



The long-term prospects of citizens managing urban green space: From place making to place-keeping?



T.J.M. Mattijssen^{a,*}, A.P.N. van der Jagt^b, A.E. Buijs^a, B.H.M. Elands^a, S. Erlwein^c, R. Laforteza^{d,e}

^a Wageningen University and Research Centre, Droevendaalsesteeg 3, 6708 PB Wageningen, The Netherlands

^b Forest Research, Northern Research Station, Roslin, EH25 9SY, United Kingdom

^c Technical University of Munich, Chair of Strategic Landscape Planning and Management, Emil-Ramann-Straße 6, 85354, Freising, Germany

^d Department of Agricultural and Environmental Sciences, University of Bari 'A. Moro', Via Amendola 165/A, 70126, Bari, Italy

^e Center for Global Change and Earth Observations (CGCEO), Michigan State University, East Lansing, MI, 48823, USA

ARTICLE INFO

Keywords:

Place-keeping
Active citizenship
Green space management
Self-governance
Adaptive capacity
Urban green space

ABSTRACT

This paper discusses the long-term management or 'place-keeping' of urban green space by citizens and highlights enabling and constraining factors that play a crucial role in this continuity. While authorities have historically been in charge of managing public green spaces, there is an increased involvement of citizens in green space management. It is therefore relevant to study how citizens can contribute towards place-keeping and realize a continuity in managing and conserving the qualities of urban green spaces.

We contribute to these debates by looking at three European cases characterized by long-term involvement of citizens in place-keeping. We conducted document analysis and interviewing of key informants to study green space management over time. Our analysis highlights what factors have contributed towards the continuity of this management, but also shows challenges and difficulties which citizens have experienced. Based on our fieldwork, we identify three factors of particular relevance for the continuity of place-keeping involving citizens.

We found that long-term continuity is supported by a degree of *formalization*: established rules and procedures within groups provide stability to citizens. We also highlight the importance of *adaptive capacity*: citizens need to be able to adapt to contextual changes in order to cope with external political, socio-economic and cultural developments over time. The *supporting role of authorities* was also key in legitimizing and supporting place-keeping by citizens. Authorities can support place-keeping by citizens by providing security via stable policies, formally protecting the involved spaces, allowing long-term management contracts and contributing resources.

1. Introduction

1.1. Active citizenship in urban green space

Urban green spaces provide a range of important ecosystem services and can contribute to the improvement of the local climate (Laforteza and Chen, 2016); biodiversity (ibid.), water retention (McDonald, 2015), health and wellbeing of citizens (Tzoulas et al., 2007), and recreation (Lovell and Taylor, 2013). Although these services are increasingly being recognized by scientists, conservationists and policy makers (McDonald, 2015), green space in many urban areas is under pressure. The quantity and quality of urban green space is negatively affected by encroachment of residential areas and infrastructure (McWilliam et al., 2015). Furthermore, many green spaces in urban

areas are inadequately managed, resulting in a loss of green space quality (Burton et al., 2014; Perkins, 2010). With this, the benefits that many green spaces provide to the urban environment and population are under pressure (Dempsey et al., 2014b).

Citizens have become an increasingly important actor in the governance of urban green (Rosol, 2010). While local authorities are often the main managers of urban green space (Van der Jagt et al., 2016), a lack of funding for green space management has spurred an interest in potential contributions of citizens to this management (Perkins, 2010; Rosol, 2010). Policy makers also express a desire to empower citizens (Bailey, 2010; Mattijssen et al., 2015), and a trend towards active citizenship is visible through the emergence of an increasing number of bottom-up initiatives (van Dam et al., 2015). There are nowadays many citizens involved in a wide variety of green space management practices

Abbreviations: PAA, Policy Arrangement Approach

* Corresponding author.

E-mail addresses: thomasmattijssen@gmail.com (T.J.M. Mattijssen), alexander.vanderjagt@forestry.gsi.gov.uk (A.P.N. van der Jagt), arjen.buijs@wur.nl (A.E. Buijs), birgit.elands@wur.nl (B.H.M. Elands), s.erlwein@gmx.de (S. Erlwein), raffaele.laforteza@uniba.it (R. Laforteza).

<http://dx.doi.org/10.1016/j.ufug.2017.05.015>

Received 19 July 2016; Received in revised form 23 May 2017; Accepted 24 May 2017

Available online 16 June 2017

1618-8667/ © 2017 Elsevier GmbH. All rights reserved.

(Mattijssen et al., 2017b). Independently or in cooperation with authorities and other actors, these citizens have the potential to realize a wide range of environmental and social benefits (Mattijssen et al., 2017a in review-a).

1.2. The long-term horizon of citizen engagement in urban green space management

In the long term, the increased engagement of citizens might have implications for the quantity and quality of urban green. While managing high quality green spaces typically requires on-going commitment (Dempsey and Burton, 2012), the abovementioned trends are recent developments. There is still uncertainty about the long-term continuity of citizen engagement in green space management and what this means for the quality of these spaces (Dempsey et al., 2014b). Recognition of these challenges has led to an increased emphasis on responsive long-term management and the role of citizens in this (Smith et al., 2014).

In this paper, we explore factors influencing long-term engagement of citizens in the management of urban green space. For this, we use the concept of place-keeping. Place-keeping is understood as *'responsive long-term management which ensures that the social, environmental and economic quality and benefits a place brings can be enjoyed by present and future generations'* (Dempsey et al., 2014; p.9). The concept of place-keeping sheds light on the socio-spatial processes of conserving and maintaining the qualities of spaces (Dempsey and Smith, 2014). By employing the concept of place-keeping, we thus focus on how citizens play a role in maintaining the qualities of urban green over time.

There is a lack of research that assesses the effectiveness of long-term management approaches (Dempsey et al., 2014a). Literature and policy often focus on the planning and design of new green spaces, also called *place-making*. However, there is much less focus on processes of conserving the qualities of these spaces once they are created, the *place-keeping*. The involvement of citizens in place-keeping is seen as being *'still in its infancy'* (Smith et al., 2014; p. 64), so even less is known about the role of active citizenship in place-keeping. There is thus a need to better understand what influences the long-term continuity of green space management by citizens in order to promote a long-term maintenance of the social, environmental and economic qualities of urban green spaces.

We contribute to international knowledge on this by studying the long-term management of urban green space by citizens in three European cases. Previous research has indicated that citizen groups managing local green spaces might encounter difficulties in ensuring a continuity of membership (Mathers et al., 2015) and in securing (long-term) funding (Lawrence et al., 2014). However, long-term place keeping by citizens has not been systematically analysed before. In the present study, we add to these findings with a more focused and systematic analysis of factors enabling and constraining long-term green space management by citizens. This paper aims to answer the following research question:

What factors contribute to and constrain continuity of urban green space management by citizens?

Lessons from our research can be used to support place-keeping by citizens. We will also provide recommendations to authorities who might be interested in the possible contribution of citizens towards place-keeping.

2. Analytical framework

Citizens always operate in a broader spatial (Lawrence et al., 2013) and socio-political context (Bailey, 2010). While place-keeping is given shape through daily management activities, it is influenced by processes beyond the space itself: policy plans from local authorities, extreme weather events or an economic crisis can directly or indirectly influence management. We study place-keeping by citizens as part of this wider *governance* context, with governance encompassing *'the many*

ways in which public and private actors from the state, market and/or civil society govern public issues at multiple scales' (Arts and Visseren-Hamakers, 2012 p. 242).

2.1. An integrated approach to study place-keeping

In our study, we focused on *activities* that citizens employ to conserve and increase the quality of the involved spaces. It is through these activities (e.g. mowing grass, planting trees, creating and maintaining paths) that places are maintained and enhanced (Burton et al., 2014). However, in order to identify important factors contributing to place-keeping, we also needed to gain insight into the broader processes of organizing these activities. In order to do so, we employed the Policy Arrangement Approach (PAA; Arts and Leroy, 2006), which is an established approach for analysing the governance of natural resources (Ayana, 2014).

The PAA provides a comprehensive analytical framework for studying this broader organizational context with the use of four analytical dimensions: *discourses, actors, rules, and resources* (Arts et al., 2006). We adopted the PAA because these analytical dimensions provide a holistic and comprehensive perspective on governance while also being practically applicable (see Ayana, 2014 for more details). Also, the PAA can capture dynamic processes and changes over time (Liefverink, 2006), fitting the idea of place-keeping as an ongoing process. We have used insights from existing literature on place-keeping to aid in operationalizing the PAA as a framework for studying place-keeping by citizens.

2.2. Dimensions of analysis

We know from the literature that design and management are important themes in place-keeping (Burton et al., 2014). These themes encompass the human *activities* through which places are created and maintained. Important activities also include the coordinating and organizing of management (Mattijssen et al., 2017b).

With the *actors* dimension, we study the individuals and organisations involved in place-keeping and their specific role (Arts and Van Tatenhove, 2006). Place-keeping often involves multiple actors who cooperate or form partnerships (Burton and Mathers, 2014). In this, we scrutinized the role of different actors but also processes of interaction and cooperation. Throughout this study, we focused explicitly on the role of volunteering citizens.

The *rules* include regulations and formal and informal procedures that determine the barriers and opportunities for actors to act (Arts and Leroy, 2006). Formal policies and regulations often have an influence on place-keeping (Lindholm et al., 2014) and are important to study. We also scrutinized how all kinds of formal and informal procedures guided activities and the organization of place-keeping (Arts and Van Tatenhove, 2004; Burton and Mathers, 2014).

The dimension of *discourse* refers to the content of governance and includes the views and narratives of those involved (Arts et al., 2006). It is important to understand the objectives of actors as what motivates them to engage in place-keeping (Mathers et al., 2015). To do so, we have studied the ideas that actors use to give meaning to their activities and the involved places, including centrally formulated objectives as well as personal motivations of different actors.

The dimension of *resources* scrutinizes financial and material resources and skills that actors mobilize to achieve certain outcomes (Arts and Leroy, 2006). Funding is essential to place-keeping (Dempsey and Burton, 2012) and includes capital investment for one-off improvements as well as funding for ongoing management (Kreutz et al., 2014). Tools and equipment are also important resources for place-keeping (ibid.), as is natural capital – in our study, the place of place-keeping itself. We also look at social capital, including capabilities of actors, knowledge and skills (Dempsey and Smith, 2014; Smith et al., 2014).

With the use of the above dimensions, we have operationalized the

Download English Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/en/article/6461828>

Download Persian Version:

<https://daneshyari.com/article/6461828>

[Daneshyari.com](https://daneshyari.com)