



In April 2009, over a hundred houses were demolished in the district Woensel-West as part of an urban renewal plan. The site would remain closed off by a typical construction fence until the start of the new housing development in 2011.

During a research on how to reintegrate the fenced-off area into the neighbourhood, designer Vincent Wittenberg became inspired by the many fences in the front gardens of the houses. When it comes to form, the garden fences and the construction fence have a lot in common. The main difference lies in what the two types of fences communicate. A garden fence does not only divide but also announces something.

Wittenberg proposed to replace the existing construction fence by an enlarged copy of one of the demolished garden fences, including 2 gates. By doing so, the anonymous gap became a familiar site, the largest front garden in the neighbourhood. Volunteers from the neighbourhood built the 180-meter fence in one day.

This intervention at the border of

the terrain literally restored the space to the neighbourhood. The former gap is now a public space with allotments and a playground.

Vincent Wittenberg is a designer from the Netherlands. In 2009 he graduated at the Design Academy Eindhoven, public space department. He is always looking for the latent potential of a location, and considers design less in terms of problems to be solved and more as the discovery of hidden possibilities.

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Photographs by Vincent Wittenberg