derived benefits of a scheme. However, with SAIL projects were to be based on the concept of social innovation so it had to be understood that:

“Not everything is measurable, so you have to look at other values [held by older people] and our system was not looking at these kinds of values yet.” [Interview with project staff].

The pilot managers also found that it was beneficial to collaborate with other pilots to capitalise on professional networks with each other. It was also the case that there was stakeholder overlap between pilots and so engaging with these stakeholders together made more efficient and effective use of time.

Time was an issue for the pilot as it was felt that there had not been enough time assigned to manage the pilot and more could have been achieved with more staff time. Budget was also an issue that hampered staff time as the budget set for the pilot had not included sufficient funding to cover the cost of running activities. Therefore, staff time had to be diverted to writing bids to potential funders rather than delivering activities. It was this need for further funding that was also an influential factor in the Vitality Boulevard pilot working collaboratively with other pilots so they could pool financial resources.



Training session for a community activity organised

Part 2: Evaluation

PILOT 3 CADZAND-BAD: DEVELOPING VITALITY BOULEVARD

Introduction

The goal of the pilot Developing Vitality Boulevard Cadzand-Bad was to provide activities and services that increase the movement of elderly inhabitants and tourists and that provide an opportunity to interact. The aim is to stimulate long-term behavioural changes, which will consist of increased movement and increased variety of movement activities (walking, swimming, light-intensity cardio, etc.). The Vitality Boulevard should attract inhabitants from Cadzand-Dorp to Bad, to encourage use of existing tourist facilities and services.

Results

Based on the sessions with stakeholders several ideas were generated. During the explore phase, different ideas have been executed. Health checks were provided to inhabitants and tourists. During these health checks the participants received a thorough check-up that demonstrated their fitness, BMI and such measures. They also got advice on how to improve the measured health indicators. 40 percent of participants in the health checks was overweight and a significant number had high cholesterol. The lifestyle advises were motivating to improve physical health as participants got clear explanations of the effects of their lifestyle behaviour (eating patterns, use of tobacco/alcohol, sports and movement) on their health. The lifestyle advices were specific, personal and easy to follow to stimulate healthy behaviour. An important project for the vitality boulevard is the development of a thalasso/wellness center. This center will be aimed at both tourists and inhabitants of the region and is being developed by several stakeholders. As this is a long-term project, there are no measurable results from this part of the vitality boulevard. It is however expected that tourists and inhabitants will have a higher perceived wellbeing when visiting the thalasso center regularly. Other ideas are a foodtruck with healthy foods and a community garden where local herbs and foods can be harvested, but due to complications related to permits these ideas have not been developed yet.

Sustainability

The health checks are expected to be sustainable as they provide lifestyle advices to participants that are easy to follow, therefore motivating participants to implement long-term behavioural changes in their daily life. Also, once the boulevard is completed and offers more activities such as the thalasso center, healthy food options and the community garden, it is to be expected that the environment will stimulate healthy behaviour as well, supporting the effects of the health checks.