

# Commoning the revival of historic estate kitchen gardens

*European symposium on the conservation of  
historic fruit and kitchen gardens*

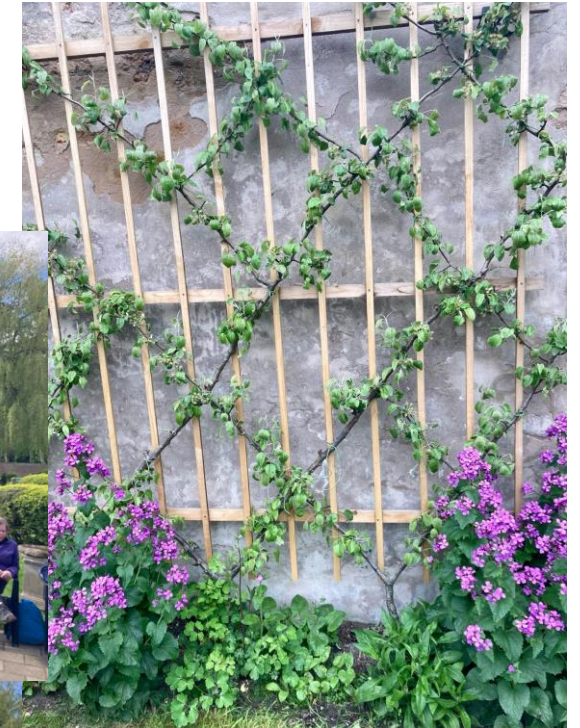
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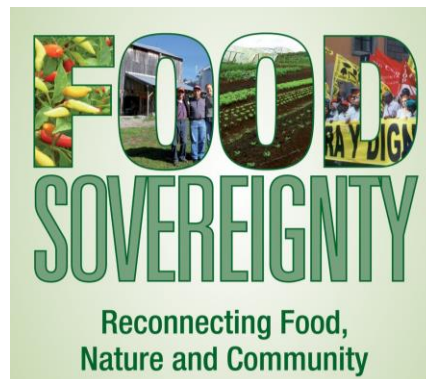


# Workshop agenda

- Getting to know each other: introduction
- Gaining some insights: key findings of the study
- Getting to work: exploring your own 'heritage community'



# Personal introduction



Utrecht  
University



Transitie naar  
een duurzaam  
voedselsysteem



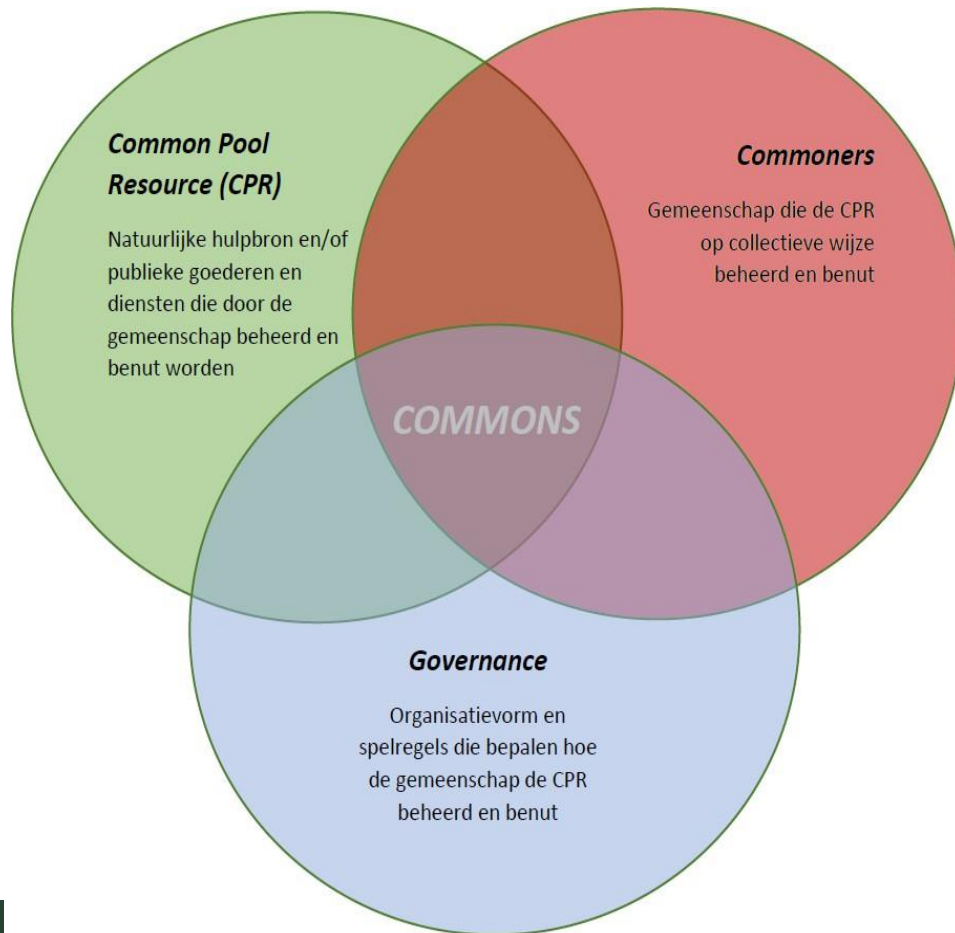
013FOOD  
samen - lokaal - actief

# Background of the study

- Request from [Erfgoedhuis Zuid-Holland](#), via platform [Collectieve Kracht](#);
- Main question: how can 'commoning' act as a foundation for the revival of historic kitchen gardens?
- Qualitative approach: case studies, interviews, field visits;
- Student involvement: Jennifer Anderson, Tana Rusanov, Quinty Kocken;
- Study as part of a bigger research project which explores the bottom-up transformative power of alternative food networks and community-supported agriculture in the Netherlands;
- Keywords: collective action, governance, citizen participation, commons, heritage



# Our analytical lens: the commons



**The common pool resource** in the context of the kitchen garden refers to the garden itself and the resources from the respective land. The land is not privately owned but it is owned by the public. Resources on the land are shared within the group of commoners.

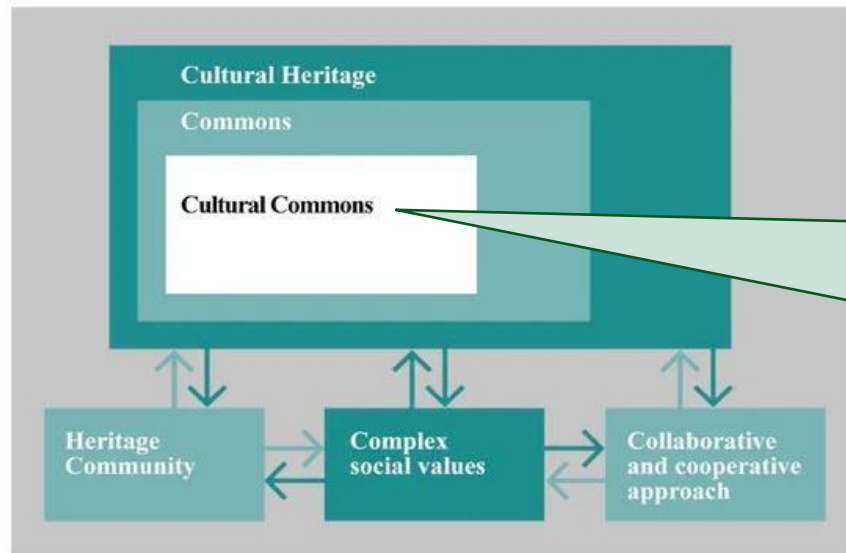
**The commoners** are all the people who are directly, or indirectly, involved with the resource. This implies the people owning the garden, the people who are managing the garden and all the participating people within the kitchen garden (Bakker, E. et al, 2022).

**The governance** is the organisational structure and the way the institution designs the rules. These governance structures are self-regulating and self-managing. However, sometimes the local municipality collaborates with these institutions (de Moor, 2013). The governance structure is established in such a way that the commoners can ensure that the resource is enriched from a future generational perspective.

Source: Bakker et al. (2022)

# Seeing historic kitchen gardens as commons







- **The place:** what is its story (place-based narrative)? What are its functions?
- **The people:** which value orientations (intrinsic, relational, instrumental) do they have?
- **The governance:** which form of self-organization and ownership connect the people with the place?



The Faro Convention (Council of Europe, 2020):

- promotes the diversity of value-based dimensions of heritage;
- cultural heritage assets contribute to local communities (and vice versa);
- citizen participation and democratic decision making is key in the renewal and management of heritage sites (*heritage communities*).

# The case studies

Estate name	Location	Function(s)	Governance & ownership
<p>Berbice</p> 	<p>Voorschoten, Zuid-Holland</p> 	<p>Heritage site Country house Park and orangery Rose and kitchen garden</p>	<p>Heritage foundation Head gardener, fixed group of volunteers Restricted access to the public</p>
<p>Haanwijk</p> 	<p>Sint-Michielsgestel, Noord-Brabant</p> 	<p>Nature conservation Kitchen garden Community wellbeing Care support &amp; education</p>	<p>Brabants Landschap Head gardener (caretaker), loose group of volunteers Open access</p>
<p>Oostduin</p> 	<p>Den Haag, Zuid-Holland</p> 	<p>Heritage site Park and kitchen garden Community engagement Food &amp; education</p>	<p>Community foundation &amp; municipality Head gardener, volunteer working groups Open community access</p>

# Key findings

- Place-based process: commoning is about connecting a place with local people, in a self-organized manner;
- Alignment: the function(s) of a place, the value orientations of people involved, and the form of self-governance are clearly connected with each other;
- Multi-dimensional: commoning can present an opportunity for assigning a meaningful and social function to heritage resources, while promoting community cohesion and local food provisioning;
- Preconditions: an experienced garden leader, clear visibility and open access of the place, local community engagement are crucial ingredients.



# What is reviving?



We see the kitchen garden as an important feature of your historic estate. To develop the kitchen garden with the future in mind, you can consider the following:

### *The place*

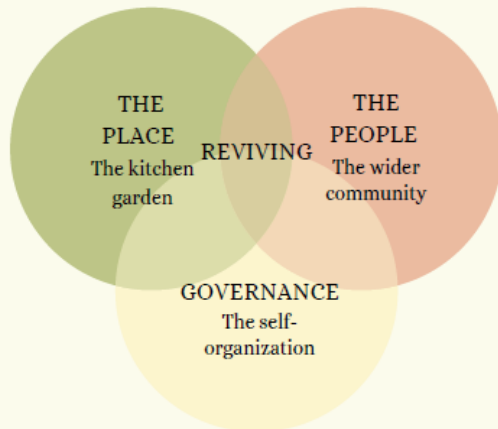
The garden as a place where heritage, people, and food communities can co-exist.

### *The people*

You, as an estate owner, have the opportunity to work with local citizens to form food communities.

### *The governance*

Together, with your food community, you can decide the garden function.



# How to revive?

## Make the kitchen garden with and for your community!

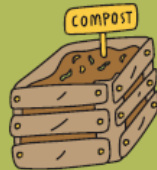
### BE ACTIVE!

Make your kitchen garden visible through the local paper and social media! You can also host an open day, this will enable you to involve your community.



### BE CREATIVE!

Your kitchen garden can become a creative space for food production and experimentation, as well as a place for culture, art, and educational workshops. Anything that suits you and the community.



### HAVE A VISION!

Have a long-term vision and a clear function of the kitchen garden together with your community. Do you want to be inspired? Scan the QR code for an example.



# Build your food community

To revive the kitchen garden, you can work with several layers of the community. Your food community could look like this:

### THE KITCHEN GARDEN LEADER

who has expertise in growing food, gardening, and can guide the volunteers

### THE VOLUNTEERS

are active citizens who want to grow and consume healthier food, as well as feel part of their neighbourhood

### THE WIDER COMMUNITY

includes other citizen groups and initiatives such as schools, restaurants, and knowledge sharing platforms like Erfgoedhuis Zuid-Holland

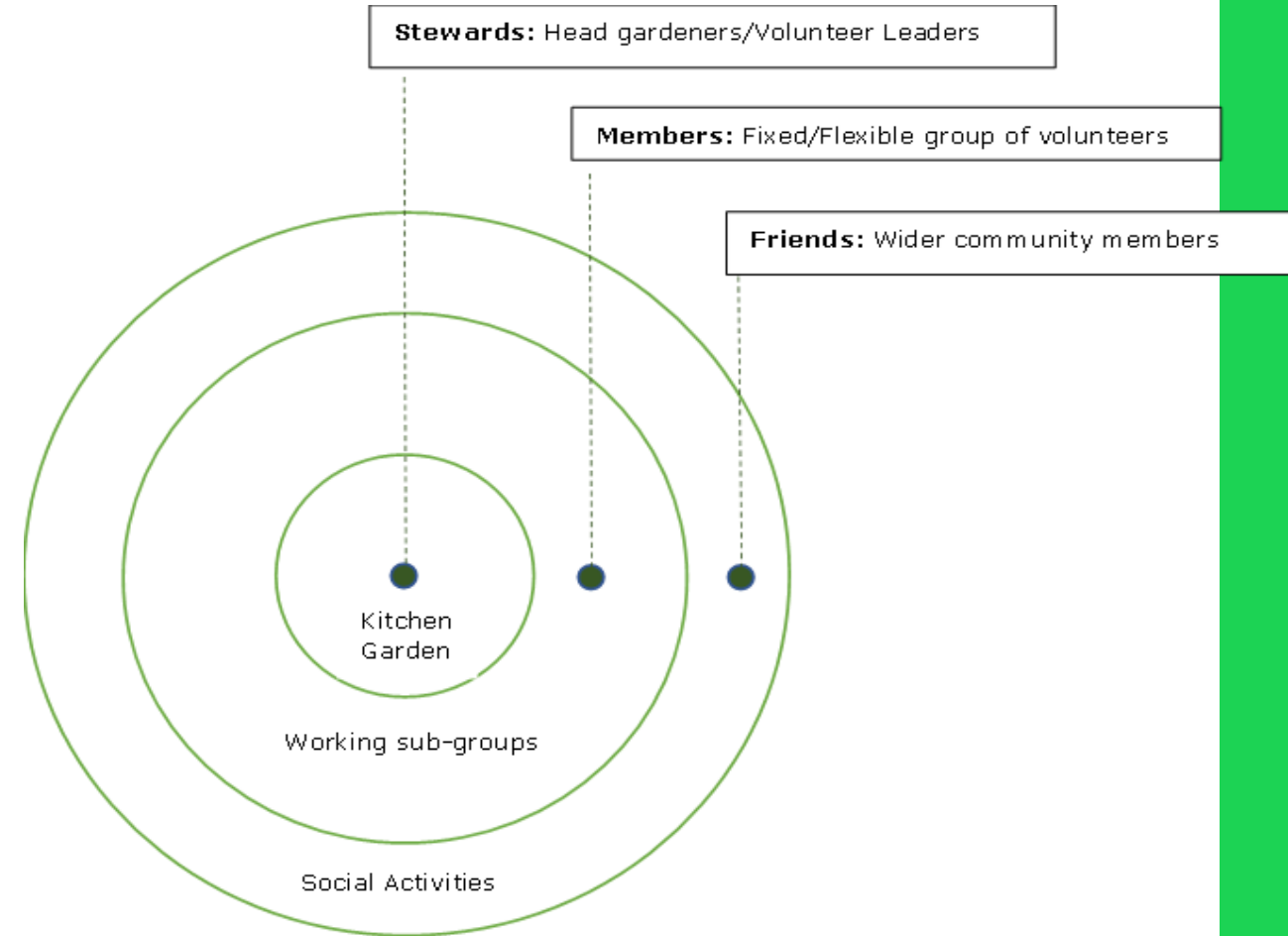


# Let's get to work: exploring your own 'heritage community'

Which different types of local community engagement can you identify for your estate?

How could you organize this engagement?

Who are your stewards, members and friends?





**Thank you**

***Do you want to connect?***

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