



The stairwells have been given a green design, bringing nature into the building's core.

**Programme** courtyards and patio in a housing complex **Location** Amsterdam, Netherlands **Designers** Bureau B+B stedebouw en landschapsarchitectuur **In collaboration with** Arons en Gelauff, KENK architecten **Commissioned by** Lieven de Key housing association, Amsterdam **Area** 1.1 ha **Design** 2017-2020 **Implementation** 2019-2022 **Budget** € 942,000 [www.bplusb.nl](http://www.bplusb.nl)

## Lieven Zuidblock

Designed by Bureau B+B

When the Lieven de Key housing association decided to build a new residential complex in the western part of the Dutch capital Amsterdam, they wanted it to fit in with the perimeter blocks in the area while also offering an open layout. The urban design created by Arons and Gelauff represents the perfect compromise: two blocks with courtyard areas that are open to the public. Clever design choices ensure that visitors feel they are entering a semi-private area. This approach succeeded, thanks in part to the landscape architects that designed the internal space.

Bureau B+B placed a fence and used planting to create intimacy, which give users the feeling they have entered a different environment. Accessed via gates that are always open, the courtyard spaces form a pathway. The gardens, situated a little away from the route, have a forest atmosphere with rocks, grasses, ferns, and trees. Semi-bound surfacing makes them more intimate, which deters people from straying too far. A huge climbing plant forms a 'green wall' in the open stairwell as it grows up towards the higher floors. Water buffers, ditches, runnels, and a swale make the gardens climate-proof. This is pioneering work, as these were not yet prominent considerations when B+B began work on the project.

The architectural layout suits the target group of students and others just beginning their adult lives, people with relatively small homes, and active urbanites. The facilities in the building complex, which include a gym, laundry bar, and café, generate an urban buzz at ground level.

*Mark Hendriks*



Along the public route that winds through the residential blocks, seating and lounging areas have been created for relaxation and socialising.

*'Soft, green, atmospheric – a valuable answer for how to design residential landscapes in the densely built-up cities of Northern Europe'*

*Jandirk Hoekstra*



Landscape design for the inner courtyards of two new residential blocks in Amsterdam-West.



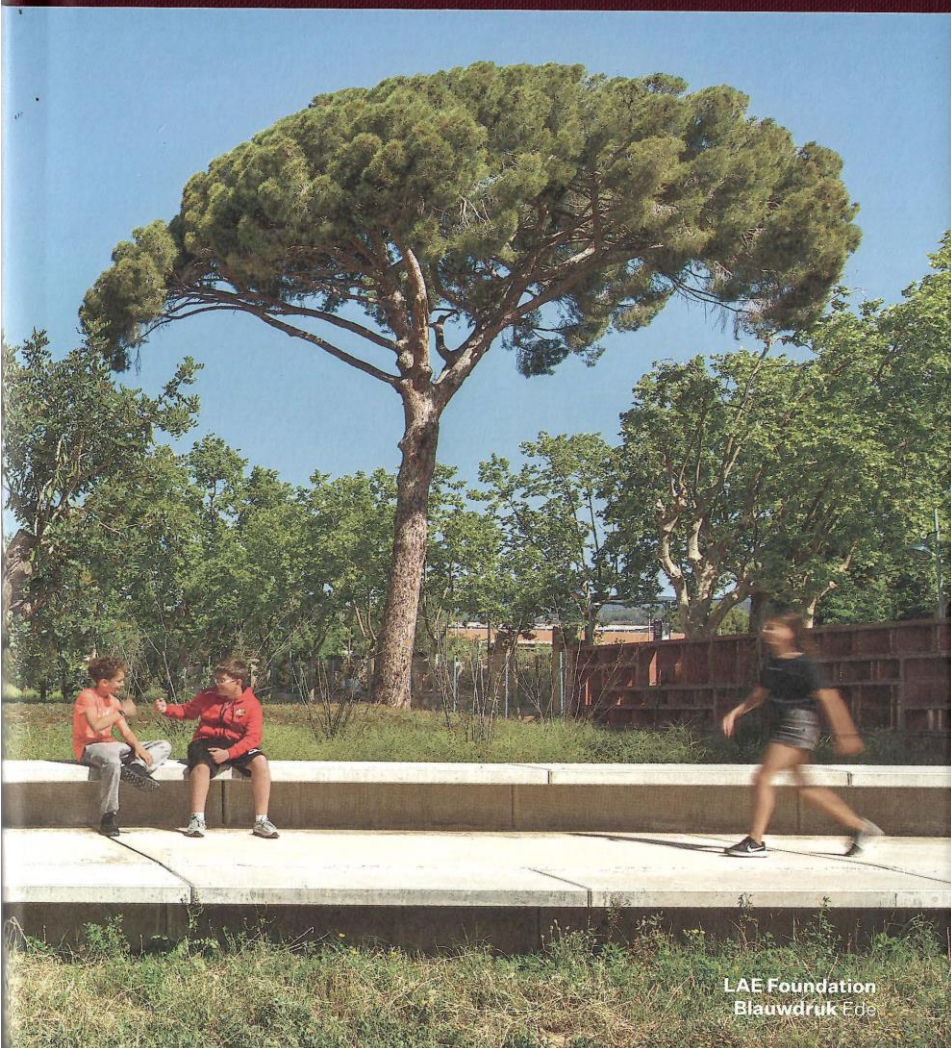
The distinctive fences signal to passersby that they are entering a residential area, subtly marking the boundary.

At times, the inner gardens take on a forest-like feel.



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