

TOOL n°6 – Define Neighborhood principles (Manifesto)

MANIFESTO FOR A RESTORATIVE NEIGHBORHOOD (Kortrijk, Belgium)

Wherever people live together, conflicts arise. This is also true in our city. But we have a choice! As citizens, we have the power to deal with them courageously and respectfully. This manifesto calls for courage and for building a city where everyone counts and takes care of each other and the environment.

Start by listening

Put your own ideas and judgments aside for a moment. The other person has their story too. Listen to understand, rather than to react. In this way, mutual understanding arises, and we lay the foundation for a peaceful solution.

Embrace the difference

As a city, we are a unity in diversity. See the other as equal and experience how differences in opinions, cultures, and experiences enrich us.

Engage in conversation

Choose dialogue, even when it's difficult. Don't walk away and certainly don't go on the offensive. Seek what unites us. No one wins as long as not everyone wins.

Dare to say sorry

When we point a finger at the other, do we also point it at ourselves? It takes courage to acknowledge our mistakes and take responsibility for our own words and actions. Only then can we truly bring about change.

React when you see something wrong

Intervene in a firm and non-violent way if you witness insults, bullying, (sexual) harassment, or any other inappropriate behavior. Seek allies. Together, we move forward.

Choose compassion over revenge

In a conflict, attack is not the best defense. Choose gentleness. Revenge leads to hardening, while compassion leads to reconciliation and healing. Only when healing occurs can everyone move forward.

Aim for encounter

Come out from behind your screen and meet the other in person. A stronger sense of connection creates a stronger sense of safety and trust. This is the city we dream of.