



Turnhout

in BLOOM



Introduction Turnhout

In 1212, Turnhout was granted city rights by Duke Henry I of Brabant. Originally the castle of Turnhout was a summer lodge of the Dukes of Brabant, with extensive hunting grounds and a park of its own. In the middle Ages, Turnhout, being a market town, became the economical centre of the Campine.

After Belgian independence in 1830 it became a town on the frontier with The Netherlands. The building of the railway line, the canal and the motorway made it into the modern industrial town and economical centre which Turnhout is today.



Number of inhabitants (1 January 2016)

- Turnhout: 42,886
- Town region (Beerse, Oud-Turnhout, Turnhout and Vosselaar): 84,944
- District (27 municipalities): 452,696

Turnhout demographics (1 January 2016)

- 0 – 19 years old: 21 %
- 20 – 64 years old: 60 %
- 65 and older: 19 %

Turnhout surface

- Total: 21.64 square miles or 56 km²
- Population density: 1968 inhabitants per square mile or 759 inhabitants per km²
- Built-up area: 4.7 square miles or 12 km²

Surface per function in Turnhout

- Residential area: 20 %
- Enterprise area: 8 %
- Green area: 22 %

Persons employed

- Turnhout: 29,595
- Town region (Beerse, Oud-Turnhout, Turnhout and Vosselaar): 45,795
- District (27 municipalities): 153,225

Mayor: Eric Vos

Alderman for environment: Hannes Anaf

Alderman for green spaces: Luc Debondt

Number of employees: 493 (= 11.7 per 1,000 inhabitants) of which

- 47 in the Urban Development sector,
- 32 staff for maintenance of green spaces





Planned development approach

In Turnhout we chose for an integrated approach. Urban planning, environmental and nature policies, water and sewage policies, mobility and the arrangement of the public space constitute a base for urban development.

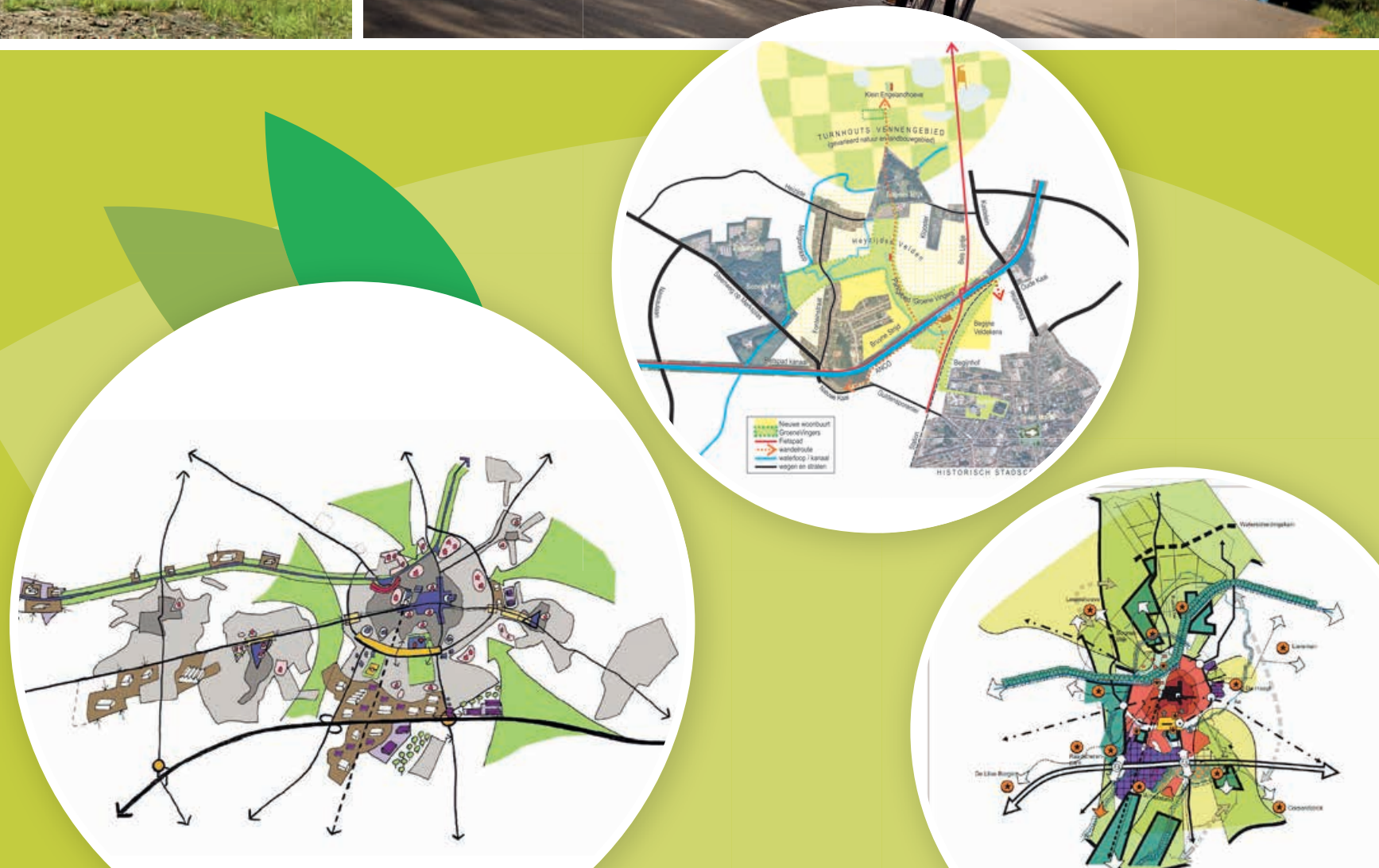
The Turnhout town council wants to reconcile the quality of life of people and the opportunities for development of enterprises in an integrated manner. Vision is converted into projects which offer space for living and relaxing, working, education and care. In this manner the town council helps to build a sustainable world on the local level.

The regional zoning plan describes the Turnhout region as the only Flemish town which is entirely surrounded by open spaces. In 2008 the town council decided to keep a circle of 'green fingers' around the entire town free of constructions. In this way the centre of the town is directly linked to the large green zones around. These open areas are part of the green-blue network. They give the necessary space for a natural water policy, for green recreation and for our G-routes. The latter is a network of green cycling routes which connect the town with the neighbouring municipalities and the recreation zones in the outer areas.

The northern green finger is currently being developed. From the 'Warande', the castle gardens, a whole series of green spaces have been recently created. In this way the historic green areas in the heart of the city are connected to the nature reserve 'Turnhouts Vennengebied' [Turnhout heaths and ponds area].

In the same way the green finger to the natural landscape 'Liereman' and the 'Grotenhoutbos domain' is also on the drawing table.

By means of the environmental policies various policy areas and aims of the town council are bound into a single structure.





Environment

Natural Environment

■ Actions taken for water quality in rivers, streams, lakes, beaches

Turnhout has a sewerage rate of 97 %. This has improved the water quality in the rivers and streams markedly over the last years. The largest, historical part of the sewerage system is a mixed system. In the case of heavy rainfall this causes the sewage treatment station to be overburdened, resulting in untreated water being discharged into the watercourses. To address this problem, new sewerage is always installed in separate systems, and during the redevelopment of existing roads a split sewerage system is installed.

In order to separate the sewerage and drainage in the historical centre, rainwater drains are installed to which all rainwater sewers can be connected. Outside the centre these become open canals, and space is created for the infiltration and buffering of the rainwater. This not only ensures an improvement of the water quality, but it also prevents or limits flooding downstream.

■ Responsible use of chemical products

In the environmental licences which the town council grants to enterprises, there is a lot of attention for the use of dangerous substances and the protection of the environment, in accordance with the Flemish regulations. Old historical contaminated sites and dumps are cleaned up. The town itself sets the good example by managing the public domain without pesticides.

■ Rain water collection

The town council aims for maximum re-use of rainwater and local infiltration. Where this is not possible, the town council chooses buffering. The remainder of the rain water is drained off separately. For this also space is provided for buffering and infiltration. Where possible this infiltration and buffering of rain water is done in open natural systems. These watercourses and ponds are green elements which also have a substantial experiential and ecological value. In the town centre, where the open spaces are limited, underground infiltration systems are provided.

■ Actions taken for air quality – policy on emissions and use of fossil fuels

The Turnhout town council signed the mayors' covenant aiming to reduce the emission of greenhouse gasses by 20% by 2020. Both citizens and enterprises are involved in the action plan.

Built environment

■ Actions taken for waste minimization

In Turnhout a weight-DIFTAR system has been introduced (Differentiated Tariff for Removal). This means that residual waste, and vegetable and garden waste which is collected at home, but also the waste delivered to the container park, is weighed. Inhabitants have to pay per kilogram of waste. This results in more awareness concerning waste.

Additionally, paper and PMD waste (Plastic, metals and drinks cartons) are collected at home. By collecting the various recyclable fractions the separation of waste collections is stimulated. The result is a small amount of waste and a large percentage of separate and reusable collection.

■ Composting and green waste recovery

The Turnhout council actively supports the functioning of the compost masters, volunteers who inform citizens in their capacity of home composting. In the case of problems they also visit the citizens at home. As citizens have to pay per kilogram of green waste, home composting has received a significant boost.

The inter-municipal waste processor uses the collected green waste to produce green compost. It is used by the municipality for the establishing and maintenance of green spaces. At the container park the compost is also sold to the citizens. Large quantities, from 1 m³, are home-delivered against payment.

■ Policies and actions taken for the use of sustainable energy

The Turnhout town council is a fervent supporter of renewable energy: on the one hand the classic sources such as wind and sun, but on the other hand also deep geothermal energy, a unique project in Flanders.

Through the installation of heat-networks the town wants to become fully energy-neutral over time. These heat-networks will be fed by geothermal sources, supplemented by wind and solar energy.

In the framework of geothermal energy and heat-networks, Turnhout is taking an active role by installing heat-networks in its own projects, and by making them compulsory in new private projects.

Together with external partners a search for a geothermal source is underway. The town council wishes to involve the citizens in this. Therefore, the town council decided that in every project regarding renewable energy at least 20% citizen participation must be provided. For this there is cooperation with Campina-energie, a citizen's collective. The citizen's shares in two windmills, which are being built this year, and both have already been sold.

The heart of the town has various historical open spaces which, even today, determine the urban design. The castle of the Dukes of Brabant in the middle of the town is the core of it.

After the French Revolution the castle domain was split into various parcels for a variety of services: prison, hospital, school, rest homes. The only remaining green parcel was the Kasteeldreef (Castle Drive).

The building of the cultural centre 'de Warande' was the start of a new castle park dedicated to culture in all its shapes. The green space was restored, step by step, to a contemporary green park in the heart of the town. The car parking, the party hall and the exhibition space were therefore built underground.

The Beguinage also was part of the original castle domain, and has now been awarded UNESCO World Heritage status. Together with the nearby 'Huys methen Thoren' (House with the Tower) it is the peaceful garden zone in the heart of the town.

The Grote Markt (Main square) on the other hand is the reception area of the town; the 'Turnhout salon'. In 2012 it was recreated without car parking, strongly reprising the historical square from before the car invasion.

During the 19th century a commercial and industrial town grew around the historic centre. Over recent decades the large print-works and weaving-mills disappeared. The town council acquired various plots, which at this moment are mainly temporarily being used as centre car parks. Some became residential complexes. The National Museum of the Playing Card is housed in one of these old factories. On the site of the old Brepols print-works – very near the Grote Markt – and after years of planning, the Flemish urban renewal project Turnova was started in 2015. There will be a great diversity of housing, a shopping mall with underground car park and a new arts campus for more than 2,500 students. In the project a large area for neighbourhood green spaces is planned, which will also be accessible to the housing areas around Turnova. This is an example of mixed use which increases the quality of life in the heart of the town.

The urban renewal is supported by upgrading the public spaces. Not only squares and parks, but also the main streets are getting a new adapted profile, with attention for pedestrians and cyclists. The new green structure with avenue trees creates a green relationship with the old arterial roads which can be recognised as drives in the landscape.





Landscape

Three landscapes join in Turnhout. The town is close to a slight rise, the cuesta, which separates the brook valleys of the Nete basin from the Ponds area to the north of the town.

Up north, you'll find the Turnhout heaths and ponds area, between the Scheldt and Maas basins. The sandy topsoil is naturally poor and slightly acidic, and was for a long time cultivated under communal management. Larger scale agriculture only became possible in the 20th century. Now a balance is sought between economically profitable agriculture and nature preservation.

With the investments of two larger scale instruments, land development for nature and EU-LIFE, some 200 ha consisting of mainly pine plantations, arable land and intensively cultivated grasslands has been restored to a complex of heaths, ponds and species rich grasslands. The meadowlands are also important for the typical birds such as lapwings and black-tailed godwits. Walkers and cyclists have the opportunity to discover the area by means of a network of walking and bicycling hubs. The visitor's centre Klein Englandhoeve is the ideal starting point.

To the south are the drier moor fields which were preserved in the military domains. Here also work is being undertaken for landscape restoration and nature preservation. They can only be accessed after agreement with the Belgian Army, but can be admired from the train which drives straight through them.

This combination of wet and dry moors gives Turnhout a large biodiversity, especially because the nature reserves connect to other large domains in the region, such as 'de Liereman'. Together with Mol, Turnhout boasts the most priority species of plants and animals in the province of Antwerp. With the Flemish Agency for Nature and Forests (ANB) and the volunteer nature conservation organisation Natuurpunt the town council is working on the species aims of the EU-NATURA2000-policy.

If you make a walk with the nature guide, you can find the water lobelia population of Turnhout, indicating the unique quality of the pond shorelines, is the largest in Belgium. There are special birds such as the black-tailed godwits and the nightjar. Everywhere around the ponds you can find sundew (Drosera), the little insect-eating plant.

Turnhout is not a town beside a great river, but a town surrounded by many small brooks, streams and ponds. The town centre is built on rises in the wet surrounding area.

The Aa collects the water of these brooks and streams, and takes it towards the Scheldt. The valley of the Aa always has been a landscape of wet meadows and marshy woods. Notwithstanding the straightening of the bends and the draining of the meadows, large parts have kept their natural character.

The town park was purposefully placed in the valley to limit the built-up area. Even when the Aa runs through residential areas, spaces are kept free for green and water. In the new development around Schorvoort an ecological neighbourhood park on the Aa will be provided, with a cycling route at the edge of the built-up area.

In the area of Turnhout the rows of oaks are very recognisable. They were planted along all arterial roads and important agricultural sites as wood for everyday usage. Especially around Zevendonk and the Wieltjes they determine the entire landscape. Therefore you can also find them in many housing developments, as a reminder of the historical landscape.



Cleanliness and tidiness

■ Clutter, Litter, Litterbins, Cigarettes

The town council has a cleanliness plan which determines where and how often cleaning is carried out. In the centre of town the public spaces are maintained by council workers. In the outlying neighbourhoods there is cooperation with the social employment initiative 'De Troef'.

Cleaning is done by council workers with a hand cart. For more extensive work they use cleaning vehicles, brush vehicles and vacuum cleaners. Turnhout has 148 volunteer litter pickers, of which more than 100 are very active.





Open green spaces

The green spaces in Turnhout are an important structure carrier in the town. Until recently public green spaces were expected to have a mainly decorative value. Over the last years the town council has also concentrated on new aspects such as quality of the environment, climate resistance, biodiversity, wellness and health.

Types of green:

■ Parks:

Town park:

- Multifunctional park with provisions for sports and playing
- Arboretum with various remarkable monumental trees
- Animal meadow
- Woods which are extensively managed with growing focus on biodiversity
- Extensive grassed areas and intensive lawns

Park Heizijde Velden:

- Multifunctional park taking games, health and biodiversity into account
- Town farm
- Fruit orchards
- Living heritage (such as the Campine moor sheep)
- Community Supported Agriculture garden
- Allotments

Park Begijnveldekens:

- Extensively managed park with a Finnish running parcours, play area, basketball and skate park.
- The green plantations are mainly extensively managed flower meadows, wood sides and intensively mowed lawns.

■ Cemeteries

Turnhout has a park cemetery outside the centre, and a historical cemetery in the centre. The park cemetery is designated as nature area with special monumental trees and green plantations. The cemetery in the centre is mainly of historical value, but will be greened in the near future. A design and management plan are at this moment being drawn up by the town council.





■ Neighbourhood green spaces

The town of Turnhout has various types of neighbourhood green spaces:

Playgrounds

Smaller parks and larger green areas:

- Beyltjenshof
- Anco parkbos
- Boomgaardplein
- Hellegat
- Parkwijk
- Zevendonk with various small squares
- Oranjemolenstraat
- Fietsbrug
- Garden of the Grote markt
- Warande and Kasteelplein
- Senior garden Natuurgaard De Wending

■ Traffic green:

Turnhout municipality works on strengthening the structure of the traffic green. The planting types must be in function of the type of road profile and the intensity of the traffic. In streets with a lot of traffic, strong planting which is salt-tolerant has been chosen. In quieter streets planting which also has an additional value for biodiversity is preferred.

■ Street trees:

Street trees are planted and maintained where possible.

The type of tree is determined by various factors (road profile, subterranean space, distance to facades, diseases and pests, falling fruit allowed or not ...).

In narrow streets, inhabitants are encouraged to establish facade gardens or to place flower containers. This is done by means of flower actions.

■ Sports parks:

Leemshoeve:

soccer infrastructure whereby the soccer pitches are surrounded by wooded strips, hedges, lines of trees and a drive with monumental summer oaks.

Town park:

provisions for football, tennis, minigolf, archery ...



Permanent planting

In order to make urban areas attractive and liveable a good green infrastructure is necessary. Open spaces with rows of trees and drives make residential and industrial areas more liveable and recognisable. Sometimes the rows of trees and wooded edges are remains from the agricultural past, when they bordered fields and meadows.

In the centre of town and in the residential areas open spaces and road trees are also used to give character to the public space and to make it recognisable. Along the arterial roads we also extend the lane structures into the historical heart of the town. The tree species varies depending on the width of the road and the type of building along it. These rows of trees are frequently sited in the parking areas. The planting area there is limited, but thanks to good caretaking they still manage to give a strong street scene. In the heart of the town itself, solitary trees catch the eye in strategic locations.

Around the Saint Peter Church on the Grote Markt a special garden has been established. Within the old cemetery perimeter a quiet perception garden has been planted, with perennial plants and trees, and many varied blossoms. The walkways are demarcated by continuous benches with built-in lighting.

The town council deems it important that there is freely available seating space in the Turnhout Salon, and not only terraces of cafés. The free wifi massively attracts the school children during their free periods.



Maintenance and management

Turnhout's green management is for 75 % in the hands of external gardening contractors. The plantations and the pavings in the central streets are maintained by the municipal greens service. Weeds are controlled without chemicals, but by means of frequent sweeping, brushing and burning.

A herbicide is used sporadically only at the cemeteries, because these have not yet been completely reconverted. The reconversion of the cemeteries is planned for 2017-2018. After these reconversions herbicides will no longer be used.

For the last few years the public gardens are designed in such a way that maintenance can be done in a more efficient manner. Not all grass in Turnhout is intensively mown, but there is a division into mowing with capture, weekly mulching, and extensive grass and flower meadows. The verges in the outer area are divided in various categories as well: non-biologically valuable, biologically valuable and biologically very valuable.

The very valuable verges in the Turnhout heaths and ponds area are mown with small scale machines in order to apply a fauna and flora friendly management. The small scale machines do not mow the valuable plants and flowers, so these plants can seed and spread out. In autumn the verges are totally mown, but the removal of the cuttings is done in a second stage. This is necessary so the seeds which are still present are not immediately removed, but can still fall on the soil.

Tree management

Five years ago the town council started establishing a tree inventory. This tree inventory is extended every year. Each time this is combined with maintenance or guidance for pruning. In five years time all trees on the public domain will have undergone a VTA (Visual Tree Assessment), which will have charted the state of all trees.

Seasonal planting

By providing seasonal planting at suitable locations in the centre of Turnhout a colourful image is created. The flowers ensure that the inhabitants and visitors feel welcome in the centre of Turnhout. Annually, the town council places 195 flower baskets in the various shopping streets and along the terraces of the Grote Markt. Flower towers or giant flower pots are placed at striking locations. Flower boxes are attached to some of the railings in the centre.

From 2016 three types of flower baskets with different colours are distributed throughout the streets of the centre.

In the near future the town council will also invest in the planting of bulbs in the grass strips along squares, roads, in planting areas, in the town park...

Some years ago the town council already had bulbs planted along the ring road. When the flowers appeared, the passers-by got a pleasant feeling of spring. As there has been a lot of demand for spring flowers and bulbs, the town council will invest in these in the near future.





Environmental education

Environmental and nature education is very important for the town. By thoroughly informing the inhabitants from a young age, they can grow into being environment and nature aware citizens. The town council has various ways of doing this.

The town council entered into an environmental covenant with all schools. Schools which are consciously engaged with environmental themes such as waste, sustainability, energy, nature... can obtain a subsidy from the town. Each year the schools report what their main focus was during the year.

For environmental and nature education the Turnhout town council closely cooperates with Natuurpunt CVN. This organisation is specialised in nature and environmental education. Thanks to the support of the town council, the association extended its establishment in the town into the Natuurpunt Museum with an associated educational garden. Natuurpunt has its own programmes for schools and individual citizens.

At various locations, such as in the Town farm and at the Klein Engelandhoeve, educational suitcases are available for schools and other groups. The materials in the suitcases treat themes such as water, healthy nutrition, and so on.

At the Town farm the compost masters have their own demonstration space. Once a month citizens can visit to get answers to their questions.

At the Town farm you will find a demonstration bee-hall,

managed by an association of apiarists. They also give guided tours on request. The hall with information stand can be visited during the opening hours of the Town farm. The association also organises training for starting apiarists.

At the Klein Engelandhoeve 'nature guide' courses are organised by Natuurpunt CVN. Each month there is also a free guided nature walk.

Both at the Town farm and at Klein Engelandhoeve there are exhibitions and information stands concerning nature, agriculture, food...

Apart from that the town council also organises its own events or participates by means of a local activity in national or regional initiatives: walks with nature guides in the framework of 'Day of the Park', 'Night of darkness', 'Town park festivals', participation at the Ponds Festival, open day at the Town farm...

Of course inhabitants are also informed and sensitised concerning themes such as waste, energy, and nature through the municipal information publications.



Effort and involvement

The principle 'make a town together' has been prominently included in the administrative agreement of the current town council. The town cannot realise its policy on its own. It is important that associations, citizens and other stakeholders help.

This policy choice is successful! Turnhout has 148 volunteer litter pickers, of which more than 100 are very active. Together they picked up some 1,200 bin bags of litter. Apart from that Turnhout has 13 compost masters. Also there are 8 conservators at Natuurpunt Beheer for the management of the Turnhout nature reserves.

The neighbourhood inhabitants are always involved in the realisation of projects. For large projects the inhabitants concerned can give their input about various aspects of the project through workshops. In this way the town council not only obtains valuable information, but the engagement of the neighbourhood with the project is also increased.

There are various manners in which

engaged citizens participate in the management of the public domain.

Inhabitants can also choose to adopt one or more planting areas. The town council supports the inhabitants by making plants available and by giving an annual reward. In the Parkwijk a number of inhabitants maintain part of the public green which adjoins their homes. Tile gardens are promoted in residential areas where the footpaths are sufficiently wide. Each inhabitant can request permission to take up some tiles from the footpath in order to brighten up their facade with climbers or small perennials.

Some playgrounds are managed together with the neighbourhood. The tasks are divided by means of a neighbourhood contract. The town council gives support by making materials available. The persons responsible in the neighbourhood ensure that the playground is locked at night, that litter is removed, that damages are reported to the town services... In return the town council provides additional furniture and free bin bags.



Tourism and leisure

Attractiveness

Turnhout is located in the north-eastern part of the province of Antwerp, very near the Dutch border. As the smallest of the 13 centre towns, Turnhout is unique because of its location in the middle of extensive green areas. From the historical centre of the town it only takes minutes to reach the green surrounding via the various green fingers. Nature embraces culture: from the Turnhout heaths and ponds area to the north, recognised on a European scale, and the landscape of the Lierman to the east, the Grotenhout wood to the west and the Campine ridge to the south. Furthermore it lies close to the towns of Antwerp, Tilburg, Breda and Eindhoven, the amusement parks Bobbejaanland, Efteling and Beekse Bergen, and nature areas such as the colonies, the regional woods, woods of Chaam, Regteheide, etc. The Dessel-Turnhout-Schoten canal passes through the northern area of the town, the motorway through the southern area, also an industrial zone. The railway that comes from the south terminates in Turnhout.

In contrast to many other cities of the same type, Turnhout never built ramparts. The town arose on the crossroads of two major trade routes, just next to the castle of the Dukes of Brabant, which served as hunting lodge of the Dukes. This hunting past can still be found in the coat of arms of the town. Today, the castle of the Dukes of Brabant serves as court house and in the surrounding park you can find the celebrated culture house 'De Warande'.



In the immediate vicinity there is the Beguinage, declared a World Heritage Site by UNESCO, a beautiful and unique beguinage, a small town within the town. By means of a detailed landscape management plan this oasis of peace is preserved for the next generations. The charming Beguinage museum takes you through the history of the Beguines of olden days. The Saint Peter's church is sited centrally on the Grote Markt, which was fully pedestrianised in 2012. The chapter church boasts a beautiful pulpit, choir and fine leaded windows. Turnhout has a rich history of the graphic industry with many print-works in card boarding, bibles, prayer cards, comics but especially playing cards. Carta Mundi, world market leader in the production of playing cards, and since the acquisition of Hasbro in the production of board games, is still based in Turnhout. The National Museum of the Playing Card tells the story of the playing card production, with extensive collections of playing cards, a large machine park and an authentic steam engine.

The Taxandriamuseum is housed in the Huys metten Thoren, the one but oldest patrician building in the town. Here various characters tell the tale of the Taxandria region, the Campines, from the lace maker to the hunter, from the teacher to the women of Turnhout. It is pleasant to have a few minutes of rest in the peaceful garden of the museum.

Apart from that, some wonderful heritage sites are more or less hidden, such as the Meduceum, the Historic Printworks and Corpus Christianorum, and the town has various important churches, buildings and facades.

Infrastructure

Via the clever walking and bicycling nodes network you can combine the heritage in the town with the nature and attractions in the outlying areas. Via many miles of low traffic roads and trails you can explore the provinces of Antwerp and North-Brabant. Horse riders and mountain bikers will find plenty to be happy with. The Dessel-Schoten canal, a blue artery, ensures peace and stability. Where in long gone times brick-works and clay pits ensured economical activity, you will now find ponds, lakes and pleasure cruising along the canal. There is a long history of land use. The many users of the marina at the Nieuwe Kaai (New Quay) call the stretch of canal between Turnhout and Dessel unique.

Via the former railway line Bels Lijntje you are taken across the nature reserves, the enclave Baarle Hertog-Nassau and some picturesque villages of Turnhout across the border to Tilburg. Bicycles can be rented at the bicycle point, a social employment project.

Hotels, B&Bs, a nice camping site, a youth hostel and accommodation specifically for poor people, invite you for an exploration of the area for several days. Turnhout counts some 55,000 overnight stays, of which a substantial amount are business related.

Marketing and development policy

Turnhout has a website with a great amount of touristic information: www.toerismeturnhout.be. We are working hard to update multilingual parts of the new website. Apart from that Turnhout has an attractive touristic brochure in various languages, a guide with a walking route through the town, and many product flyers. Turnhout actively participates in the Campines media campaign. Apart from the touristic website there is an 'out' website, which enthuses visitors for participation in a large number of leisure activities. At the UiTloket booking office in Tourism house 't Steentje information about this can be obtained, as well as tickets purchased.

In our tourist marketing, and by extension city marketing, we aim to present the playing card as USP as much as possible: 'Turnhout Trumps'. We do this through communication actions, tourist reception and product development.

Some examples of touristic products and events: bierTROEFroute (beerTRUMPSroute), scooter route along the dead's wire, playing card walk, tasteful bicycling along the canal, puppet walk, slow boat cruises, picnic on Tuesday etc.

Sustainability

Turnhout focuses on heritage education through an active inter-communal heritage association, a large pool of guides and many new touristic heritage products. Nature and agriculture education are also intensely highlighted. In this way Turnhout effortlessly combines the trumps of the inner town with those of the outlying areas. The visitors' centre Klein Engelandhoeve, located at an old laundry, is the ideal starting point for walks through the ponds. The Town farm is on the other side of the canal, next to the town centre. Both gateways to the ponds are exploited by a social employment initiative. We are working on new bicycling and walking products, such as the puppet walk and routes around the Bels Lijntje.

Each year we work on an annual touristic theme, around which new products are developed. For instance, in 2012 we celebrated the 800th anniversary of the town, in 2013 the caring past of the town, in 2014 the start of WWI, in 2015 the border, in 2016 the anniversary of the canal, and for 2017 the jubilee of the Bels Lijntje.

Owners of guest accommodation are encouraged to have corporate social responsibility through energy saving measures (green key), taking part in holiday participation, etc.



AGENTSCHAP
NATUUR & BOS

