



EUROPEAN
URBAN RESILIENCE
FORUM

25 - 27 June 2025

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

12TH EUROPEAN URBAN RESILIENCE FORUM

Self-guided Resilience in Urban planning tour

25-26 June 2025

Rotterdam, The Netherlands

Venue: LantarenVenster

Self-Guided Architecture Tour: Climate Adaptation Through Community and Design

Heliport Groen: please use google maps to navigate to the following location:

<https://maps.app.goo.gl/aMeoKaHct34GCSBQA>):

Theme: Urban water resilience, community-led adaptation, and nature-based infrastructure

Estimated duration: ~40 minutes (including exploration time)

Walking distance: ~500 meters

What to Know:

“Klimaatpleinen” or climate squares are part of Rotterdam’s city-wide strategy to make public spaces more climate-resilient by integrating water-sensitive design into urban infrastructure.

These squares:

- Are designed to handle heavy rainfall, reduce urban heat, and improve biodiversity.
- Feature elements like sunken gardens, green roofing, and stormwater buffers.
- Are often co-developed with local communities, showcasing public participation in resilience planning.



Look for:

- Permeable pavements or sunken play areas where water visibly collects.
- Landscaping that includes drought-resistant plants and water features.

As you head toward the Heliport complex (a few minutes northeast from Binnenrotte), you’ll pass examples of these interventions.

Heliport Groen – Community-Led Climate Courtyard



Oude Noorden district, near the corner of Heliport and Karnemelkshaven



What You’re Looking At:




Welcome to **Heliport Groen**, a **former concrete courtyard** transformed into a vibrant, green, and water-smart public space—thanks to a grassroots effort by resident **Diana Vergeer** and a coalition of local partners.



The Big Idea:

This **community-initiated project** replaced paving stones with greenery, smart water infrastructure, and a playful public realm.

Key features include:

-  **Biodiversity & cooling:** A rich mix of plants and flowers replaces paving, cooling the area and inviting pollinators.
-  **Rainwater management:** Rooftop downspouts are disconnected and redirected to the courtyard. Rainwater flows visibly into a sculptural gutter and collects in a sunken central playground. From there, it drains toward the Karnemelkshaven, a nearby canal.
-  **Community composting:** A “wormenhotel” (worm hotel) converts food scraps into compost for the garden.

- 🦊 Natural play: Wooden play equipment blends into the environment.
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👥 How It Happened:

- In 2018, resident Diana launched the idea by removing a few tiles to plant greenery. This sparked the support of the Tussentuin Foundation, the municipality, and the regional water authority (hoogheemraadschap).
- With funding (including EU subsidies), the project grew into a full redesign.
- Rainwater design was led by Rain(a)Way, who created the visible water system, including the custom gutter and sunken plaza.
- The plan was guided by a climate adaptation analysis, identifying heat and stormwater risks.
- Finished in late 2020, it's now maintained by local residents, who clean, compost, and even remove litter from the nearby canal monthly.

🌍 Why It Matters for EURESFO:

- **Water Resilience in Action:** Demonstrates how small-scale, visible water infrastructure builds awareness and preparedness.
- **Co-Design & Ownership:** Real, ongoing **resident involvement** makes this a model of inclusive, just resilience.
- **Systems Thinking:** Connects rainwater, play, nature, and community into a single, holistic system.

📷 What to look for:

- The **gutter sculpture**—it's as elegant as it is functional.
- Play areas with **sunken landscaping**—both artistic and practical.
- Compost bin ("worm hotel")—community waste turned into community benefit.

🗺️ Local Tip:

- If time allows, visit the **Karnemelkshaven canal**, a short walk around the back of the complex, to see where the rainwater flows.
- The **Hofbogenpark** (a green roof project Diana now supports) is also nearby for those wanting to explore more green-blue infrastructure.

Heliport Groen isn't just a courtyard—it's a blueprint for grassroots resilience: integrating design, ecology, and community pride.