

The enhancement of the natural site and landscape of Hof ter Musschen,

Commission on the environment of Brussels and its environs ASBL

The Hof ter Musschen project aimed to preserve, enhance and animate an old rural and typical landscape to the east of Brussels. Located just outside the regional territory, this site of high biological and landscape value is composed of a farm, wet meadows, reed beds, wooded areas, wastelands, orchards and a mill. Part of a 17th century Brabant farm, Hof ter Musschen ceased agricultural activities in 1979. It is bordered to the south by the Woluwe River, and by a main road heading towards the city. Threatened both by the extension of the St. Luc University campus and urbanisation, the Hof ter Musschen project has been a true fight for citizens to safeguard and protect its historical and biological values. Since 1990, the Brussels Committee on the Environment and Surroundings Association, ASBL, in partnership with local and regional stakeholders, has ensured sustainable management of the landscape, organising scientific-level study days as well as awareness-raising actions: rehabilitation of the bakery, mowing, osier beds, beekeeping, school activities and guided tours. These activities have helped revive the landscape and for it to evolve favourably.



The Committee of Ministers of the Council of Europe acknowledged and praised the great value of the project presented for the 4th Session 2014-2015 of the Landscape Award of the Council of Europe's European Landscape Convention and recommended making it well-known to the general public for its exemplary value, and as a source of inspiration. The project has helped preserve an ancient rural landscape threatened for years by the urbanisation of the surrounding areas. Playing a key role in the sustainable development policy in the region, it owes its existence to the initiative of residents eager to save the Hof ter Musschen and to protect its important landscape values, both historical and biological. Since 1990, the Commission on the Environment of Brussels and its environs, in partnership with local and regional actors, has supported the sustainable management of the site and conducts awareness-raising campaigns among the school population and the general public. The outstanding achievements and actions performed will thus help protect, manage and plan the landscape for the benefit of present generations and pass it on to future generations.