

# Spatial intervention in rural development

*A case study of Kiel-Windeweer*



Master Thesis Cultural Geography  
Author: Johan Dankert  
S2169568  
University of Groningen  
Faculty of Spatial Sciences  
Department of Cultural Geography  
Supervisor: Prof. Dr. D. (Dirk) Strijker

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## **Abstract**

The Veenkoloniën in the northeast of the Netherlands is an area where average household income and employment figures are below average (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001; Strijker, 2008, CBS, 2019). Moreover, the region is perceived as backward, economically as well as socially and culturally; too much dependent on agriculture and affiliated industries (Rijnks & Strijker, 2013). To improve the region, a committee devised a plan to reopen the redundant canals that characterise the region in order to make a navigable route through the area for recreational boaters that would form a missing link between (inter)national waterways (Agenda voor de Veenkoloniën, 2003). By stimulating tourism in this way, the plan would diversify the economy of the region, increase the quality of life of residents, strengthen the identity and improve the image of the region.

This study evaluates the impact the canal has had on a specific village along the route: Kiel-Windeweer. The main research question therefor is:

*What has been the effect of reopening the Kieldiep on the identity, valuation, sense of place, average house value and business environment of Kiel-Windeweer?*

To answer this question, this study makes use of several research methods. Quantitative methods, more specifically, a questionnaire was used to gather data on residents' perception of the identity, valuation and sense of place of the village. To measure what constitutes the perceived identity of the village, the degree of association with identity markers, was indicated by respondents (Tempelman, 1999). Sense of place was measured using the method described by Jorgensen and Stedman (2001). Average house value was gathered using data from Statistics Netherlands, and compared to other areas. Valuation and identity markers have been compared to a study done in 2008, before the canal was reopened, in order to identify the effect of the reopening (Reiling, 2008). The effect of the reopening of the canal on the business environment was investigated using semi-structured interviews.

The conclusion of the study is that physical constraints has hampered the tourism entrepreneurs to engage fully with the recreational boaters and that the effect on the valuation, identity and sense of place is negligible. According to the results, Kiel-Windeweer is very much like other Dutch villages in general, and in particular comparable to other villages in the Veenkoloniën. The effectiveness of spatial intervention as a tool for rural development is, on the basis of this very limited research, very much dependent on local circumstances.

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## Chapter 1 - Introduction

The Veenkoloniën, a region in the northeast of the Netherlands, is characterised by artificially dug canals, once upon a time used to drain and transport the peat dug there. Between the 1950's and 1980's a lot of these canals were closed in or dammed off, in order to provide space for road construction. However, the region is still perceived as backward, economically as well as socially and culturally (Rijnks & Strijker, 2013). The region is also seen as too much dependent on agriculture and affiliated industries. Employment figures and median household income are below the nations average (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001; Strijker, 2008, CBS, 2019). Because of the aforementioned reasons policy makers and academics alike have bestowed the region with a disproportionate amount of attention. The Dutch national government has in the past tried to improve the region through a large-scale restructuring of the physical environment in the area (such as the beforementioned closing of the canals). Somewhat more recently it ordered a special committee to come up with advice on how to improve the region (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001). Based on the advice of that committee a number of tangible projects were proposed to address the identified problems. One of these projects was the redevelopment of existing canals to create navigable route that links several existing recreational lakes and waterways (Agenda voor de Veenkoloniën, 2003). This plan was named “*Van Turfvaart naar Toervaart*”, a metaphor for the idea that the historical peat transportation by barges in the area would be replaced by recreational boaters as one of the pillars of the regional economy (Grontmij, 2002).

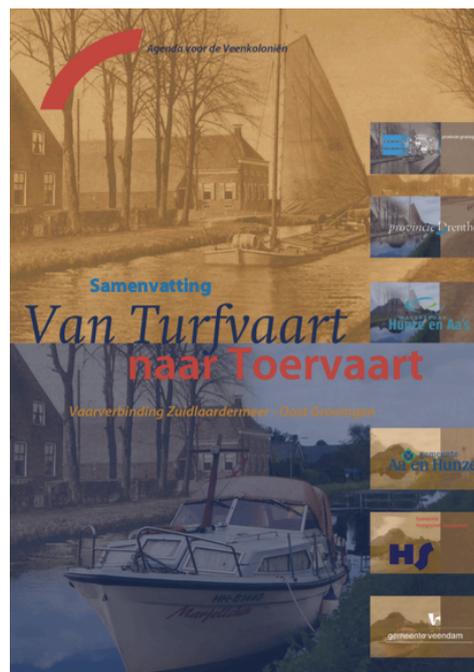


Figure 1: Report on the reopening of the canals (source: Grontmij, 2002)

According to that plan the people living near these canals would see an increase in their wellbeing because of the project: “*These new tourist developments stimulate a rediscovery of the living environment. Through this the identity of the region will be strengthened and the wellbeing of the inhabitants will increase*” (Grontmij, 2002). Because of these predictions a

student of Cultural Geography of the University of Groningen, Maarten Reiling, did a study on the subject just before the plan was completed (Reiling, 2008). He wondered whether the inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën were really more interested in their surroundings, and if the project really did strengthen the identity of the villages? Were the inhabitants going to value their living environment more? These are questions of change, and thus Reiling deemed an approach that involved a comparison appropriate. The central case he chose was the village of Kiel-Windeweer. This village has the layout of a linear settlement. Houses are built on both sides of an almost straight canal, with almost no roads and even less buildings perpendicular to the canal. This type of settlement is common in the Veenkoloniën (Duyvendak, 2003). Kiel-Windeweer in particular was chosen because of three reasons. First, the layout of the village is still very much original, and has been designated a protected townscape (Staatscourant, 2006). Second, this part of the new route was first to be completed. And third, Kiel-Windeweer was relatively undisturbed by researchers. It was argued that the willingness to cooperate therefore would be greater than in other settlements along the route (Reiling, 2008). To investigate the effect of a navigable route, Reiling chose for a comparison with a different village in the Veenkoloniën that already had a navigable route going through the village. But ten years have passed since the reopening in 2008 and this provides a unique opportunity to revisit Kiel-Windeweer and study the effect of the reopening of the canal on the village.

Because the plan was intended to diversify the economy of the region, especially through promoting tourism, I will not only study the effectiveness of the reopening of the canal on strengthening the identity of the village, but pose the question whether the reopening of the canal has had an effect on the economy of the village, in particular on the tourism-related businesses as well. Were there any new start-ups? Could the start-up be related to the reopening of the canal? How did these businesses fare? What role does the canal play in their business strategy? It was argued the reopening of the canal would also lead to the area becoming more attractive for migrating to. Would there then also be an effect on housing prices? Together all these questions have yielded a main research question:

*What has been the effect of reopening the Kieldiep on the identity, valuation, sense of place, housing prices and business environment of Kiel-Windeweer?*

In order to answer the main research questions, several sub questions are posed:

- *In what way does the ascribed identity of Kiel-Windeweer now compare to that of ten years ago, and could changes be related to the canal?*
- *How do people value Kiel-Windeweer compared to ten years ago, and could changes be related to the canal?*
- *How do residents relate to their living environment, as measured by sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer?*
- *In what way have the housing prices developed since the reopening of the canal?*
- *In what way has the tourism-business environment of Kiel-Windeweer developed according to the relevant entrepreneurs?*

In this study the effect of reopening the canal will be studied using a number of indicators. The conclusions the research will yield can perhaps be incorporated when other plans are being drawn up that propose to change people-place relations through a large-scale intervention in the physical environment. Several other projects in the Netherlands have in the past tried to change the image of an area, the relationship people have with an area, or this was not the goal, but has been the effect. For instance, the closing of the Lauwersmeer on the village of Zoutkamp ([marnegebied.nl](http://marnegebied.nl)), or the development of Blauwestad ([blauwestad.nl](http://blauwestad.nl)) with a completely artificial lake. For future plans such as these conclusions of this research might be taken into account. It can also perhaps be sobering for policymakers not to overstate the effectiveness or what change is possible through spatial intervention or what might be unintended consequences.

The structure of this study is rather straightforward. Chapter II deals with the theory. Most important are the concepts of place, identity and sense of place and its subsidiary concepts. It also deals with rural development, rural entrepreneurship and the role of place in rural entrepreneurship. Chapter III focuses on the geographical context and history of the region and study. It also deals with the village of Kiel-Windeweer in greater detail. Chapter IV outlines the methods used in the study. Chapter V contains the results of the data collection. Chapter VI deals with the conclusions, the recommendations stemming from the research and also discusses the limitations of the study and potential new studies. An overview of literature and appendices are attached.

## Chapter 2 - Theoretical framework: places, identity and attachment

This chapter deals with the general theories in geography concerning places, identity and attachment. It provides an overview of the literature and a theoretical basis for understanding people-place relationships. It also provides an overview of the role of place in rural development and entrepreneurship.

### 2.1.1 Place

In geography, sociology and environmental psychology the concept of place has received ample attention during the past decades (Tuan, 1977; Relph, 1976,1978; Agnew, 1987; Canter, 1977; Gustafson, 2001; Gieling, 2018). Places are, according to Tuan (1977) spaces that are imbued with meaning. Spaces are different from places in the fact that spaces are valueless, without the meaning attached to spaces, there is no value attached. Relph (1976) identifies three components of place: physical setting, activities and meanings. In Canter's model of place (1977), place is the result of the relationship between actions, conceptions and physical attributes. While different, these definitions of place can also be seen as remarkably similar. All three of the authors identify that places are more than just their physical component and incorporate some kind of intangible meaning that makes the places unique. They also acknowledge that the activities of people located there is part of that place. These meanings of place can be subdivided into an array of different categories. These meanings range from tangible and instrumental meanings to historic, social, cultural and spiritual meanings (Williams and Patterson, 1999)

Relph (1976, 1978) and Tuan (1977) define places through their historical continuity, unique character, boundedness and opportunity for rest. This approach suggests that places are static and are depicted as having single, essential identities. Massey (1994, 1995) suggests that these notions are based upon a commonsensical, conservative or even reactionary idea of what places are. Contrary to the idea that places are static, Massey developed a progressive concept of place and argues that places are not developed in isolation from the outside world, but always in relationship to that outside world. Places therefor are also never finished, but always *"in a constant state of becoming"*. This notion of places as points where the local and the global intersect Massey calls a *"global sense of place"*. She furthermore argues that places are not essences but processes, since places are constantly changing, and places do not necessarily mean the same thing to everybody, since meaning is in the eye of the beholder (Massey, 1994; 1995).

Much research on the meanings of place follow the path set out by Tuan (1977) that meaning is primarily socially constructed as a result of shared behaviours and cultural processes. Greider and Garkovic (1994) agree: *"landscapes are the reflections of these cultural identities, which are about us, rather than the natural environment. Any physical place has the potential to embody multiple landscapes, each of which is grounded in the cultural definitions of those who encounter that place. Every river is more than one river. Every rock*

*is more than just one rock. Of course, humans reside in a natural world that is there, but this world is meaningless. Meanings are not inherent in the nature of things*". Eisenhauer et al. (1999) also seem to agree with this point of view: *"In essence, people confer meaning on the environment in ways that reflect their social and cultural experiences"*. The result is, in accordance with Massey (1994), that a single place can have multiple contested meanings depending on the experiences and cultural background of the various actors associating with that place.

Stedman (2003) holds a critical view that meanings are derived solely from the social construction of place. According to Stedman *"social constructs are important, [but] they hardly arise out of thin air: the local environment sets bounds and gives form to these constructions"*. At least a part of the place making process is concerned with material reality, it does not mean that the outcome of the process is determined by the physical environment, but neither does it deny the physical environment a role in the construction of place.

Legitimate questions arise from the discussions about space, place, meanings and the construction thereof: do places matter? Why do places matter? How do places matter? In the fast-moving world of today, where globalisation leads to *"time-space compression"* (Harvey, 1989), a common assumption is that place is losing parts of its importance, because more people are more mobile than before. The notion is that mobile persons are less likely than others to develop a strong sense of belonging to a place (Laczo, 2005). Van der Land (1998) and Gustafson (2009) however contest this assumption. Gustafson (2009) for instance argues that for highly mobile persons place in a local or regional sense can be even more important to them than to those who are less mobile, as to why, Gustafson indicates that it might be the case that place attachment might lead to a willingness in being mobile. Van der Land (1998) goes even further and suggests that *"mobility might in fact be conducive to forming ties with a place"*. It is in these ties to place that importance of places lies.

### *2.1.2 Identity of places*

The constructionist view has not always been dominant in human geography and in the popular discourse of today people do often assume that *"identities are intrinsic qualities of landscapes and cityscapes"* (Ashworth and Graham, 2005). In the early twentieth century this essentialist reading of identity also dominated some currents of cultural geography. These geographers, coming from tradition of landscape description, used regional narratives to describe identity as a primeval nature of the region, emphasising their personality and the harmony of the region and its people (Vidal de la Blache, 1903; Sauer, 1925). An idealised notion of the region and the subsequent conservatism usually comes along with these regional narratives (Gilbert and Litt, 1960; Winks, 1983). Paasi (2002) states furthermore that *"regional geographers were deeply involved in power-knowledge relations when creating bounded orders on the earth, fixed in apparently neutral maps and texts that identified separate regions"*. Power-relations are tied to essentialist thinking and are paramount in understanding the use of identity in society (Ashworth and Graham, 2005; Terlouw, 2012).

Current dominant views in human geography regard the idea of a singular identity of a place to be faulty and regard not the identity of a place, but multiple identities of a place contested social constructs (Paasi, 2002). Della Porta and Diani (1999) suggest that identities are constructed in relationship to the environment, by using a complex mix of defining sameness and difference to that environment. This might be in relation to social actors (public opinion, the media, institutions etc.) and/or the physical environment (landscape, architecture, weather). According to Brah (1996) identities and differences “*are actualised in many ways on several (spatial) scales – not just as neat divisions – so that one site of the construction of difference can act as the unmarked background for another*”. An urban area can be stressed as different in relationship to the surrounding rural area, while in characterising the region as a whole the sameness of the urban and rural area is accentuated. It follows that academics that adhere to this constructionist view of identities, such as Holloway and Hubbard (2001), regard places as possessing multiple identities that can be unique, but never singular. Identities of places are also seen as ever changing because of their continuous interaction with their environment.

Accepting the current view that identities are constructed and assigned, it leads to the questions such as: who is assigning the identity and for what purpose? A simple answer is that everybody is constructing and assigning identities for some form of benefit. Some identities become dominant, while others become marginalised. Through political, financial or cultural means those who hold power and have an interest to make the identity of their choosing dominant, are able to do so. Through continued exposure to the dominant identity, those who initially did not share this particular identity sometimes can grow to accept the dominant identity (Ashworth et al., 2007). One way to construct and assign identities is through the use of certain distinctive element, that is seen as significant for a person, place or group. This element is used to define the person, group or place as different from others. Tempelman (1999) calls these elements identity markers. Examples of these identity markers include the eating of raw herring or the Saint Nicholas celebrations as quintessentially Dutch. Other examples are the hijab as a marker for Islamic faith or bratwurst as essentially German. An event such as the racing of bulls in the centre of Pamplona can also be regarded as defining the unique identity of the city.

Accepting the current view that identities in society are constructed and assigned, leads to an issue. If identities for persons, groups or places are constructed and if they differ depending on the individual, it seems groundless to simplify and use identity markers as an object of study. However, constructing identity individually does not exclude the sharing of elements of that identity or that some identities are dominant. Second, using identity markers allows for generalisation and comparison. And third, if individuals believe or not believe certain elements are inseparable from the identity, they will behave and act accordingly to those beliefs.

### 2.1.3 Sense of place

The way people interrelate to places has been studied in a variety of ways, producing a number of different concepts and theories. Notable among these are community attachment (Kasarda & Janowitz, 1974), sense of community (Sarason, 1974), place attachment (Gerson et al., 1977; Altman & Low, 1992; Hidalgo & Hernandez, 2001; Lewicka, 2011), place identity (Proshansky et al., 1983; Blake, 2002; Wang & Chen, 2015), place dependence (Stokols & Shumaker, 1981), sense of place (Hay, 1998; Hummon, 1992; Jorgensen & Stedman, 2001; Xu, 1995; Mullendore et al., 2015) and belonging (Pollini, 2005; Savage et al., 2005; Gustafson, 2009). Through adopting one concept as a generic concept some authors have tried to make sense from this plethora of concepts. Hidalgo and Hernandez (2001) have favoured place attachment as the generic concept to describe a positive affective bond between an individual and a specific place. Jorgensen & Stedman (2001) have put the case forward to regard sense of place as the overarching concept that encompasses place attachment, place identity, and place dependence. It is clear that the way people interrelate to places is complex and the debate regarding the definitions and use of the various concepts is far from over. For this study the concepts and definitions that Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) propose will be adhered to. The reason for this is that the authors have clearly defined the concepts and the way they possibly interrelate. Furthermore, they have provided a clear method for measuring the concepts and this method has been used by other authors (Nanzer, 2004, Rijnks and Strijker, 2011), and positions this study centrally in the relevant literature.

Jorgensen and Stedman (2001) define sense of place as *“the meaning attached to a spatial setting by a person or group”*. They argue that sense of place is the overarching concept encompassing place attachment, place identity and place dependence. Place attachment is the positive bond that can develop between groups or individuals and their environment (Williams et al., 1992). Place identity involves *“those dimensions of self that define the individual’s personal identity in relation to the physical environment by means of a complex pattern of conscious and unconscious ideas, beliefs, preferences, feelings and values, goals and behavioural tendencies and skills relevant to this environment”* (Proshansky, 1978). Place dependence is defined as an *“occupant’s perceived strength of association between him or herself and specific places”* (Stokols and Shumaker, 1981). It differs from place attachment in that it can hinder the achievement of valued outcomes, and therefore it is possible that place dependence is perceived as negative. But it also differs from place attachment because *“the strength of the connection may be based on specific behavioural goals rather than just general affect”* (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001).

## *2.2 Rural development, rural entrepreneurship and the role of place concepts*

### *2.2.1 The rural*

Rural areas in the US and Europe have undergone changes that have raised concerns and prompted governments to devise policy to address these concerns (Brown et al. 2012). Because of diversity in rural regions across Europe these concerns are not universal, but *“in varying ways and to a varying extent they are certainly widespread and keenly felt”* (Moseley, 2003). These are concerns for various sectors of society. These include the reducing ability of traditional rural forms of employment (such as agriculture, forestry, quarrying, mining and fishery) and the associated industries to provide secure employment and adequate incomes for the people or providing services in a sparsely populated area (Salemink and Strijker, 2016; de Haan et al., 2019). Also a number of social and cultural concerns, such as *“un- and underemployment, low incomes, social exclusion, insufficient affordable housing for local people, the steady decline of local services and facilities and a deeper cultural malaise linked to the erosion of caring local communities, a sense of powerlessness in the face of rapid change, and latent or overt conflict between long-established residents and many newcomers with different sets of values”* (Moseley, 2003, Markantoni, 2012; Gieling, 2018). Environmental concerns form another group. These concerns, that are mostly related to the agricultural intensification and consequently a decline biodiversity and –mass and a less diverse countryside for habitation, stem also from the pressure exerted by an urban population that wish to use the countryside for living, working, leisure and quality of the landscape. Related to all previous concerns are a number of political and institutional concerns that deal with the inadequacy to deal with previous concerns in a way that incorporates a host of actors including the local population and recognises the interrelatedness of said concerns (Woods, 2005; for more detailed description on the challenges of the rural see Moseley, 2003; Pain and Hansen, 2019).

### *2.2.2 Rural development*

Concerns such as these have led to different approaches to rural development. Exogenous development is a centralized, top-down approach to creating growth in a rural area that is coping with low productivity and peripherality. A key principle is the theory of economies of scale and as such the focus of exogenous development could be agricultural rationalization and modernization (Ward et al., 2015). This approach to rural development can be successful in creating jobs in peripheral regions, but costs to central governments tend to be high, leading Lowe et al. (1998) to question the efficiency and sustainability of such an approach. They suggest that exogenous development promotes dependent, distorted, destructive, and dictated development. Dependent development concerns the dependency on subsidies for development, but also the lack of local control over important decisions of this type of development approach, and consequently a potential lack of local support. Furthermore, Donnelly et al. (2005) have shown that component suppliers and related industries in rural

areas can become reliant on foreign owned firms that have been encouraged to relocate to that area, essentially making the position of local suppliers, and therefore the development of that area, rather precarious.

Exogenous, top-down rural development policies can also support policies where the chosen economic activity is incompatible with locally available resources, skills, and tradition leading to distorted development (Bosworth and Atterton, 2012). The destructive aspect deals with the possibility of such policies to destroy the cultural and environmental fabric of rural regions (Lowe et al. 1998).

Endogenous, bottom-up rural development by contrast is characterized by utilizing local resources, initiative, and capacity (Norgaard, 1992; van der Ploeg and Long, 1994). This approach offers the opportunity to better target specific needs across different rural regions. (Bosworth and Atterton, 2012). However, while these kinds of approaches are able to empower communities and provide them with the ability to define their own challenges and prioritise development accordingly, this does not necessarily equate development. And while power might shift from core to periphery, locally these participatory processes have the tendency to be dominated by powerful local actors, thereby continuing the marginalisation of the powerless. In some cases, outside stimulus is needed to overcome local apathy towards participatory processes (Murdoch, 2000). Cloke (1996) furthermore argues that while many causes of rural change originate from outside rural areas in the first place, endogenous development remains unappreciative of this fact.

Neo-endogenous, or networked, development seeks to address this fact by promoting local and extra-local connections that strengthen the position of local people in dealing with the extra-local. It is endogenous in the way that it stresses the importance of the resourcefulness and resilience of local businesses, households and communities but also acknowledges that rural professionals, agencies, companies, research institutes and universities have a crucial role in linking the local actors to the outside world where capital, power and expertise is located (Esparcia, 2014). According to Gkartzios and Lowe (2019) neo-endogenous rural development is not simply *“a prescriptive model devised by scientists on how development should work in practice. It is a perspective on the governance of rural development, a way of thinking about how things work, recognising the networked nature of knowledge production.”* Neo-endogenous development values knowledge that is locally generated, but seeks to strengthen that expertise in place through interaction with externally produced knowledge (Lowe et al., 2019).

### 2.2.3 Rural tourism entrepreneurship

Especially endogenous and neo-endogenous rural development theory stress the role of rural entrepreneurship in development, because entrepreneurship is generally acknowledged as an engine of economic growth (Acs et al., 2008; Wright and Marlow, 2011; Wright and Stigliani, 2013). As such, one of the ways in which governments on all spatial levels try to develop the rural is by stimulating rural entrepreneurship in general and rural tourism entrepreneurship in particular. Entrepreneurship in the rural as a result been the subject of numerous studies

and this has led to a number of insights. Korsgaard and Müller (2015) highlight that entrepreneurship in the rural can be inextricably linked to specific places. They provide an example of a jam maker on the Danish island of Strynø. Because of the specific climate conditions on the island and the role the island plays in marketing, it would be almost impossible to relocate the jam business. In tourism as well, it is common to use place-based resources such as heritage, scenery, traditions etc. for entrepreneurial activity. Place, or the attractiveness of place, is seen as a paramount resource in tourism research (Mill and Morrison, 1992; Lundberg et al., 1995). While it may be perceived as paramount, and might also be start-up motivation, Haber and Reichel (2007) concluded that, for their study of tourism businesses in Israel, it had only a minor effect on the performance of the business.

However, not only the physical environment is of importance for tourism entrepreneurs, so is the social. Social contacts within the local community can lead to reciprocal relationships between tourism entrepreneurs and other businesses. This can be important for success of the specific businesses involved, but also for the goal of rural development in general. Ties such as these create more resilient rural communities (Bosworth and Farrel, 2011). For governments on all spatial levels fostering a culture in which entrepreneurship is valued and can flourish is of paramount importance for rural development to be successful (Moseley, 2003). According to Atterton & Affleck (2010) and Newberry and Bosworth (2010) small rural entrepreneurs could provide crucial sources of employment and improve the rural economy in general. And while some small rural businesses provide little employment opportunities for others beside the owner, they can still provide an important role in diversifying the rural economy (Wanhill, 2000).

Vanclay (2011) argues that for evaluating rural development, not only economic factors should be taken into account, but that it should also encompass social aspects as social networking, participating in the community and the sense of being part of a community, because these are all defined as attributes of social well-being and quality of life. Entrepreneurship has not only been shown to address economic issues, but also play a vital role in the daily lives, identities and needs of rural dwellers (Aldrich and Cliff, 2003; Bridge et al., 2003; Buttner and Moore, 1997). Moreover, Morrison et al. (2008) described the ability of small rural entrepreneurs to help counter rural depopulation, but also to benefit the local society as a whole since these entrepreneurs are more likely to be active in the local cultural scene as well as play an important role in environmental conservation. Markantoni (2012) has shown that for side-activities, defined as *“a home-based activity, which provides a supplementary income at the household level,”* these more intangible outcomes are valued more than the direct economic returns. Rural inhabitants, through practising side-activities, can achieve a growth that is described as qualitative, meaning personal development, enrichment, self-realisation and enjoyment (Markantoni, 2012; Markatoni and van Hoven, 2012).

From a networked development perspective, tourism-related entrepreneurship plays an important role in creating networks with the extra-local and in attracting capital to the local. In Northumberland, Bosworth and Farrel (2011) have shown that these kinds of entrepreneurs conduct significant levels of local trade and market themselves and the region across a much

wider area. They also stress that from a policy perspective, immigration is a vital component as a high proportion of business-owners are in-migrants to the area, taking with them important human and social capital. This relationship however, goes both ways. Exogenous stimulation is to a certain extent still needed as (perceived) employment opportunities, services and image of the region are an important pre-requisite for migration intentions (Stockdale, 2006; Thissen et al., 2010).

#### *2.2.4 The role of government and institutions in stimulating rural entrepreneurship*

Formal and informal institutional context influences the extent to which entrepreneurship can be harnessed effectively for the goals of rural development. It influences the extent to which entrepreneurship is socially productive and contributes to economic growth (Acs et al., 2008; Baumol, 1990; Williams and Vorley, 2015). Through signalling which choices, norms and behaviours are normalised and socialised they, both forms of institutions influence decisions by individuals and organisations alike (Ahlstrom and Bruton, 2002; Tonoyan et al., 2010). Formal institutions are the rules and regulations that form the legal and economic framework of society, such as laws of ownership but also planning or zoning regulations (Tonoyan et al., 2010). It is widely accepted that these formal institutions are important for fostering entrepreneurship (Estrin et al., 2016; Gherhes et al., 2018; Williams and Vorley, 2015). For instance, individuals are sensitive to the degree of potential returns of the business being captured by the state when starting up a business or to the possibilities of getting a permit for a certain type of building or activity (Estrin et al., 2016). Traditions, culture, customs, societal norms and unwritten codes of conduct form the informal institutions (Baumol, 1990; North, 1990). These informal institutions or socio-cultural values shape the societal response and social rewards to entrepreneurial behaviours that can either stimulate or hamper entrepreneurial activity (Hayton et al., 2002; Estrin et al., 2016). According to Manolova et al. (2008) these values are culturally specific and typically learned through everyday social interactions. Consequently, the development of these values is place-specific: different contexts produce different institutions (Bathelt and Glückner, 2014). Moreover, history matters. Memories of past behaviour or past (external) shock (such as deindustrialisation, loss of a form of economic identity) can lead to a selective collective memory influencing the behaviour of individuals (Grinfield et al., 2009). As a result, informal institutions might also become rigid and resist change (Martin and Sunley, 2006). This can lead to the situation that present and future socio-economic activity in certain places is shaped by past outcomes (Hayter, 2004). Byrne (2002) highlights, for example, that *“industrialism became so engrained in the social fabric of industrialised places that these developed and industrial way of life.”* Stuetzer et al. (2016) elaborate that *“informal institutions developed around mass-employment in large-scale industries as opposed to self-employment, and the absence of an entrepreneurship culture has seen such places facing difficulties in adapting to a post-industrial setting that emphasises entrepreneurial-led growth”* (Gherhes et al., 2018). The effectiveness of entrepreneurship as a tool for rural development is influenced by local institutions and policy needs to incorporate this fact.

### 2.2.5 Sense of place and the rural

As stated before on the theory of place, people-place bonds have been studied using a number of different concepts. For this thesis the main concept is sense of place, but the findings of studies using other concepts are taken into account as well. Defining such concepts is not the purpose of this study, but understanding the way the relationships these concepts describe function and are used in rural development is.

In the past two decades rural geographers have often pointed out that meaning of place has become more complex and contested as different sections of the rural populations attach in different ways to different aspects of the rural due to increasing mobility of its residents (Bell and Osti, 2010; Halfacree, 2012; Milbourne and Kitchen, 2014). Attachment to the living environment takes different forms, commonly divided between environmental and social attachment (Hidalgo and Hernandez, 2001; Brehm et al., 2006; Scannel and Gifford, 2010). Environmental attachment might lead to people choosing to live in, what they perceive to be, a beautiful environment and as such develop strong attachment to the physical environment. For others, such strong feelings are reserved for attachment to a tight-knit community. This is regarded as part of the social dimension of place attachment. Panelli et al. (2018) highlight that some form of cultural attachment also exists. This form of attachment can develop through being actively engaged in cultural practices and also lead to a specific sense of local identity.

In the Dutch context Gieling (2018) has shown that, while forms of belonging may be changing, the majority of rural inhabitants still show a high degree of village attachment. Moreover, while residents that had lived longer in one place were overrepresented in the category of those with a strong village attachment, the relationship was far from absolute. Village-born residents sometimes showed a low level of village attachment, while in-migrants reported a high level. Furthermore, according to Savage et al. (2015) and reinforced by Gieling (2018) it can be assumed that a general and all-encompassing attachment to the village is increasingly replaced by a more individualised form of attachment, selecting specific characteristics to form attachment to. One of the overarching conclusions of Gieling is *“that the relationship between selective forms of attachment and volunteering is substantive. In particular, the number of local social contacts is strongly predictive of volunteering, whereas cultural and environmental attachments only result in activities related to those specific forms of attachment”*.

Sense of place is also one of the many factors influencing migration (Thissen et al., 2010; Halfacree, 1994). Echoing Savage et al. (2015) and the theory of elective/selective belonging, Bjarnason and Thorlindsson (2006) state that, due to increased mobility and developments in technology, the spatial constraints of social interactions have been eroded leading to identification with certain communities or neighbourhoods becoming a matter of personal choice. Quality of the residential environment is often viewed as the most important pull factor of rural areas (Deller et al., 2001; Gkartzios and Scott, 2009; Walmsley et al., 1998). But more specifically, for movers to rural areas in the Netherlands the typical rural idyllic arguments such as space and quietness, after housing characteristics, are prime reasons for moving to the rural (Steenbekkers et al., 2008). For moving to the specific, less-popular rural

area, housing characteristics were the primary reasons, followed by the physical qualities of the environment, and personal reasons, such as moving in with a partner or living close to family and friends. Only fifth in the hierarchy of reasons for moving to a specific less-popular area were house prices (Bijker et al., 2012).

However, sense of place not only influences intentions of moving to rural areas. After hard structural factors such as employment opportunities, Thissen et al. (2010) have also shown that soft factors play a part in the outward migration intentions of rural youth. In their case of the Veenkoloniën and the Westhoek in Flanders they have highlighted the importance of identification with the home region on out-migration intentions of rural youth. Moreover, Rye (2006) argues that the rural idyll could be better described as the 'rural dull' for young people.

### 2.2.6 Summary

Place has received ample attention since the 1970's in geography, sociology and environmental psychology. Places are, according to Tuan (1977) spaces that are imbued with meaning and as such can have specific identities. While these identities are often contested, it is possible to share elements of the identity of places or that one identity is dominant (Ashworth et al., 2007). One way to construct this identity is by measuring the degree of association with identity markers (Tempelman, 1999). Among many other things, identities of places can have an effect on the way people are attached to places, or on a specific sense of place. Much research has focused on the socially constructive element of place, but Stedman (2003) argues that the local [physical] environment sets bounds and gives form to these constructions. Sense of place or a specific local identity can have many positive effects on a locality. Such as a basis for a business idea (Muller and Korsgaard, 2015), being conducive to immigration (Stockdale, 2006; Steenbekkers et al., 2008) or in rural development through creating community networks and stimulating volunteering in specific areas (Gielsing, 2018). Places, the meaning and bonds thereof, can be a social purpose of rural development but can also be conducive in enhancing the economy and economic diversity.

## Chapter 3 - Geographic context and policy history of the study: the Veenkoloniën

This chapter deals with the relevant geographic context, history of the region, policy documents, the plan to reopen the canals and the village of Kiel-Windeweer.

### *3.1 Localisation of the Veenkoloniën and Kiel-Windeweer*

The Veenkoloniën are located in the north-eastern part of the Netherlands. On the south-eastern side it borders the German border. On the north-eastern side the border is formed by the sandy area known as Westerwolde and the clay areas known as the Oldambt. A sand ridge called the Hondsrug forms the western border. This demarcation of the Veenkoloniën is not always accepted, in some policy documents the area of Westerwolde is included because it shares similar socio-economic challenges with the Veenkoloniën (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001; Rijnks and Strijker, 2008)

The village of Kiel-Windeweer is located in the older, north-western part of the Veenkoloniën. The village is approx. 7,5 km long and 750 m wide and was home to 855 inhabitants in 2017 (CBS, 2017).



Figure 2: Map of the Netherlands with the Veenkoloniën marked in dark green, Kiel-Windeweer is marked with a red dot (source: Rijnks and Strijker, 2008)

### *3.2 History of the reclamation and development of the Veenkoloniën*

The area we now call the Veenkoloniën, is the Dutch part of what used to be a high moor known as the Bourtanger Moor. For centuries, the area was difficult to access and considered a dangerous place. Arable and livestock farming was impossible. In late medieval times the abbey of Aduard started to reclaim small parts of the moor by digging for peat, used for the heating of homes. Due to the Reformation, and subsequently the conversion of the city of

Groningen from Catholic to Calvinist, most of the possessions of the monasteries fell into the hands of Groningen. Moreover, firewood was becoming increasingly scarce in most parts of the Netherlands during the fifteenth and sixteenth century and an expanding brickwork, glassmaking and other industries demanded an ever-increasing amount of peat (Tossavainen, 1994). These circumstances led the city council of Groningen to systematically start reclaiming the north-western area of the peat moor on their doorstep.

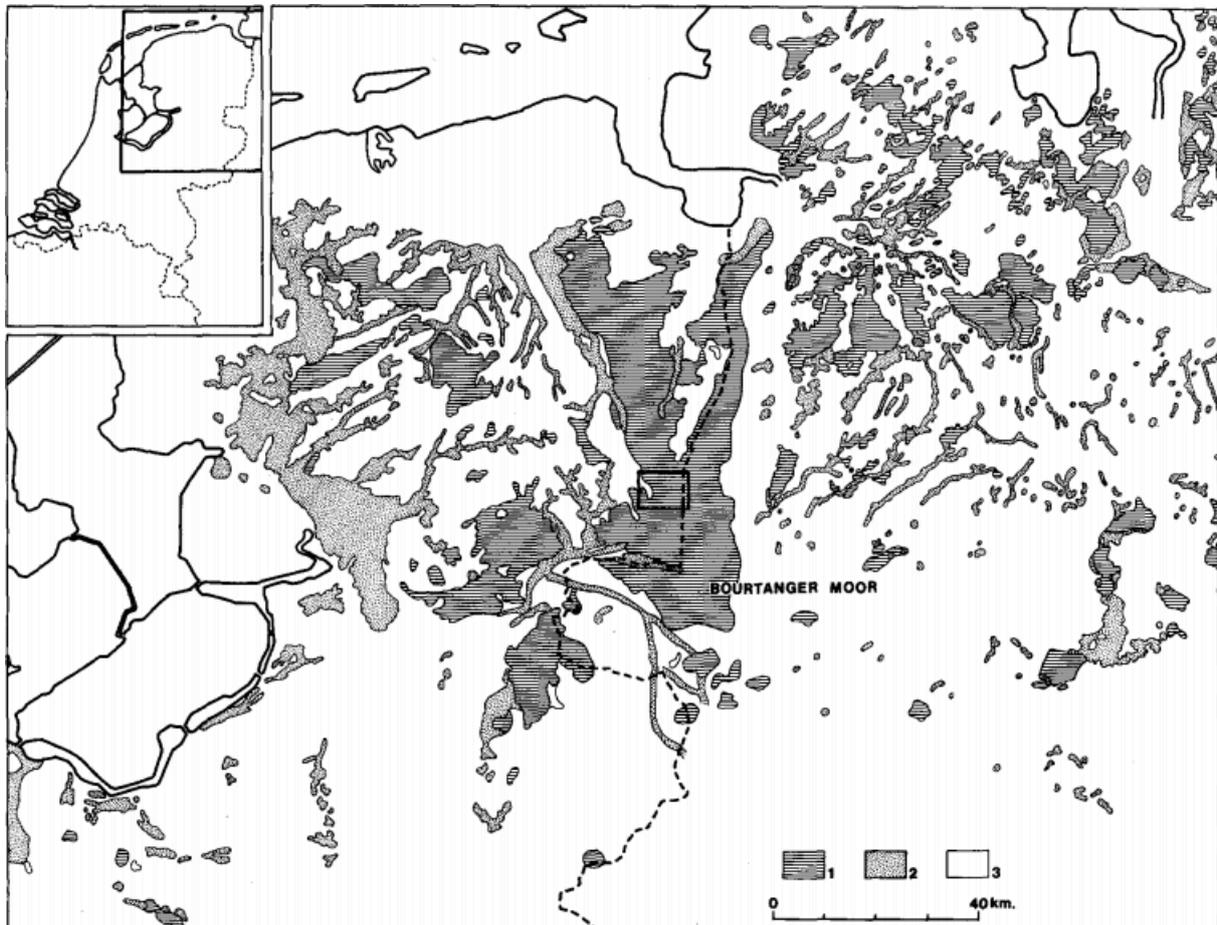


Figure 3: Localisation of the Bourtanger Moor and other bogs in the northern part of the Netherlands and northwestern part of Germany (source: Casparie, 1993)

In the last part of the seventeenth century the blueprint and the necessary infrastructure for the reclamation of the first part of the moor was ready. The infrastructure consisted of a series of canals for the draining and transport of the peat and a series of settlements from which the peat digging could commence. After the peat had been dug, the cultivation of the drained land began. Farmsteads were built along the canals, which could then be used to transport the agricultural goods towards the market. This way linear settlements developed with relatively large and elongated fields behind. This part of the area is known as the old part or *Oude Veenkoloniën* (Keuning, 1974).

During the second half of the eighteenth century the remaining parts of the moor were reclaimed in largely the same fashion. For the transport of the peat and the agricultural goods, ships were used that were also increasingly built in the area. These wharfs grew and started to provide large seagoing vessels; a flourishing shipbuilding industry developed in the *Veenkoloniën*. Other industries developed during the second half of the nineteenth century.

These industries were either energy-intensive or affiliated with the agricultural production in the area. A series of factories producing potato-starch and strawboard were developed (Strijker, 2008). These factories absorbed the labour that was freed from the agricultural sector through mechanization, though overall unemployment remained above average (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001).

After the Second World War the increasing importance of economies of scale and mechanization had several effects. In the agricultural sector this led to a decrease in the amount of agricultural businesses and a decrease in the amount of labour needed for these businesses. In the shipbuilding industry ever-larger ships had to be built, the canals in the Veenkoloniën could not facilitate these ships. As a result, the shipbuilding industry declined, with the notable exception of several wharfs on the larger Winschoterdiep and on the German side of the Bourtanger Moor, the Meijwer Werft at Papenberg on the river Ems. These effects of the economies of scale did also leave a mark on the other industries of the Veenkoloniën; the strawboard and potato-starch factories. Due to an increase in the amount of transport by roads instead of canals along a tendency of the larger factories to produce and sell their goods more efficiently than the smaller factories led to the closure of a number of smaller, more remote factories. Eventually only the large cooperative AVEBE remained in business (Strijker, 2008). Developments in the strawboard industry followed roughly the same lines as the potato starch industries, with eSKa the main remaining producer.

Parallel with these developments was the decrease in importance of the canals for the transportation in the Netherlands in general, but in the Veenkoloniën in particular (van der Woud, 1987). During the nineteenth century railroads grew in importance but still remained relatively unthreatening to the hegemony of the canal transport for the bulk of goods. The death knell came with the development of the smaller internal combustion engine and subsequently the development of cars, trucks and roads. This made transport by land faster, more flexible and cheaper. For the construction of roads, canals even became a hindrance.

In the Veenkoloniën the solution to this problem was the partial or complete closing of the canals. Sometimes dams were built as a cheaper alternative to bridges, but sometimes the complete canal was closed when a new road followed the old course of the canal. After the Second World War the canals increasingly were no longer a vital aspect for the economy of the Veenkoloniën, but lost their main function and were considered hindering relics of the past (Strijker, 2003).

### *3.3 Reorganization of the Veenkoloniën*

In that light it is understandable that a lot of the main and subsidiary canals were closed during the period of rationalisation that started in the seventies of the twentieth century. Plots of land were joined together to form larger plots, easier for large agricultural machines. Furthermore, the drainage of the area needed to be improved, years of discharging the waste water of the agro-industry in the canals had taken their toll and pollution posed a serious problem for agriculture as well as other aspects of the environment (Strijker, 2003).

These changes were proposed in a policy document that encompassed areas that were deemed problematic in the northern part of the Netherlands, including the Veenkoloniën (Stuurgroep Intergraal Structuurplan Noorden des Lands, 1974-1977). In line with the prevailing thinking in planning during this era, it was the idea that to change the environment, would lead to a change of the downward spiral of the socio-economical position of the area. Eventually the proposed changes were anchored in a specially designed national law (Herinrichtingswet Oost-Groningen en de Gronings-Drentse Veenkoloniën, 1977). The law intended to cover the attractiveness of the living environment as well as the agricultural and industrial potential of the environment. In practice the emphasis was on the latter (Strijker, 1997). A governing condition of the reorganisation was that it would not lead to a loss of the character of the area, meaning the geometric identity, the straight roads and canals, the open scenery and the large plots of land. In 2017 the reorganization was officially declared completed, even if certain procedures were still running (Dagblad van het Noorden, 2017). According to Strijker (2003) the law only partially succeeded in its goals. Agriculture and industry did fairly well, but the reorganization did not succeed in increasing the valuation of the area. As a result of this, few investors chose to invest in the area and new inhabitants remained scarce.

#### 3.4 'Commissie Hoekstra' and 'Stuurgroep Veenkoloniën'

Aware of the shortcomings of the reorganisation, the government decided in 2000 to order the instigation of a new committee that would map the governing problems in the area, but that would also look towards potential future problems. The committee was given the name that could be translated as the Committee Strengthening of the Organization of the Veenkoloniën. Colloquially called Committee Hoekstra, after its president. The findings were published in a report that could be translated as "*From dependency towards strength*" (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001).

According to the report the Veenkoloniën had to deal with several problems:

- Socio-economic: A relatively large part of the population is on benefits or is working because of some form of subsidized labour. Furthermore, a high number of those that received higher education leave the area, leaving a disproportionate amount of lower educated people.
- Economic: Employment is mostly to be found in the industrial sector. Opportunities for work in services remain underdeveloped. Moreover, in the primary sector the focus is primarily on the production of starch potatoes, little is done to spread risks.
- Accessibility: The lack of a train line, inadequate bus services and a mediocre connection to the national motorways make the area moderately accessible.
- Demography: An aging population will pose problems in the near future with a large number of the working population being between forty-five and sixty-five.
- Image: The area is considered unattractive and outsiders perceive few economic opportunities. Migration towards the area remains therefor low.

- Government: Weak government and little intergovernmental cooperation. This leads to ineffective action on beforementioned problems in the region.

In order to tackle the problems reported by the committee, the provinces of Groningen, Drenthe, ten municipalities and two water boards united in a coordinating and advisory committee (Stuurgroep Veenkoloniën). The committee is organised around three pillars of development: social, economic and spatial (Stuurgroep Veenkoloniën, 2003). First, the social pillar is focused on the quality of life of the inhabitants, developing more and more diverse job opportunities, reducing the number of youngsters dropping out of school and creating a living and working environment that is attractive to outsiders. Second, the economic pillar is focused on the diversification of the primary sector and commodification of a quiet, peaceful and spacious area, thus developing tourism and attracting newcomers. Third, the spatial development pillar is focused around creating better accessibility, varied living environment, space for the development of water-based tourism and nature (Stuurgroep Veenkoloniën, 2003). All these developments are constrained by the requirement to respect the core qualities of the region; the open environment and cultural historic lines of the landscape (Strijker, 2003).

Ten projects were formulated and selected that would be the working area of the committee in 2003. Due to financial constraints and the realisation the group was working on too many projects at the same time, the number was reduced to seven in 2005 (Van Hilten, 2007). One of the projects that was considered viable was the development of a navigable canal from the Zuidlaardermeer to the Hoogeveense vaart near Klazienaveen and the Bargerveen. This would make the area not the end of the line anymore, but part of a bigger network of canals. By joining these canals, it was the intention of the committee to realize several goals:

- The recreational lake of Zuidlaren would no longer be at the end of a route, but the hub of a larger recreational water area.
- This would stimulate tourism in the area
- Which in turn would stimulate the local economy



Figure 4: Map outlining the new route. The part that was reopened is marked in red. This also includes a second part that was developed more recent, but connects the different waterways (source: veenvaart.nl)

The tourists that would come to the area, bringing their own boat or renting one, would sometimes be in need of repairs or supplies. Local businesses could provide these services. Moreover, the boating guests would like refreshments and other services pubs, cafés and restaurants have to offer. This could lead to the development of these services in the area. Other opportunities for the area would be to start small businesses that cater to the tourists that would like to engage in other water-related activities, such as canoe rental businesses (Grontmij, 2002).

Another less tangible result the committee hopes to achieve is to create a more positive image of the Veenkoloniën in general. It is the hope that outsiders and inhabitants start valuing the area more. According to the policy makers, the inhabitants will start to rediscover their living environment, and discover the history of the place and identifying with it more because of outside interest in their region (Grontmij, 2002).

To summarise, the plan to create the route from the Zuidlaardermeer to the Hoogeeense Vaart is a rather top-down, or exogenous approach to create the conditions and infrastructure for tourism to develop organically in the region, leading to economic diversification and, somewhat less direct, to a higher quality of life and attractiveness of the region.

### 3.5 Kiel-Windeweer

The reclamation of Kiel-Windeweer took more than a century. The reclamation process began in 1647 just south of Hoogezand by the ‘Kielcompagnie,’ a company of men whose purpose was reclaiming land. By 1760, reclamation had progressed to the southernmost point of the current village. Around 1750 the first church was built where we know can find the restaurant “*De Amshoff*”, the current building is a church and attached pastoral house that was built thirteen years later, in 1763. At the end of the eighteenth century the first roads alongside the canal and

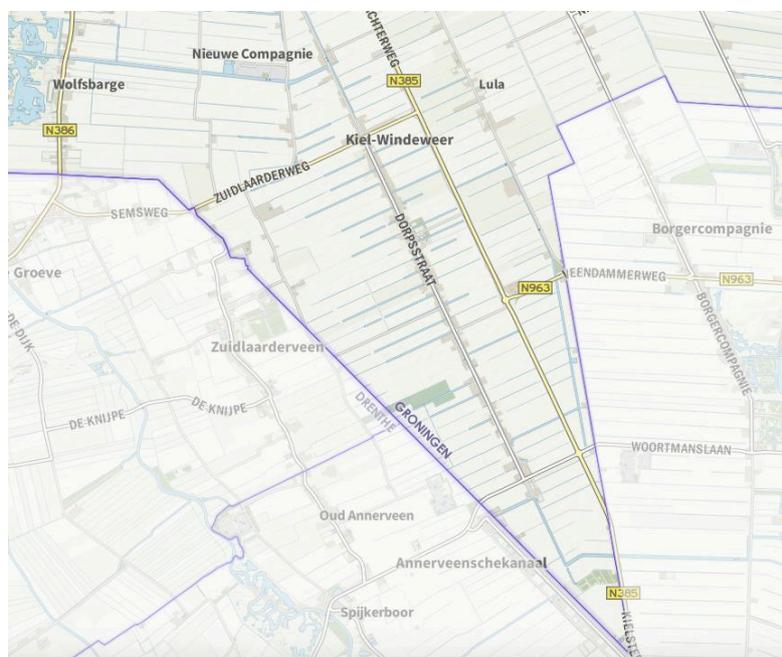


Figure 5: Map of Kiel-Windeweer (source: Reiling, 2008)

bridges were built. This was also the time when the village started a regular ferry service to the city of Groningen, the building from which the service started was called “*Het Snikhuis*” and got its current form in 1871. The same year the home of the lockkeeper as well as the lock itself were renewed. The lock itself got its current form in 1927. In 1898 the potato-starch factory “*De Eendracht*” is built and two years later “*De Toekomst*” opened for business. “*De Eendracht*” closed in 1943, and has completely disappeared; only the name of the “*Eendrachtsbrug*” reminds us of its past existence. “*De Toekomst*” managed to stay in business until 1971, and today it is the locale for a flea market (Van Leeuwen, 2018).



Figure 6: 2005: Construction works to replace dam with a lock at Nieuwe Compagnie have just started. Factory “*De Toekomst*” is visible on the left. (source: [kiel-windeweer.nl](http://kiel-windeweer.nl))



Figure 7: 2006: Central dam in Kiel-Windeweer is replaced by a modern drawbridge. In the background the old dam is still visible (source: [kiel-windeweer.nl](http://kiel-windeweer.nl))

During the reorganization period in the 1970's the Kieldiep was dammed where the "Zuidlaarderweg" crosses the canal and the village. Here a dam was constructed, some seventy meters long, to function as the centre of the village due to the lack of an organic village centre. At the southernmost point of the village, where the "Wildervanksterweg" (further east becoming Woortmanslaan) crosses the canal, a fixed bridge was built. During the works for reopening the canal, the central dam has been replaced by a drawbridge.



*Figure 8: Central bridge crossing the Kieldiep in Kiel-Windeweer, location of the former dam (source: my own collection, 2018)*

The fixed bridge at the southernmost point of the village has been replaced as well. Spread along the length of the village eleven smaller footbridges and a smaller drawbridge can be found. These bridges were all serviced and have been put back in operation. At Nieuwe Compagnie, on the part of the route perpendicular on the canal in Kiel-Windeweer, a dam was replaced by a lock in order to connect the part of the canal in Kiel-Windeweer to the Zuidlaardermeer, west of Wolfsbarge on the map. At the south end of the canal through the village, a new canal was dug to connect to the lake Langebosch at Wildervank, parallel with the Woortmanslaan.



*Figure 9: Connecting part of the canal in Kiel-Windeweer and the lake Langebosch near Wildervank being dug in 2008. (source: Reiling, 2008)*

## Chapter 4 - Methodology

The aim of this study is to explore in-depth how and to what extent a spatial intervention has changed the outlook of inhabitants towards their village and in what way entrepreneurship has developed. This will be done by examining the role that reopening the canal in Kiel-Windeweer has played in the years 2008-2018 on identity, valuation, sense of place of and entrepreneurship in the village. When choosing the methods for a research, the limitations of different methods and the type and applicability of the results they generally yield, need to be explored in relationship to the aim and limitations of the present study. Quantitative methods are frequently used to obtain a large amount of data from a diverse and large population (McLafferty, 2010) and are usually designed to generalise findings into a general theory (Punch, 2014). The obtainment of data in a quantitative way makes it possible for that data to be analysed and compared using descriptive and inferential statistics. A drawback, generally, of using quantitative methods is that underlying feelings and assumptions remain hidden to the researcher. Qualitative methods are by and large seen as being better able than quantitative methods to explore beforementioned feelings and assumptions than quantitative methods (Creswell, 2014). One of the criticisms of qualitative methods for data collections is that they inevitably involve fewer respondents than quantitative methods. This is because of the tendency of methods such as in-depth interviews and subsequent analysis to require more time and energy per respondent for the researcher than quantitative methods (Flowerdew and Martin, 2005).

Absolute freedom of choice of methods in this study was restricted by the aim to use the results of the study by Reiling (2008) for comparison. To compare the results optimally the choice to repeat the relevant part of the research almost identically was made early on. For the research into identity and valuation of the Veenkoloniën, using Kiel-Windeweer as one of the cases, Reiling chose to use quantitative methods in the form of a questionnaire. Although using quantitative methods for research into questions of identity and valuation was not my first choice, the ability to compare results gathered in identical ways across a ten year divide did provide a unique opportunity to explore the relationship between the reopening of the canal in Kiel-Windeweer, the valuation thereof and the identity of the village.

The aim of this research was deemed to be most in-line with the aim of a case study, as a case study research involves an up-close, in-depth and detailed examination of a given case and its context (Yin, 2013). Gerring's (2004) definition of a case study also fits the bill of the aim of the present study. Gerring defines the case study as "*an intensive study of a single unit for the purpose of understanding a larger class of (similar) units*". Hay (2016) furthermore states that a case study is used to research a phenomenon and to explore in-depth nuances of a phenomenon. Typically, case studies are built upon the use of mixed methods, whereby the choice of method is based upon a given question and, perhaps, size of the population (Creswell and Clark, 2007). This study is also built upon mixed methods, using quantitative and qualitative methods to study a number of aspects of the reopening of the canal on the inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer and the area. One of the quantitative methods used was the beforementioned questionnaire, supplemented with additional questions concerning sense of

place and valuation. A second quantitative method was the gathering of relevant publicly available data from Statistics Netherlands. The qualitative methods used are semi-structured interviews in order to obtain data on the entrepreneurial experiences and uncontrolled observation.

#### 4.1 Questionnaire

The design of the questionnaire can be divided in three sections. The first section was concerned with the perceived identity of Kiel-Windeweer and was copied from the research by Reiling (2008). The second section dealt with valuation, change and sense of place of Kiel-Windeweer. The third section was comprised of a set of general questions about gender, age, length of residence and education.<sup>1</sup> These general questions were also present in the study by Reiling.

The first section of the questionnaire deals with identity markers. Identity markers are social and physical characteristics that people assign to a place to distinguish it from the surroundings (Tempelman, 1999). The selection of the identity markers was done by Reiling in 2008:

*“While selecting the identity markers, it was at the outset important to have a certain idea of the possible elements that are important for constructing the identity that is to be researched. For that reason, during the quest for an identity for the Veenkoloniën, certain identity markers that refer to the origin of the area and the history of industrialisation were used. The list was further complemented with identity markers that indicated certain social phenomena, such as a tight-knit community or progressiveness.”*

The inspiration for the list of identity markers for the Veenkoloniën was derived from report on the social-cultural aspects of the Veenkoloniën (Winkels and Duyvendak, 2003). The full list contained 34 identity markers. Respondents were asked to what extent they associated the relevant identity marker with Kiel-Windeweer. They could register their degree of association on a five-point Likert item ranging from totally disagreeing to totally agreeing. Using these responses, a database was built that was used to compare the results per identity marker with the research of Reiling. This allowed for a detailed examination of the importance of the identity markers in 2008 and 2018 and the results were used to answer the first sub question.

The second part of the questionnaire dealt with valuation, change and sense of place of Kiel-Windeweer. Respondents were asked to rate Kiel-Windeweer on a scale ranging from one to ten. They were also asked whether Kiel-Windeweer had changed the past ten years, and if change had occurred, whether they thought it was positive. The results of the first question were compared to the value respondents had assigned to Kiel-Windeweer in 2008 in order to assess change in valuation irrespective of the second question and to answer the second sub question. The question whether Kiel-Windeweer had changed according to the respondents

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<sup>1</sup> See appendix 1 for the complete questionnaire

was used to get a general feel of the subjective experience of respondents in this regard and was used to shed some light on other results and this study in general. The last six questions of the second part of the questionnaire were used to determine the strength of sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer. These questions were taken from research by Jorgensen and Stedman (2001). Three pairs of questions corresponded with the three concepts of place attachment, place identity and place dependence. The results were used to answer the third sub question.

In the third section of the questionnaire respondents were asked to provide general information about their gender, age, years of residence in Kiel-Windeweer and their education. The results of these questions were used to check whether sample was a representative sample of the population and to explore relationships between other results and general characteristics.

Finally, an open-ended question was added asking the respondents to write down anything they thought was of use to the study. This was not a mandatory question, but provided the respondents some degree of freedom to air their opinion on the subject.

#### *4.2 Publicly available data*

Publicly available data for comparison of or research on a number of subjects, data from Statistics Netherlands and other sources was used. This provided the possibility to position Kiel-Windeweer in relationship to other comparison areas. This data had a number of drawbacks that are discussed where relevant.

#### *4.3 Data gathering*

In the last two weeks of June 2018, including both weekends, this researcher went door-to-door in Kiel-Windeweer in order to enlist respondents for the questionnaire. All 325 addresses in the village were visited, if there was no response, the address was visited a second time on a different day of the week. At 129 addresses someone was found at home and at 67 addresses one or more persons were willing to cooperate. This led to 94 respondents of a total population of 795, a sample size of 12 %. Of the 94 responses, four were eventually discarded for reasons ranging from a failure of understanding, miscommunication to the impossibility of interpreting the response. Eventually 90 respondents were incorporated in this research.

#### 4.4 The sample

Properties of the sample and of the population can be found in table 1 through 3. Males were overrepresented in the sample with 63% of respondents being male, while only 52% of the total population is male.

Gender	Population		Sample	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
Male	410	52%	57	63%
Female	385	48%	33	37%
Total	795	100%	90	100%

Table 1: Gender distribution of population and sample

Higher educated people were also relatively more present in the sample than in the population; 37% of the sample was higher educated, while this figure for the population is 15%. Especially the lower educated were relatively less present in the sample, compared to the population; 24% versus 40%.

Level of education	Population	Sample
	Lower	40%
Middle	45%	39%
Higher	15%	37%

Table 2: Highest education of population and sample

Relatively more respondents were over-65 than was expected on the basis of the age distribution of the population; 26% of the sample was over-65, while the population only has 19%. Relatively fewer respondents were below the age of 25; the sample showed only 6%, while 15% of the population consists of under-25's.

Age cohort	Population		Sample	
	Frequency	Percentage	Frequency	Percentage
15-25	105	15%	5	6%
25-45	130	18%	20	22%
45-65	345	48%	42	47%
65+	135	19%	23	26%
Total	715	100%	90	100%

Table 3: Distribution of age of population and sample

79 % of the respondents has lived in Kiel-Windeweer more than ten years, since 2008, the year the canal was reopened. A large majority of the respondents therefor has known the village since before the reopening and could therefor theoretically comment on the change of the village. This also means that 21 % of the respondents has moved to Kiel-Windeweer since the reopening.

Years or residence	Frequency	Percentage
0-5	12	13%
5-10	7	8%
10-15	12	13%
15-25	24	27%
25-40	16	18%
40-65	17	19%
65+	2	2%
Total	90	100%

Table 4: Years of residence of respondents in the sample

In order to check statistically whether the sample was representative of the research population chi-square goodness-of-fit tests were conducted on the characteristics where the proportions of the population were known. These characteristics were: age cohort, gender and level of education. Statistics Netherlands (CBS) provided the number of inhabitants per age cohort and gender on the level of the neighbourhood (in this case the village of Kiel-Windeweer) and the level of education of municipal level. On the basis of the chi-square goodness-of-fit tests the conclusions must be drawn that the sample is not representative of the research population (all three tests:  $p > 0,00$ ). Weighting the data is a solution to unrepresentative samples, but was discarded because of the following reasons. Weighting data reduces the accuracy of the sampling variance, standard deviation and standard error. This is especially the case when sample sizes are small, such as this study. The cost in reduced accuracy might be very great with fewer than a hundred respondents. Moreover, statistical tests may not be used on weighted data since an important prerequisite is that cases are independent (Moore and McCabe, 2005). If for an item there were suggestions that one of the beforementioned characteristics were influential in the response to that item, that relationship was explored.

#### 4.5 Interviews

In order to explore the subjective experiences of tourism-related entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer semi-structured interviews were conducted with relevant entrepreneurs. The choice for semi-structured interviews was made to have a more conversational tone during the interview and to allow for a certain amount of freedom on behalf of the interviewee (Longhurst, 2010). The entrepreneurs were identified through observation and inquiry during the

conducting of the questionnaires. Some businesses were easily identifiable because of a sign near the road, another was suggested by one of the respondents of the questionnaire. This way of selecting the interviewees is not fully random and subject to selection bias, but it also allows the researcher to become highly attentive to the focus of the study while becoming immersed in the research area (Biernacki and Waldorf, 1981). However, it must also be taken into account that there are relatively few relevant businesses in Kiel-Windeweer. Eventually four businesses were identified as suitable for this research on the basis that they seemed to run a little business that seemed more than a productive pass-time.

The businesses that eventually were selected were a canoe-rental business called “*Peddel enzo*”, a Vietnamese tea-garden called “*Romala’s Home*” and café called “*De Kielster Koffiemolen*”. In a development that was seen as a setback in the research the owners of the fourth business were unwilling to cooperate. The other interviews were conducted in August 2018 in the homes of the interviewees in Kiel-Windeweer. The interviews were recorded and afterwards transcribed. Before conducting the interviews, it was made clear by the researcher to the interviewees that they were free to decline answering any question, to ask to pause the recording device at any moment, to discontinue the interview for whatever or no reason and to receive and correct the transcript. Furthermore, if afterwards they were unhappy with the interview, they were free to ask for the interview not to be used. Also, it was made clear the interviewees could remain anonymous if they so wished. The interviewee signed an informed consent form (Appendix X) and also consented vocally to the interview. None of the interviewees however wished to remain anonymous, and none of the interviewees wished to view and edit the transcript. Also, none of the interviewees afterwards asked to not include their interview in the study.

The interviews were transcribed, read and coded by hand. In that way certain themes relevant to the fourth sub question emerged that were further analysed.

#### 4.6 Observations

Before, during and after conducting the questionnaire and interviews, I was alert to matters that seemed relevant to the study. In order to incorporate these observations, I made notes and pictures. Moreover, since I was present during the completion of the questionnaire for almost all respondents, comments on the questionnaire and other relevant matters were also noted. These notes and pictures were used to illustrate findings of the research methods and arguably led to a better understanding of the inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer and their relationship to the village.

## Chapter 5 - Results

This chapter deals with the results of the data collection process. The first paragraph deals with the degree of association of the identity markers. This is in relationship to the goals of the reopening of the canal to strengthen certain aspects of the identity of the region. The results are related to the research of Rijnks and Strijker (2011) on the image and identity of the entire Veenkoloniën and other literature on the more general image of the rural. In this way the effect of the reopening of the canal becomes clearer. The second paragraph deals with the degree of association of the identity markers as well, but in relationship to the research of Reiling (2008). This was done in two different paragraphs because of a difference in the preferred way of presenting the results of Reiling (2008) and Rijnks and Strijker (2011). The third paragraph deals with the valuation of Kiel-Windeweer in 2008 and 2018 and whether this has changed. One of the intended consequences of the reopening was a higher valuation of the region. This provided a way to measure a change in valuation. It also deals with the question whether the respondents themselves thought Kiel-Windeweer had changed, and if so, whether this was positive or negative. One way of measuring change is comparing the same measurement on different moments in time, but perception of change is arguably equally important since perception can trigger action. The fourth paragraph deals with the strength of sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer, compared to the Dutch average (Gielsing, 2018) and the Veenkoloniën (Rijnks and Strijker, 2011). In order to approach the valuation of the village and region in a way that could be compared more generally, this measure was taken. The fifth paragraph seeks to elicit the effect of the reopening of the canal on the value of houses in the village. The intended effect of reopening the canal was to increase the attractiveness of the region as a living environment. If that is the case, it is possible the value of the homes in Kiel-Windeweer would have gone up relative to other areas. The sixth paragraph studies the number of businesses in Kiel-Windeweer, this would be a measure to show whether the entrepreneurial climate has improved in Kiel-Windeweer since the reopening. The seventh paragraph illustrates the number of boats passing yearly through the canal since the reopening, as a measure for the success to attract recreational boaters. The eighth paragraph deals with the type of entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer to gain insight into these entrepreneurs and illustrate the type of activity that has developed as an effect of the reopening. The ninth paragraph deals with a thematic overview of the experiences of these entrepreneurs. This identified enabling and constraining factors in their business and the role of the (reopening) of the canal.

### *5.1 Identity markers*

The results of the questionnaire state clearly that the most important identity marker for the respondents is the canal.<sup>2</sup> The association of the canal with Kiel-Windeweer was to be expected; it is the central visual feature around which the village has been built. This is partially supported by the research of Rijnks and Strijker (2011) into identity markers in and associations with the Veenkoloniën. They found that inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën associated their region somewhat with the canals that intersect the region. Difference in strength of association can perhaps be attributed to a difference in scale of the research area; a canal in a linear settlement makes a bigger mark on the area than a series of canals in a larger region. Other infrastructure related to the canal, such as the drawbridge, the swinging bridges and the lock are also in descending order regarded as conducive to the identity of the village. Hague and Jenkins (2005) have shown that interacting with the environment is one of the ways in which identity is constructed and although it is a linear settlement, the area around the drawbridge is mostly regarded as the centre of the village. For a large number of inhabitants, it is the primary location to cross the canal by car as well. Active usage of the drawbridge and the central location might have influenced the importance of it as an identity marker. The lock is located more to the northern end of the village, locks are quite a common sight throughout the Netherlands, and the more peripheral location, combined with little usage would seem to influence the importance of the lock as an identity marker for Kiel-Windeweer. The swinging bridges can be found in the southern half of the village, can only be used for pedestrians or cyclists and are not linked to a thoroughfare perpendicular to the canal. However, they are more numerous in the village and a fairly unique and quaint sight and this might influence their relative importance compared to the lock as an identity marker.

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<sup>2</sup> Results of the questionnaire concerning the identity markers are summarized in table 5

Identity marker	Value		
Canal	4,77	Strong association with Kiel-Windeweer	
Agriculture	4,49		
Peaceful living environment	4,44		
Open landscape	4,37		
Safe living environment	4,22		
Drawbridge	4,18		
Farms	4,14		
Recreational boating	4,08		
Recreational cycling	4,01		
Nature	3,97		Association with Kiel-Windeweer
Swing bridges	3,91		
Peat transport by boat	3,81		
Anglers	3,76		
"De Amshoff"	3,74		
Swimming in the canal	3,69		
Lock	3,67		
Primary school "Albronda"	3,64		
Strawboard factory "De Toekomst"	3,49	Neutral	
Tight-knit community	3,37		
Canoes	3,22		
Lockmasters' house	3,21		
Industriousness	3,12		
Art along the canal	3,07		
Tourists in the village	2,93		
Progressiveness	2,87		
Statue "De Hengelaar"	2,73		
Potato-starch factory "De Eendracht"	2,69		
Dam	2,60	No association with Kiel-Windeweer	
Ferryman's house	2,57		
Hotels, restaurants, café's etc.	2,46		
Campings	2,43		
Woods	2,39		
Impoverishment	2,39		
Unemployment	2,21		

Table 5: Strength of association of identity markers with Kiel-Windeweer

The identity markers that inhabitants most strongly disassociate their village with are, in following order, unemployment and impoverishment. This is similar to other findings (Winkels and Duyvendak, 2003; Rijnks and Strijker, 2011) into the predisposition of the inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën to the associations of poverty, backwardness, unemployment and impoverishment that is frequently mentioned in policy documents (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001; Agenda voor de Veenkoloniën, 2003). Reiling (2008) and Rijnks and Strijker (2011) have shown that the association between the Veenkoloniën and unemployment and impoverishment is strongest in the areas bordering on the Veenkoloniën. In general, I also got the impression that some inhabitants were fed up with this image of the Veenkoloniën. A fair amount of hostility was noticeable when discussing this subject.

More general identity markers such as agriculture, a peaceful living environment, open landscape and a safe living environment were also deemed very important markers of Kiel-Windeweer. These identity markers are also associated strongly with rurality in general (Haartsen, 2002) and the Veenkoloniën in particular (Rijnks and Strijker, 2011). The lower rating of farms compared to agriculture might be explained from the fact that people might generally associate farms with the buildings, and not always of farms and the associated land-use. Although farm buildings are quite numerous in the village, historically owing to the omnipresence of agriculture in the surrounding area, it is agricultural land-use can be seen from nearly all backyards due to the lay-out of the village.

While villages in general are sometimes still perceived as tight-knit communities (Gielsing et al., 2017), the inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer do not equate their village with a tight-knit community, but neither do they identify against their village being a tight-knit community. According to Winkels and Duyvendak (2003) this is typical of the relationship of inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën with their community. Savage et al. (2005) introduced the concept of elective belonging, meaning that with greater mobility, attachment to place has become increasingly elective. This also suggests that specific aspects of place are chosen to form attachment with, a process Watt (2009) and Benson & Jackson (2012) refer to as selective belonging. This might lead to uneven distribution of specific forms of attachment (social, cultural, environmental etc.) within the population of a village or region, as Gielsing et al. (2017) and Thissen et al. (2010) have shown, but it might also lead to a spatially uneven distribution of types of inhabitants based on the perceived qualities or characteristics of specific places. Linear settlements in the Veenkoloniën are, because of the spatial distribution of houses often associated with inhabitants who are more individualistic and less interested in the social aspects of villages (Winkels and Duyvendak, 2003). The low importance of a tight-knit community as an identity marker suggests this is perhaps also the case in Kiel-Windeweer. When comparing the mean values for a tight-knit community as an identity marker among the under-25's and the over-25's in the sample, the mean for the younger group does show a higher mean value (3.60) compared to the older group (3.32), however because of the small number of cases of under-25's (n=5), not too much importance should be given to this difference in mean values.

Tourists in the village are not regarded as something inhabitants associate their village with, but they do associate their village fairly strong with recreational boating and cycling, and

to some extent with anglers. Arguably there are two possible causes. Either because there is a stereotypical image of tourists, strolling along a promenade with shops and restaurants etc. that the inhabitants do not see in Kiel-Windeweer and therefore do not regard as being part of the identity of the village, as is the case with hotels, restaurants, cafés and camping grounds as identity markers, or because tourists are regarded as those who spent a night somewhere, not day-trippers, which according to comments of residents during the data collection does not happen on a large scale in Kiel-Windeweer. Furthermore, canoes do not function as strong identity markers, this is probably due to the fact that the owner of the canoe rental business indicated that she only spends two-three hours a week in the summer season renting out canoes and small pleasure crafts. There are simply not that many canoes in the canal.

Inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer do not have a particularly strong association between their village and the identity markers associated with the history of the Veenkoloniën. Of these identity markers, the historical practice of transporting peat through the canals by boat carries the strongest association with the village. Respondents, while completing the questionnaire, commented on this marker usually rather uninterested with something like: “*Yeah, yeah, that’s part of our history*” or “*Everybody knows that!*” And then carried on. Arguably, the inhabitants recognize it as part of the history of their village, but it plays no part in their daily lives. You don’t generally enjoy historical peat transportation like you do a peaceful living environment. The more concrete examples such as the strawboard factory “*De Toekomst*”, the lockmaster’s house, potato-starch factory “*De Eendracht*” and the ferryman’s house are not considered strong markers of the identity of Kiel-Windeweer. The most heard comment on the strawboard factory “*De Toekomst*” were that there was a flea market sometimes on Sundays, which together with the fact that it is a recognizable industrial heritage building could explain the relative importance. A fair number of respondents had never heard of the lockmaster’s house, the potato-starch factory “*De Eendracht*” or the ferryman’s house, in all cases unsurprising since the potato-starch factory closed in 1943 and was demolished sometimes after and the lockmaster’s and ferryman’s house are architecturally similar to the other historical buildings in the village. Rijnks and Strijker (2011) corroborate the relative lack of association with the historical aspects of the Veenkoloniën by inhabitants.

Some relevant policy documents speak of the pioneering, entrepreneurial or progressive spirit of inhabitants of the region (Commissie Hoekstra, 2001; Agenda voor de Veenkoloniën, 2003, Winkels and Duyvendak, 2003) while Rijnks and Strijker (2011) have shown that inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën only weakly associate such a spirit with their region. The latter findings are supported by this research. Inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer also do not associate their village particularly strong with identity markers that are related to this spirit, such as industriousness and progressiveness.

The now closed primary school “*Albronda*” features not particularly strong in the associations that the inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer have with their village. It could be argued that this is because the school has closed in 2017. However, it should be noted that the closure was contentious (RTV Noord, 2017), but also that inhabitants of the Veenkoloniën showed a concern for disappearing amenities (Winkels & Duyvendak, 2003) and that a primary school may also have a symbolic function, representing a healthy, viable and prosperous community

(Woods, 2005; Mormont, 1987, Christiaanse & Haartsen, 2017). Furthermore, when looking more closely at the data and comparing it to the data of an identity marker that shows a similar mean value, such as the lock, a more complicated story emerges.<sup>3</sup> Standard deviation of the data is greater for the primary school (1.221) than for the lock (0.983) indicating less agreement on the importance of the identity marker of Kiel-Windeweer. This is furthermore reinforced by comments of respondents on the matter. Some respondents appeared still unable to accept the closure and stated that while it was closed it still remained part of the village, while others were more reminiscent and melancholy and remembered that they or their children went to school there, while still others appeared unwilling to include the primary school as an identity marker, as if they associated the closure of the school as a failure and were unwilling to associate the village with a failure. It seemed to this researcher that the closure of the school had resulted in a sense of loss (Cooke et al., 2007; Christiaanse and Haartsen, 2017) and that the inhabitants were still unsure of how to come to grips with the situation and what it meant for the village.

	Percentage of respondents	
	Lock	Primary school "Albronda"
(1) Disagree very much	3.3 %	7.8 %
(2) Disagree	8.9 %	10.0 %
(3) Neutral	23.3 %	21.1 %
(4) Agree	46.7 %	32.2 %
(5) Agree very much	17.8 %	28.9 %
Standard deviation	0.983	1.221

Table 6: Comparison of the results primary school and the lock as identity markers

The results for a few identity markers do not incline very close scrutiny because of the goals of the study, but a short overview is provided in order to be thorough. Inhabitants on average agree that the former rectory “*De Amshoff*” is part of the identity of the village. It is one of the most picturesque parts of the village, featuring an old church and an aesthetically pleasing rectory on an elevated patch of lands with old trees and a park-like atmosphere near the graveyard. Arguably the image of “*De Amshoff*” corresponds with an image of the “*rural idyll*” (Markham and Bosworth, 2016). Swimming in the canal is also associated with Kiel-Windeweer, as a summer pass-time activity that some inhabitants indulge in, this is not unsurprising. Inhabitants have a more moderate association with the art alongside the canal and with a specific statue “*De Hengelaar*”. A lot of respondents indicated that they did not really take notice of the art and the statue, and some respondents declared that they were oblivious as to the location of both. The dam that used to be in the central part of the village, where nowadays the drawbridge can be found, was only moderately associated with the village.

<sup>3</sup> See table 6

Woods, as an identity marker, were not associated with Kiel-Windeweer. Some time ago there used to be a planted wood in the vicinity of the village for timber purposes, but it has disappeared and is furthermore uncharacteristic of the landscape.

Summarised, respondents indicate that they associate Kiel-Windeweer strongly with identity markers related to the canal, such as the canal itself, the drawbridge, recreational boating the lock, swimming in the canal, anglers, peat transport by boat and the swing bridges. The immediate effect of the reopening of the canal is clear on the drawbridge and the recreational boaters as identity markers. The drawbridge was constructed as part of the reopening of the canal, while the recreational boaters would not be able to come to Kiel-Windeweer without the reopening. There is no clear indication of an effect of, specifically, the reopening of the canal on the other canal-related identity markers.

### *5.2 Comparison with the research of Reiling (2008)*

Because of the impossibility to acquire the original dataset of the research of Reiling, the preferred method of a direct comparison between the two datasets was not possible. Only a comparison of the summarised results was possible. For the part of the research into identity markers, a transformation of the data was needed to acquire an identical framework for comparison. In the dataset of this research thirty-four variables were created, corresponding with the thirty-four identity markers in the questionnaire. Those variables had five possible values corresponding to the five answer possibilities. The part of the questionnaire concerning the identity markers of this research was identical to the research of Reiling. He chose to present and interpret the results by transforming the five possible answer values of the thirty-four identity marker questions to four possible resultant values corresponding with the amount of influence of the thirty-four identity markers on the identity of Kiel-Windeweer.

Reiling fails to mention the transformation of the data, consequently an explanation of the data transformation process is also lacking. He only mentions that the resultant table of the research is an overview of the median values of the identity markers. Two possible ways to transform the data were deemed possible on the basis of this comment. Either presenting the median values of the data as it was collected, and equating the four highest answer values with the four values as Reiling had presented them. Or in the relevant cases combining the lowest two values of the original variables into one and as such creating thirty-four new variables with four possible answer values and presenting the corresponding median values. The second option seemed the best course of action if further analyses were required, even though the resultant median values would be the same, because of the inherent characteristic of a median value.<sup>4</sup>

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<sup>4</sup> In order to clarify the process as described above, a schematic overview of the process is presented in table 7

Questionnaire	Equates	Resultant variables
When thinking of Kiel-Windeweer, I think of: <i>identity marker</i>	with:	Amount of influence of <i>identity marker</i> on identity of Kiel-Windeweer
<b>Answer value:</b>		<b>Resultant value:</b>
(1) Disagree very much	-	(1) No influence
(2) Disagree		
(3) Neutral	-	(2) Moderate influence
(4) Agree	-	(3) Strong influence
(5) Agree very much	-	(4) Very strong influence

Table 7: Schematic overview of the data transformation process

Nine of the 34 identity markers have changed in importance since the study by Reiling. This means that almost three-quarters of the identity markers have not changed. None of the identity markers has changed more than one category.<sup>5</sup>

The respondents indicated that the influence of the former dam in the centre of the village has waned. In 2008 the results indicated that it still had a moderate influence on the identity of the village, while the results in 2018 indicated that it ceased to have any influence. With the reopening of the canal, the dam was replaced with a drawbridge. Campsites and canoes have also become less important. Campsites have lost all influence and canoes remain only moderately of influence. The results suggest that the historical lockmaster's home of 1871 has become less important for the identity of Kiel-Windeweer. In 2008 the results indicated a large influence of the lockmaster's home, in 2018 the results only indicated a moderate influence. One of the intended results of the project of reopening the canal was that history of the area would be of greater interest to inhabitants, leading inhabitants to treasure the historical landmarks of the area and show great pride towards them (Agenda voor de Veenkoloniën, 2003). These results suggest if that is the case, a newfound affection does not extend towards the lockmaster's home. Furthermore, a tight-knit community also has become less important. This seems to be in accordance with recent societal development indicating less engagement with local communities (Simmel, 1971; Wellman and Leighton, 1979; Salamon, 2003). According to the results, both former factories, "*De Eendracht*" and "*De Toekomst*", have a greater influence on the identity of Kiel-Windeweer. This is in contrast to the "*Never heard of it*" comments frequently heard about "*De Eendracht*". But in the case of "*De Toekomst*" this might be related to the blooming in the former factory. Given that "*Never heard of it*" also were frequently heard when asked to rate the importance of statue "*De Hengelaar*", the increased importance also strikes as odd. The increased importance for agriculture, an identity marker closely related to the traditional idea of the rural (Haartsen, 2002), could be related to the notion that agriculture has become more important again as an image for the rural nationally, since regional identities as social constructs are affected by national opinions about rurality (Haartsen et al., 2003; Steenbekkers et al., 2008). At the very least it is proof for the continuing importance of agriculture for rural identity construction.

<sup>5</sup> See table 8 for the results of the comparison of the identity markers between this research and Reiling (2008)

Identity marker	Change	No influence	Moderate influence	Strong influence	Very strong influence
Canal					XO
Lock				XO	
Dam	-	O	X		
Drawbridge				XO	
Swing bridges				XO	
Lockmasters' home	-		O	X	
Ferry house			XO		
Factory "De Eendracht"	+	X	O		
Factory "De Toekomst"	+		X	O	
Wide scenery/open landscape					XO
Farms				XO	
Agriculture	+			X	O
Woods		XO			
Nature				XO	
Amshoff				XO	
Art alongside the canal			XO		
Statue "De Hengelaar"	+	X	O		
Tourists in the village			XO		
Anglers				XO	
Recreational cyclists				XO	
Canoes	-		O	X	
Swimming in the canal				XO	
Peat transport by boat				XO	
Recreational boating				XO	
Bars, restaurants etc.		XO			
Campsites	-	O	X		
Primary school "Albronda"				XO	
Unemployment		XO			
Impoverishment		XO			
Tight-knit community	-		O	X	
Safe living environment				XO	
Peaceful living environment					XO
Industriousness			XO		
Progressiveness			XO		
Total number of identity markers that have changed	9				

Table 8: Comparison of the identity markers between this research, marked by the letter O, and Reiling (2008), marked by the letter X

Summarised, a comparison between the associations in 2008 and 2018, shows that since the reopening of the canal, nine identity markers have changed their significance to the identity of the village. The effect of the reopening however is more ambiguous. Notable is the continued importance of the recreational boaters, especially since at the time of the research of Reiling (2008) the construction works had not yet finished, and no one had seen recreational boaters pass through the village. The anticipation of the boaters must have had enough of an effect leading respondents to already strongly associate the boaters with Kiel-Windeweer. The dam as an identity marker is associated less with the village than in 2008, this seems to be an effect of the reopening; the dam has been removed.

### *5.3 Change according to residents of Kiel-Windeweer*

Respondents were asked to rate Kiel-Windeweer as a place of residence both in 2008 and 2018.<sup>6</sup> The resultant mean value of the research of 2008 was 8.09, the mean value in 2018 was 7.86. Valuation for Kiel-Windeweer in 2018 as living environment was higher than the Dutch average for liveability. Liveability in the Netherlands was on average rated 7.5 in 2017 (CBS, 2018). The results of the research of 2018 were not normally distributed. Because of the central limit theorem (n=90), one-sample T-test was still allowed to test the data with the mean value from 2008 as test value. The result was not significant, therefore it cannot be concluded on the basis of the one-sample T-test that there is a difference in valuation between 2008 and 2018. The positive valuation of Kiel-Windeweer by inhabitants was further reinforced by the many positive comments respondents made before, after or during the completion of the questionnaire. Comments such as *“Look around you, such a spacious, quiet place. Where else are you able to find such a place?”* or *“I like it here, you can do what you like”* were quite common. Although statistically no difference can be concluded, the resultant decline in the values measured, along with comments of respondents, does beg the question whether the respondents have gotten used to the canal being navigable again. In 2008, the anticipation of the boats coming to Kiel-Windeweer might have led to momentary increase in valuation of the village. This effect might have dissipated in 2018, after ten years of seeing boats pass by. Some respondents still indicated that the boats passing by was a pleasant sight, but most of the respondents never mentioned them during the research. However, this is pure speculation as many other reasons might have led to the lower value in 2018.

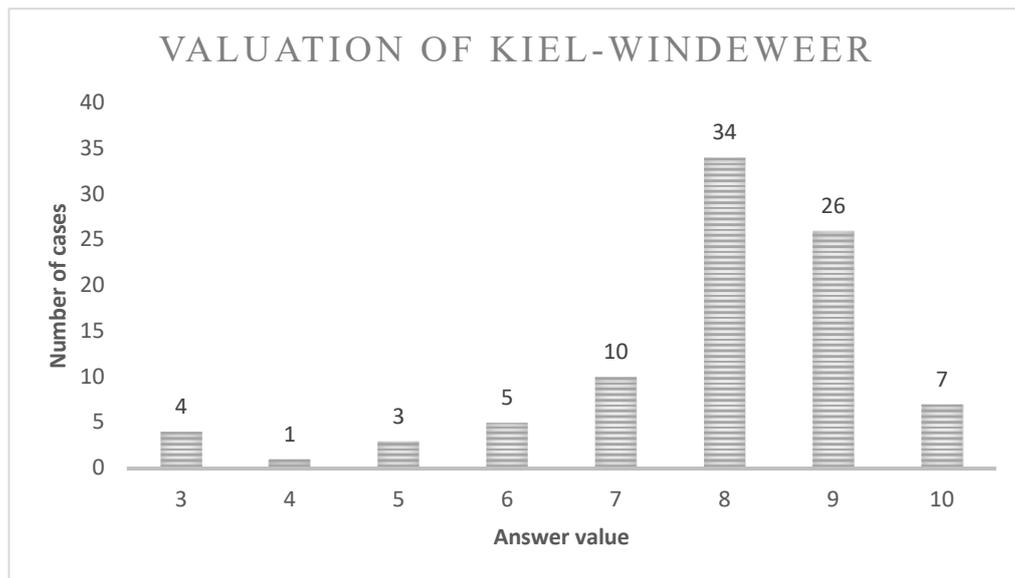
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<sup>6</sup> Results are summarised in table 9 and bar chart 1

How attractive do you perceive Kiel-Windeweer to be as a place of residence?

Possible values between 1 (negative) and 10 (positive)	
Year of research	Resultant mean value
2008 (n=88)	8.09
2018 (n=90)	7.86
Sign. (2-tailed)	0.165

Table 9: Comparison of valuation of Kiel-Windeweer between this research and Reiling (2008)



Bar chart 1: Valuation of Kiel-Windeweer

Respondents were also asked whether they agreed with the statement that Kiel-Windeweer had changed during the past ten years.<sup>7</sup> They were able to agree, disagree or state that they didn't know. Notable was the number of respondents that stated that they didn't know (n=21) or for whom no response was recorded (n=10). Together those cases constituted 34.4 % of total number of cases. A number of respondents indicated during the completion of the questionnaire that they did not live that long in the village and consequently did not know. Those respondents (n=14) accounted for 45.2 % of the total number of respondents who indicated that they did not know or that gave no response. Of the remaining respondents (n=76) 22.3 % indicated that they did not know or that gave no response. Of the respondents that did agree or disagree, 74.6 % agreed that they thought Kiel-Windeweer had changed, 25.4 % did not. If the hypothesis was that the population is equally divided on whether Kiel-Windeweer has changed can be rejected on the basis of a binominal test ( $p < 0.00$ ). This would suggest that the population is of opinion that Kiel-Windeweer has changed the past ten years.

<sup>7</sup> Results are summarised in table 10

Kiel-Windeweer has changed during the past ten years (n=90)

Possible answer	Agree	Disagree	I don't know	No response
Frequency	44	15	21	10
Percentage	46.9 %	16.7 %	23.3 %	11.1 %

Results after deselecting respondents who, on grounds of residential history, either recorded no response or indicated that they didn't know (n=76)

Possible answer	Agree	Disagree	I don't know	No response
Frequency	44	15	8	9
Percentage	57.9 %	19.7 %	10.5 %	11.8 %
Valid percentage	74.6 %	25.4 %		

Table 10: Results of the question about change of Kiel-Windeweer

Next respondents were asked whether that change, if it had occurred according to the respondent, had been positive.<sup>8</sup> Response was recorded on a five-point Likert item, possible answers ranged from 'I agree very much' to 'I disagree very much,' with the middle value presented as neutral. Because of the wording of the question, it was expected to generate a response only from those respondents who had indicated that they thought Kiel-Windeweer had changed in the previous question. However, only two respondents acted accordingly. While seemingly contradictory, it is not impossible to have an opinion or general feel on the value of a change, even though the person is unsure or considers oneself unable to assess that change. Further inspection of the results showed that 82 % of respondents who did not indicate agreement in the previous question chose the neutral answer. The median values of the group that indicated agreement, and the whole sample were the same (=3). Furthermore, comparing the distribution across the selected group and the whole sample by way of a Mann-Whitney U test, showed there was no significant difference in distribution ( $p=0.152$ ). Because no significant difference in distribution was found, because the data for the whole sample was seemingly normally distributed, in order to include as many cases possible and to not discard data without due cause, further analysis was done on the whole sample. On the basis of a one-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test (test median value = 3), the hypothesis that the inhabitants of Kiel-Windeweer do not regard a hypothetical change of their village as positive, cannot be rejected ( $p = 0.571$ ). On the basis of these results the conclusion can be drawn that the change of Kiel-Windeweer is by inhabitants perceived as neutral.

<sup>8</sup> Results are summarised in table 11

That change, if it has occurred according to you, has been positive (n=88)

Median value: 3

Possible answer	1 Disagree very much	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Agree very much
Frequency	4	17	47	19	1
Valid percentage	4.5 %	19.3 %	53.4 %	21.6 %	1.1 %

Test value one-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test: 3

Significance one-sample Wilcoxon signed rank test: 0.571

Results after deselecting the cases where, in previous question, no response 'Disagree' or 'I don't know' was recorded (n=43)

Median value: 3

Possible answer	1 Disagree very much	2 Disagree	3 Neutral	4 Agree	5 Agree very much
Frequency	4	15	10	13	1
Valid percentage	9.3 %	34.9 %	23.3 %	30.2 %	2.3 %

Significance independent samples Mann-Whitney U test: 0.152

Table 11: Results of the question about positivity of change

Respondents did however often verbally indicate that they thought the fact that, boats came by every now and again, the canal was navigable again and the old bridges and the lock were reinstated was nice. For some respondents the boats coming by gave them the feeling that something was happening in the village. This led to a hypothesis that respondents that valued the hypothetical change of Kiel-Windeweer more positively also associated the village stronger with identity markers related to the canal, recreational boating etc. However, no significant correlation between the valuation of the hypothetical change of Kiel-Windeweer and a broad range of identity markers could be found, based on calculating Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient.<sup>9</sup>

Moreover, none of the respondents made any negative comment on the canal. The majority of negative comments that were induced by the question about change and the positivity of that change were either in the social dimension or about the loss of amenities. This led to a hypothesis that respondents that associated Kiel-Windeweer less with a tight-knit community might also value the hypothetical change less positively. This notion was however rejected by calculating Spearman's Rho correlation coefficient. The notion that there would be correlation between valuing change and an association of Kiel-Windeweer with the primary school was rejected because respondents who had objected to the closing of the school, often strongly associated the school with the village, moreover the results were not significant.

<sup>9</sup> Results are summarised in table 12

Correlation between positiveness of change and strength of association with identity markers

	Significance	Spearman's Rho Correlation coefficient
Canal	0.615	0.054
Lock	0.835	-0.023
Drawbridge	0.505	-0.072
Swing bridges	0.378	0.095
Tourists in the village	0.403	0.090
Canoes	0.885	-0.35
Recreational boating	0.604	-0.56
Primary school "Albronda"	0.891	-0.015
Tight-knit community	0.154	0.153

Table 12: Correlation between positivity of change and strength of association with identity markers

To summarise, statistically the reopening of the canal does not seem to have had a (positive) effect on the valuation of the village by the respondents. Respondents did indicate that the village had changed the last ten years, but indicated that the change had been neutral. Anecdotal evidence however indicates a positive feeling about the reopening of the canal and the recreational boaters passing by.

#### 5.4 Sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer

Using a set of questions derived from the research of Jorgensen & Stedman (2001) sense of place was measured.<sup>10</sup> Answer values for one question were reversed in order for a high value to represent a high level of the construct. This concerned the question about there being better places to live than in Kiel-Windeweer. While a series of studies (Jorgensen and Stedman, 2001; Nanzer, 2004; Rijnks and Strijker, 2011) confirmed the validity of using these questions to construct place identity, place attachment and place dependence as separate scales, the calculated Cronbach Alpha's showed a poor internal consistency of the items constituting the scale of place identity ( $\alpha=0,56$ ) and place dependence ( $\alpha=0,67$ ). The two items concerning the scale for place attachment did show a good internal consistency ( $\alpha=0,82$ ). Using the six items to construct a scale of sense of place was allowed ( $\alpha=0.82$ ). Considering these findings, the three dimensions of sense of place where were not developed as separate scales. The six items were analysed separately and together as a scale for sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer.

<sup>10</sup> Results in table 13

	Score
Identity1	2,99
Identity2	4,11
Attachment1	4,22
Attachment2	4,26
Dependence1	3,69
Dependence2	2,84
Sense of place	3,69

*Table 13: Sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer*

The scores for the two items measuring place identity showed a moderate level of place identity for the first item (2,99) and a high level for the second item (4,11). This was somewhat expected since the question whether respondents could be themselves in Kiel-Windeweer is a milder formulated question than whether respondents tied their own identity to their perceived identity of the village. The two items for place attachment in Kiel-Windeweer both showed a high level of place attachment (attachment1=4,22; attachment2=4,26). These results should be approached with caution, since it became clear to this researcher during the data collection process that a fair number of respondents equated Kiel-Windeweer in these questions to their home. Common sense would suggest that in general a stronger attachment to home than to the village could be expected. The two items for place dependency showed a moderate, to moderately high level of place dependence (dependence1=3,69; dependence2=2,84). Some respondents indicated that the answer for the question whether there were better places to be than Kiel-Windeweer was obvious. There were always better places, but in general they were satisfied. This attitude towards the question resulted in a different approach to the question among respondents. Some respondents therefor chose the neutral answer, while others defiantly chose to disagree and still others went along with their analysis of the question and opted for an agreeing answer. The results for this item should therefore be regarded with caution.

The scale for sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer was calculated by dividing the sum of means by the number of items constituting the scale. This yielded a moderately high level of sense of place (3,69). The study of Rijnks and Strijker (2011) on the image and identity of the Veenkoloniën showed a sense of place level of 3,90 for inhabitants born and living in the Veenkoloniën and of 3,33 for inhabitants that moved to and lived in the Veenkoloniën. The results Gieling et al. (2018) showed for the Dutch countryside in general a mean value for general attachment between 3.62 and 3.82. The moderately high level of sense of place is therefor in line with previous research. It is not, however, appreciably higher as might be expected as a result of the reopening of the canal.



*Figure 10: Wordplay of “East or West, home’s best.” This could be a quite accurate description of the majority of inhabitants’ feelings towards Kiel-Windeweer (source: own collection, 2018)*

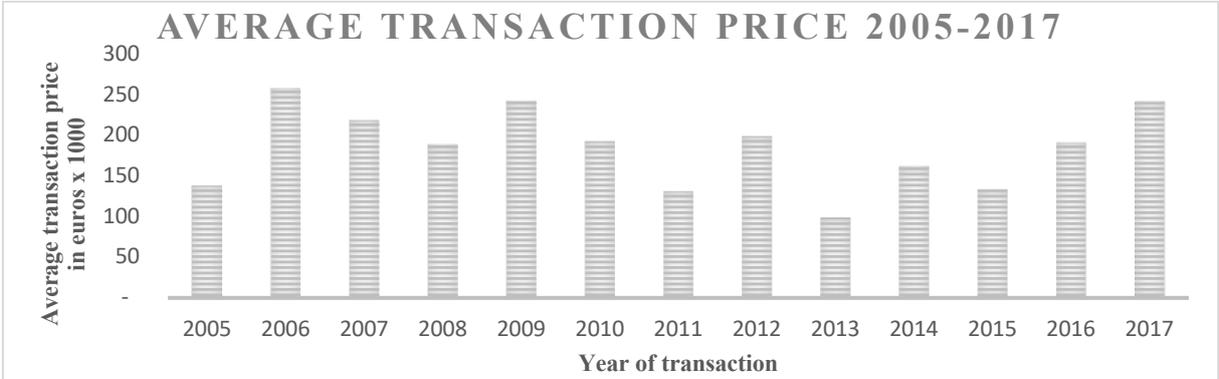
### *5.5 Hedonic pricing and change in real-estate value in Kiel-Windeweer*

Summarised, the hedonic pricing theory states that each house has a certain number of characteristics. Each characteristic comes with a certain price. The total price of a house is the sum of the prices of the characteristics (Ampe et al., 2006). Hedonic pricing is an attempt to create a model that can be used to compare different houses using a same set of characteristics. Implicit in the model is that it reflects the valuation process of individuals. If a house has certain desirable characteristics, individuals are willing to pay a higher price. Arguably, whether a spatial intervention, such as the reopening of the canal, has led to an increase in the desirability of the area as a living environment, can be inferred from the house prices in the area. However, processes and trends that occur on a larger scale also influence house prices. In order to try to identify the effect of a single contributing factor, comparisons must be made. For this study, the average house price of Kiel-Windeweer was compared to that price in the Netherlands in general, the northern part of the Netherlands, the province of Groningen, the former municipality of Hoogezand-Sappemeer and the village of Borgercompagnie. The first comparisons were made to check whether Kiel-Windeweer defied a trend occurring on a larger spatial scale, the comparison with Borgercompagnie was made because limited research

identified this village as rather similar to Kiel-Windeweer in a large number of ways. Most important are three reasons. First, it is also a linear settlement. Second, the canal in the village was dammed of and filled in in the 1970's. Third, it is also located in the Veenkoloniën, very near to Kiel-Windeweer. The single most important difference for this research however is that the canal in Borgercompagnie was not reopened. To investigate one part of the effects of reopening the canal, comparison with Borgercompagnie was therefore deemed appropriate.

Whether the reopening of the canal has been beneficial for Kiel-Windeweer as a place to attract in-migration might be inferred from house prices. In order to be able to do so several lines of inquiry were pursued. First, a dataset was created containing the transaction price of every house that was sold in Kiel-Windeweer between 2004 and 2017. This resulted in a dataset containing 63 transactions, and 61 different houses (two houses were sold twice in the timeframe).<sup>11</sup> Average transaction prices were calculated per year. Data was drawn from a dataset of historical transactions from one of the associations of real-estate agents in the Netherlands (VBO-makelaars).

The number of transactions per year and the average transaction price for houses fluctuated too much for it to be possible to discern a trend and for the data to be used to draw conclusions.



Bar chart 2: Average transaction price of houses in Kiel-Windeweer

Further investigation into the two properties that were sold twice in the period 2005-2017 did also not lead to any meaningful results. Both properties were sold for less than they were bought for earlier.<sup>12</sup>

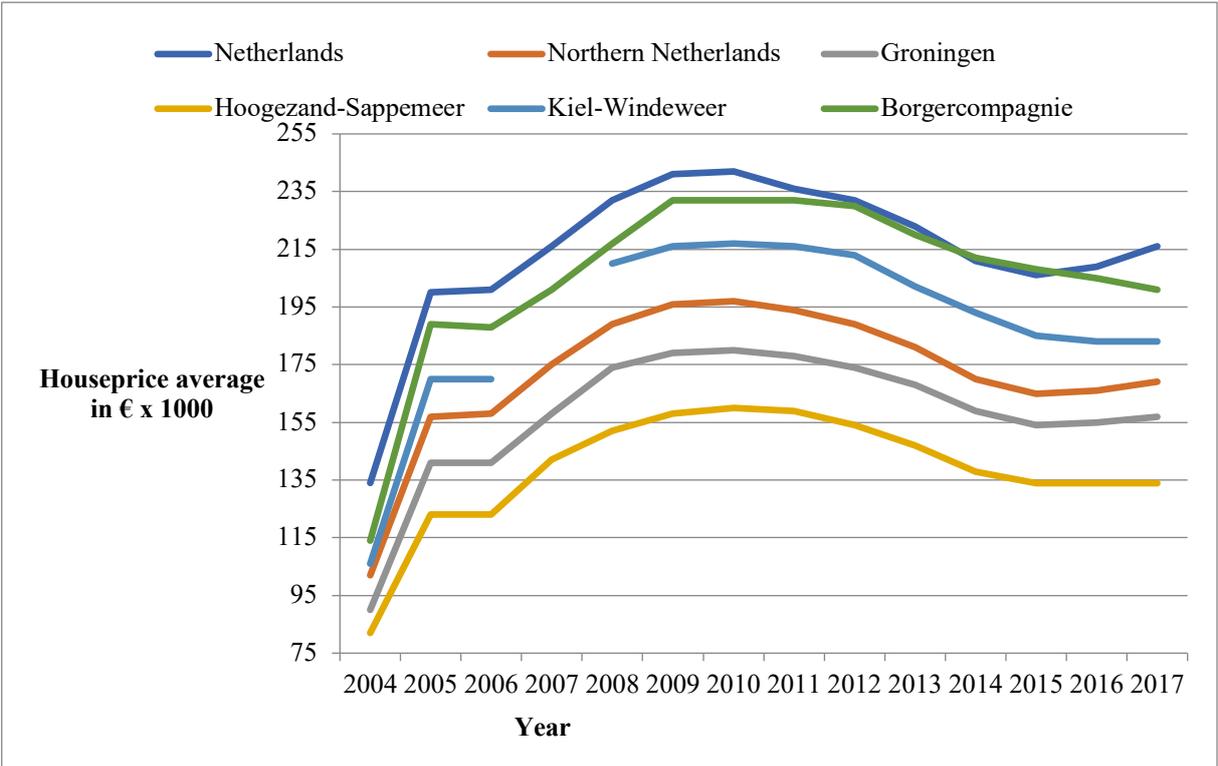
	Transaction price	Year of transaction
Property 1	€ 320.000	2006
	€ 165.000	2015
Property 2	€ 250.000	2014
	€ 220.000	2016

Table 14: Transaction prices of two properties in Kiel-Windeweer

<sup>11</sup> A visual summary is presented in bar chart 2

<sup>12</sup> Results in table 14

Statistics Netherlands (CBS) provided the average value of houses (WOZ-waarde) on different spatial levels. These values were gathered for Kiel-Windeweer, Borger-Compagnie, the former municipality of Hoogezand-Sappemeer, the province of Groningen, the northern part of the Netherlands and of the Netherlands. The value of every house is each year estimated by the municipality. An assessor bases this value on a number of characteristics; among others are the size of the property, the number of rooms, the type of building and the transaction prices of similar houses in the vicinity. These values are then inserted in a model that calculates the value of the other houses in the vicinity based on the set of characteristics. An independent national organisation (Waarderingskamer) checks the quality of the assessments of the municipalities. The average value of houses between 2004-2017 were gathered for Kiel-Windeweer and the before mentioned comparison areas.<sup>13</sup> The average house value in Kiel-Windeweer in 2007 could not be provided by Statistics Netherlands and is therefore missing.



Graph 1: Visual representation of average house value in several areas

The average value of houses in Kiel-Windeweer follows the trend of the northern Netherlands, province of Groningen and the municipality of Hoogezand-Sappemeer closely. Up to 2015 this is also the case for Kiel-Windeweer, the whole of the Netherlands and Borgercompagnie. After 2015 average value of houses in the Netherlands in general rises compared to the other areas of reference. While the average value of houses in Borgercompagnie is higher than in Kiel-Windeweer, the decline in prices identifiable in both villages since 2009 is stabilising in Kiel-Windeweer, while prices continue to decline in Borgercompagnie.

<sup>13</sup> For a visual representation see graph 1

In order to check whether the average value of houses in Kiel-Windeweer throughout the period 2009-2017 correlates with the average value of houses in the comparison areas, Pearson’s correlation coefficient was calculated for all the pairs. The timeframe of 2009-2017 was chosen because the canal was reopened in 2008. The effects of that project are expected to be noticeable after that date.<sup>14</sup> For all the pairs a significant correlation was found. The degree of correlation is highest between Kiel-Windeweer and Borgercompagnie. For the other pairs the degree of correlation declines as scale increases. The average house prices in Kiel-Windeweer shows the least degree of correlation with average house prices in the Netherlands in general. These results do not support the hypothesis that reopening the canal has led to an increase in the value of houses in Kiel-Windeweer. Average house prices in Kiel-Windeweer show the highest degree of correlation with a village that is in many respects similar.

Correlation between average house price between 2009 and 2017 in Kiel-Windeweer and:

	Netherlands	Northern Netherlands	Groningen	Hoogezand-Sappemeer	Borgercompagnie
Pearson Correlation	0,951	0,983	0,988	0,993	0,994
Significance (2-tailed)	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000	0.000

Table 15: Correlation between average house value between 2009 and 2017 in Kiel-Windeweer and comparison area

5.6 Number of businesses in Kiel-Windeweer

Data from Statistics Netherlands was used to see whether the number of businesses in the tourism sector in Kiel-Windeweer has changed since the reopening of the canal. Due to a change in the standard (SBI 2008) Statistics Netherlands uses to order businesses according to their activities, data only goes back to 2011. Data before that date is differently structured and a useful grouping of businesses based on activities is missing. Furthermore, Statistics Netherlands chooses to round the number of businesses in a certain area up to five. This obfuscates the picture in a small village with relatively few businesses such as Kiel-Windeweer. Relevant to this research are businesses like bed and breakfasts, hotels, restaurants, cafés, campsites, recreational or supporting businesses. These relevant businesses are grouped in three different categories. These categories are: “wholesale and retail trade”, “accommodation and food service activity”, “transportation, information and communication” and “culture, sports and recreation”.<sup>15</sup> Of these, only the category labelled culture, sports and recreation has

<sup>14</sup> Results of the correlation calculations are summarised in table 15  
<sup>15</sup> For a full overview of the development of the number businesses in Kiel-Windeweer see appendix 2.

shown an increase of 5 or less businesses in 2013. The number of businesses in the other categories remains the same. Although the evidence is far too scant to draw conclusions, it is noteworthy that the number of businesses in the recreational sector increased in the years 2011-2018. Two of the interviewees however did start their business as a direct result of the (future) reopening of the canal, respectively in 2007 and 2008.

### *5.7 Number of boats passing through the village*

According to regional newspaper *Dagblad van het Noorden* the number of boats taking the route through Kiel-Windeweer has declined the last few years. During the most successful years the number of boats hovered around 1200 a year, in 2018 the number was around 900 (*Dagblad van het Noorden*, 2018).

### *5.8 Characteristics of tourism entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer*

All of the entrepreneurs have utilised their home for the business, but the extent to which the business provides an income is varied.<sup>16</sup> For none of the entrepreneurs however, income generation was the initial motivation. Diedo explained how he lost his regular job and decided to do something useful with the money he got from the company and the time he now had. Marlies and Wilma saw an opportunity in the reopening of the canal and thought they could profit from the opportunities it potentially would create, while doing something that would give them other benefits. Marlies for instance is proud of the village and thought the business might help the outside world appreciate the village as well. In relation to the literature, it is notable that this characterisation is largely compatible with conclusion of Markantoni and van Hoven (2012) that this kind of activities are valued most for the intangible rewards such as pride, personal growth and a sense of achievement and empowerment.

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<sup>16</sup> See table 14 for an overview

	Wilma	Marlies	Diedo
Type of business	Canoe rental	Vietnamese teagarden, antique store, B&B	Small pub, café
Time spent on the business	2-3 hours a week	4 days a week	Fulltime
Income generation	Works fulltime elsewhere	Dependent on income of partner	Business provides one full income
Location of business	At home	At home	At home
Motivation for starting business	Among others: Reopening of the canal	Among others: Reopening of the canal	Primary reason was losing regular job
Relationship between canal and business	Uses the canal for her canoes, doesn't profit from recreational boaters	Doesn't profit from recreational boaters	Doesn't profit from recreational boaters
Founding year	2007	2007	2014
Intended public	Relatively young and active people	Older recreational cyclists	Cyclists, families, birthday parties, cardplaying groups etc.

Table 16: Overview of characteristics of the entrepreneurs

### 5.9 Experiences of tourism entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer

Analysis of the interviews among the relevant business owners in Kiel-Windeweer resulted in the emergence of three themes. These themes are: “*physical environment*”, “*institutional factors*”, “*maintenance and practical constraints*”. The results are complemented with general observations and conversations with other stakeholders.

#### *Physical environment*

The physical environment in Kiel-Windeweer provides for both constraints and possibilities for tourism-related businesses. Wilma, the owner of the canoe-rental business ‘Peddel enzo’ notes the number of possible destinations for water-related recreation.

Wilma: “*When you put the canoes in the water here, you can go the lake Langebosch, the lake of Zuidlaren, and you can visit the villages. So, there’s plenty of opportunity here.*”

Diedo, the owner of the small pub ‘De Kielster Koffiemolen’, mentions the view of the village from the canal, the historical buildings and the wide scenery, united in the allocation of the

protected townscape label to Kiel-Windeweer as something that is a matter of pride for the inhabitants and something that is able to draw tourists to the village.

However, the physical environment provides constraints as well. Across the entire length of the village, the canal has basically the same width and no jetty near useful spots in the village. This makes it particularly difficult to properly moor a boat in the village. The lack of an existing wider area leads to the situation that there is no obvious nor easy spot for a harbour. Combined with the lack of jetties, this makes for a situation where the tourists that pass through the village by boat have little opportunity to make an unscheduled stop and make use of what businesses have to offer. When asked what role the canal plays for the pub, the answer of Diedo illustrates the situation, but also the potential solution:

*“It plays basically no role. I don’t aim for the recreational boaters, because they cannot moor here. [...] Yes, it would be possible, as soon as there is a jetty here.”*

It must also be noted that there are jetties along the canal in the village, but they are nowhere near useful spots for the entrepreneurs. If, during the construction works, there had been more cooperation between the entrepreneurs and the civil servants this might not have led to so much frustration for the entrepreneurs, and would have catered better to the needs of the local area. This distorted development echoes the critique of Bosworth and Atterton (2012) on exogenous development of this kind.

Another feature of the physical environment in Kiel-Windeweer that poses challenges to the entrepreneurs is the difference in height of the banks of the canal. Wilma explains:

*“For example, the Amshoff, it’s located a number of kilometres further along. The banks are higher over there, than they are here. Over there you can’t get out of a canoe, while here, it is possible to get in.”*

Summarised, there are a number of features that provide opportunities for tourism-related entrepreneurial activity in Kiel-Windeweer, in particular the number of possible destinations for water-related recreation and the general pleasant features of the village. But the lack of jetties and difference in the height of the banks of the canal make it difficult for the entrepreneurs to cater to the needs of potential customers.

### *Institutional context*

Entrepreneurship is sensible to the institutional context. Both formal institutions and informal institutions can foster or hinder entrepreneurship (Estrin et al., 2016). The role of formal institutions, such as local governments, is often seen as providing barriers to entrepreneurship through regulation, planning permissions or licensing. Equally these institutions are hailed as providing stimuli for entrepreneurs through subsidies, organising networking events or

through providing infrastructure (Sine and David, 2010). Experiences with formal institutions among the interviewed entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer in this matter is no different.

During the years since Diedo started his business he noticed a shift in the priorities of the municipal government, coinciding with merger of former municipality of Hoogezand-Sappemeer into the municipality of Midden-Groningen.

Diedo: *“Because, back then, the municipality of Hoogezand-Sappemeer did little else than promoting tourism. Back then, it was extraordinarily easy getting my license [to sell alcoholic beverages] [...] I just think it’s strange. [Since the merging of the municipalities] the whole thing with the jetties suddenly did not moved forward in inch.”*

Priorities is one of the difficulties the entrepreneurs feel they encounter in their relations with the formal institutions running a business in Kiel-Windeweer. Wilma and Marlies both expressed that another difficulty they encounter is that civil servants often lack an ability to compromise. In the case of Wilma, it is the sense that they don’t value initiative if it doesn’t conform to their expectations, if they value it at all.

Wilma: *“You know, back when I started, [...] they said: We’d rather have someone who has side branch of the canal right next to the house, because then people don’t have to cross the road with a canoe.”*

Also Wilma: *“Now I’m in a group to link Kiel-Windeweer to a cultural-historical route, so you get a little sign that tells you a little story at points like the Amshoff. [...] As an entrepreneur, I have to invest so much time. [...] I just think there should be more initiative, not only from entrepreneurs, but also from a government, waterboard or something like it.”*

Marlies furthermore lays some of the blame for the time it takes and difficulty to get a planning or building permit on the both the formal and informal institutions in the province of Groningen.

Marlies: *“In Kiel-Windeweer, in Groningen, you have got to have the patience to play the long game [...], all things progress only bit by little bit and because it took so long with the permits, we had a rather rough start.”*

Culture, or informal institutions, is a subject that returns numerous times in the interview with Marlies, herself not native to the area.

Marlies: *“If you hear that there are six teagardens in Kiel-Windeweer, that are just closed. Even during the holidays, they have shut the gate. If you listen to recreational cyclists, [...] they say I’m the only one who is open in Kiel-Windeweer and the surrounding area. [...] Others just open when they feel like it.”*

These and other comments echo a certain well-known negative perception about a supposedly dominant work ethos in the area, being on benefits or reliant on the government or some large company for providing either direct work or subsidised work. The character traits that go along with this work ethos is seen as incompatible with an entrepreneurial spirit. Whether true or not, expectations of this kind, if shared by others, may lead to not bothering to start up businesses because of low expectations of support from the environment (Gherhes et al., 2017).

The entrepreneurs that were interviewed in Kiel-Windeweer also indicated a certain frustration with navigating the maze of different governments and the fragmented responsibility of, what is implicitly considered, a single issue. This critique is reminiscent of the observations of the Commissie Structuurversterking Veenkoloniën (2001) on intergovernmental cooperation in the region.

Wilma explains: *“It should be a cooperative effort with the municipalities and the water board. [...] The provinces are responsible for this little area, the municipalities of that little area and the water board of another little area. [...] As soon as you go around the corner from here, you’re in the province of Drenthe. [...] And then you’ve got the lake of Zuidlaren, which is partially Drenthe and partially Groningen. Well, it’s really difficult as an entrepreneur to gain a foothold at these institutions.”*

Institutional context in Kiel-Windeweer is not seen as especially conducive to entrepreneurship by the interviewees. The time it takes to get a permit, uncompromising attitude of civil servants and fragmented responsibility when dealing with different governments are all seen as stymieing the development of their businesses. One entrepreneur also mentions a complete lack of entrepreneurial spirit or valuation thereof in the area.

#### *Maintenance and practical constraints*

The third theme that arose from the interviews is maintenance of the canal and other practical constraints. The entrepreneurs identified several obstacles for tourists navigating the canal wishing to make a stop to enjoy what Kiel-Windeweer has to offer, foremost among which is the previously mentioned lack of jetties. However, the entrepreneurs and bridge keepers both also mentioned the difficulty, even with hypothetical jetties, of stopping midway through the village.

Diedo: *“They pass by here in a column. There are people who escort them through eleven bridges, I believe, and a lock. And if they would stop, then they have a problem, because they cannot continue when they please.”*

This highlights the detrimental effect of the way the operation of the bridges is organised on the opportunities for entrepreneurs to cater to the desires of the recreational boaters. Every hour a number of boats are guided from beginning to end through the village, making it apparently a too complicated business to stop.

Furthermore, entrepreneurs and bridge keepers alike notice a steady decrease in the navigability of the canal. The official maximum draft in largest part of the route through the Veenkoloniën is 1,10 m, in the part of Kiel-Windeweer the official draft is 1,20 m. However, in recent years the canal has seen a steady increase in the presence of aquatic plants. Aquatic plants slow down the flow of water and capture sediment, eventually leading to silting up of the canal. At the moment, aquatic plants hamper recreational boaters and the canoe rental business of Wilma for other reasons as well.

Wilma: *“When you look at it, you’ll see it. Steadily the canal is becoming overgrown. When I want to set off with a boat with outboard engine, I have to push hard and only start the engine in the middle of the canal. Otherwise it would jam immediately because of the overgrowth.”*

While it hampers Wilma when setting off, it can also lead to problems for the recreational boaters that are passing by Kiel-Windeweer.

Diedo: *“Now we are ten years on and I see the canal silting up. [...] When you come into a canal that is overgrown, [...] and you have a boat with a propeller. You know what happens, you’re not manoeuvrable because your propeller is covered in stuff. That’s what’s happening in the Kieldiep, and I think it’s a shame. If you ask the bridge keepers, well... you can better take cover.”*

It is the shared opinion of the bridge keepers and the entrepreneurs that the aquatic plants are not controlled properly by the authorities, but the same goes for the grass, the nettles and other plants on the banks of the canal. It is felt that this is not maintained properly. According to the entrepreneurs interviewed they are concerned the high grass blocks the view for recreational boaters and causes dangerous situations for the recreational cyclists on the small road along the east side of the canal. The entrepreneurs have responded by maintaining the public grounds in front of their own property themselves. Practical constraints such as the way the operation of the bridges is organised does not facilitate easy stopping for the recreational boater in Kiel-Windeweer. Furthermore, the overgrowth of aquatic plants in the Kieldiep provides nuisance for those wanting to use the canal for recreational purposes.

To summarise, two entrepreneurs have started a business as a direct result of the reopening of the canal. However, the entrepreneurs have not been able to consistently capitalise on the opportunities the recreational boaters and the reopening the canal has brought to the village because of a number of constraints.

## Chapter 6 - Conclusion and discussion

### 6.1 Conclusion

The goal of this research was to establish the effect the reopening of the canal in Kiel-Windeweer has had on a number of areas that the plan intended to improve. These areas are specified in the sub questions of the research. This chapter summarises the most important conclusions of those sub questions and provides an answer to the main question.

*In what way does the ascribed identity of Kiel-Windeweer now compare to that of ten years ago? And to what extent can this be attributed to the reopening of the Kieldiep?*

Inhabitants Kiel-Windeweer rated most identity markers in 2018 just as important for the identity of the village as in 2008. This suggests the critique of Tempelman (1999) on the constructivist vision of identity is valid. She states that in a lot of situations cultural identity is not as fluid as constructivists claim and that while cultural identities are invented, this does not mean that it is the result of a goal-oriented approach or, that if there is an intended aim to change the identity, that this is successful (Tempelman, 1999). Moreover, it seems erroneous to suggest on the basis of the results that the measured change that did occur is the intended result of the reopening of the canal. To reminisce, the intention was to strengthen the identity of the area (Grontmij, 2002). While it is possible that small changes have occurred in the identity markers that were measured as having stayed the same, I would suggest that if the identity was strengthened and the positive image of tourism in the region has taken root in the area, that at least the identity markers relating to that image would either have become more important or at the very least have stayed the same. Two identity markers related to tourism and leisure, campsites and canoes, have instead become less important. While the marker agriculture, that is tied more to the traditional idea of the rural, has become more important than it already was (Haartsen, 2002). This seems to reinforce the notion that regional identities as social constructs are affected by national opinions about rurality (Haartsen et al., 2003; Steenbekkers et al., 2008). The results of the study into the strength of the association of the identity markers also seems to validate the notion of Hague and Jenkins (2015) that the importance of these identity markers is influenced by the fact whether people actively engage with them. This seems especially the case with the importance of the relatively central drawbridge, compared to the swinging bridges, locks and other identity markers.

*How do residents value Kiel-Windeweer in 2018 compared to 2008?*

In 2008 residents of Kiel-Windeweer rated their living environment on an item ranging from one to ten with an average value of 8.09. The same value in 2018 was 7.86. For the Netherlands in general the value was 7.5 in 2017 (CBS, 2019). Statistically no difference between 2008 and 2018 can be concluded. It cannot be concluded that residents value Kiel-Windeweer in 2018

different from 2008, but there are indications that the novelty of the canal being navigable is wearing off, leading to a lower valuation.

*How do residents relate to their living environment, as measured by sense of place in Kiel-Windeweer?*

Sense of place was measured using a slightly modified method of that used by Jorgensen and Stedman (2001). Separate scales could not be constructed for place identity and place dependence. The construction of a scale for sense of place was allowed. The level of sense of place for inhabitants in Kiel-Windeweer is moderately high (3,96) and within range of expectations on the basis of previous research in the Veenkoloniën (Rijnks and Strijker, 2011). Appreciably higher, as would be expected on the basis of the impact predictions of the reopening of the canal, it is not.

*In what way have the house prices developed since the reopening of the canal?*

Average value of houses as provided by Statistics Netherlands shows that the value of houses in the village of Kiel-Windeweer show to correlate most with the value of houses in the nearby village of Borgercompagnie. Moreover, the value of houses in Kiel-Windeweer closely follows the general trend of houses in the Netherlands on several spatial levels. Too few houses were sold between 2005 and 2017 too reliably calculate an average of real house prices in Kiel-Windeweer. The comparison of results of the average house value in Kiel-Windeweer with other areas does not suggest an increase of house values due to the reopening of the canal.

*In what way has the tourism-business of Kiel-Windeweer developed since the reopening of the canal according to the relevant entrepreneurs?*

This research has focused on three different aspect of the tourism-business environment: the number of businesses in Kiel-Windeweer, the number of boats passing through the village and the less tangible business environment. Looking at the subject of the number of businesses it was found that Statistics Netherlands chooses to round the number of businesses up to five on all spatial scales, which provided difficulties in a small village such as Kiel-Windeweer. The most relevant result was that the number of businesses in the recreational sector in Kiel-Windeweer has increased in 2013 and that two interviewees identified the reopening of the canal as one of the major reasons for starting a business. The number of boats that pass through Kiel-Windeweer has declined in the last few years from a peak of 1200 a year to around 900 in 2018.

The entrepreneurs that were interviewed, have developed mostly irrespective of the reopening of the canal, since they have been unable to use the opportunities the canal grants. The reason for this is the absence of suitable mooring locations for the recreational boaters near the businesses wishing to cater to them. While this study does not provide a definitive link between the informal institutions and the success of entrepreneurs in Kiel-Windeweer, the

results do incline to ask the question whether an absence of a culture, both at the level of municipal government as well as in the village itself, that fosters entrepreneurship is the reason why the entrepreneurs have been unable to overcome this hurdle. This is the case in peripheral post-industrial places as Gherhes et al. (2018) have shown in Doncaster, England. It also echoes the research by Haber and Reichel (2007) who have shown that success (in terms of revenue) of tourism entrepreneurs in Israël was largely dependent on the managerial skills and less so on the attractiveness of the location.

While the entrepreneurs do indicate that they wish to engage with the recreational boaters, they are also content with the way their business has developed. Moreover, the less tangible rewards that their business activity offers them might be equally or more important than other more quantifiable rewards. However, from the perspective of the goal to develop a bustling tourism business sector in the area, as the reopening of the canal has sought to do, it has not been successful and provides further arguments for the discrediting of an exogenous or top-down like approach of rural development.

*What has been the effect of reopening the Kieldiep on the identity, valuation, sense of place, housing prices and business environment of Kiel-Windeweer?*

The purpose of this study was to investigate the effect of reopening of the canal on the village of Kiel-Windeweer. It has become clear during the study that the village, in a lot of respects, is remarkably similar to other villages in the rural Netherlands in general, but particularly to other villages in the Veenkoloniën. Inhabitants value their village as living environment quite well, with the figure even slightly higher than the average in the Netherlands. The measured sense of place is moderately high, and within the range measured in previous research on sense of place in the Veenkoloniën. The value of houses moreover very much resembles that of neighbouring Borgercompagnie. What inhabitants perceive as the identity of the village, as measured by identity markers, has for almost three-quarters remained the same. The identity markers that have changed, have only done so only slightly. But most importantly, for the purposes of this study, there are very few indications that the reopening of the canal has been the factor influencing all of the above. When collecting the data, far more common were the remarks that in Kiel-Windeweer “*you can do what you like and you’re being left alone*” or in Kiel-Windeweer “*the peacefulness and wide-open scenery*” is exceptional. What can be positively linked to the reopening of the canal, is the start of two businesses in Kiel-Windeweer. Profiting from the recreational boaters however, has until now been unsuccessful due to a number of reasons explored previously.

To conclude that the reopening of the canal has been negatively perceived, however, is untrue. Inhabitants did comment on it in a positive way, but what seems to be the case is that according to the results, the reopening of the canal is mostly irrelevant in the areas it was intending to improve in Kiel-Windeweer.

On the matter of rural development, this study illustrated, to a certain extent, the need to include lay knowledge (on the local geography, the operation of bridges, maintenance etc.) in rural development policy. In that respect this study is a critique as well of the exogenous or

top-down approach and the need for development to value this local knowledge and strengthen it through interaction with externally produced knowledge (Lowe et al., 2019).

## *6.2 Discussion*

In the course of this research, comments made by the respondents and interviewees have caused me to question the validity of using pre-defined identity markers for research into identity of place on this spatial scale. Respondents gave the impression that they equated the village, especially at first, mostly with their own home. To force the answers of respondents into a pre-defined framework drives the associations away from that which clearly matters most to respondents. This is also what Gustafson (2001) discovered. According to Gustafson many of his respondents “associated their place of residence with security and a sense of home.” On a more theoretical note, he also concluded that “small places are primarily given self-related meanings, whereas the opposite holds true for larger places.” It is still possible to draw response to pre-defined identity markers as this study has shown. It leads however to the following question: if these markers are not natural responses, do the answers still matter? My suggestion for further research on the effects of spatial intervention on the people-place relations in a small study area would be to approach this in a qualitative way, or at the very least, do a qualitative exploratory study to better identify what matters to people and use those results for a quantitative approach.

This study would also have been more effective in addressing the main research question if it would have incorporated more theory in the research design. This would have led to an interview guide that would have focused more on the role of motivations, sense of place, growth expectations and social environment in entrepreneurship and would have approached the role of the canal less directly, but more effectively.

Moreover, the reopening of this route through the Veenkoloniën does not only affect Kiel-Windeweer. To draw conclusions on the whole project, using only the results of this study in Kiel-Windeweer, would not be valid. Better would have been to make the canals central in the study and focus on multiple villages, places or areas in the Veenkoloniën and study the effects there using the results of Reiling of Kiel-Windeweer. The findings of the specific challenges of the entrepreneurs with the physical environment could have been put in relation to those places along the canal that have been successful in profiting of the recreational boaters (for an example, see neighbouring Annerveenschekanaal).

It would also have been important to study whether the image of the region has been positively influenced by using the canals. A questionnaire distributed to recreational boaters could have been used for that goal. It would also be important to investigate if this image differs from the image inhabitants have of the region. I would therefore implore future studies on the project to incorporate these experiences and I am very much interested in potential findings.

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## **Appendices**

### Appendix I: Questionnaire

Beste lezer,

Een aantal jaren terug is er een enquête afgenomen in Kiel-Windeweer die als doel had om uit te zoeken hoe de inwoners het dorp zouden karakteriseren. Dit is gedaan naar aanleiding van de voorgenomen plannen om het Kieldiep weer bevaarbaar te maken. Nu is het Kieldiep al enige jaren weer bevaarbaar en willen we kijken hoe de inwoners nu tegen hun dorp aan kijken.

Ik zou u willen vragen om in een aantal minuten de enquête in te vullen. De enquête is onderdeel van de dataverzameling van een masterscriptie bij de studie Culturele Geografie van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen. De enquête is volledig anoniem en wordt niet voor andere doeleinden gebruikt dan voor de scriptie.

Johan Dankert

## Enquête identiteit en gehechtheid Kiel-Windeweer

1. De onderstaande lijst bevat een aantal begrippen die u wel of niet kunt associëren met uw woonplaats. In de rechter kolommen kunt u aangeven in hoeverre u het betreffende begrip van toepassing vindt op Kiel-Windeweer.

Als ik aan Kiel-Windeweer denk,  
dan denk ik aan:

Zeer mee oneens  
 Mee oneens  
 Neutraal  
 Mee eens  
 Zeer mee eens

1	De Amshoff					
2	Beeld "De Hengelaar"					
3	Open landschap					
4	Toeristen in het dorp					
5	Kano's					
6	Turfvaart					
7	Horeca					
8	Sluis					
9	Dammen					
10	Rustige woonomgeving					
11	Vissers (recreatief)					
12	Fabriek "De Eendracht"					
13	Kunst langs het Kieldiep					
14	Hechte gemeenschap					
15	Boerderijen					
16	Fabriek "De Toekomst"					
17	Kieldiep (kanaal)					
18	Akkerbouw					
19	Werkloosheid					
20	Pleziervaart					
21	Zwemmen in het Kieldiep					
22	Campings					
23	Snikhuis (of Veerhuis)					
24	Badden (bruggen)					
25	Ophaalbrug					
26	Albrondaschool					
27	Natuur					
28	Veilige woonomgeving					
29	Bedrijvigheid					
30	Bos					
31	Vooruitstrevend					
32	Fietsers (recreatief)					
33	Sluiswachterswoning					
34	Verpaupering					

*De enquête gaat verder op de volgende pagina*

**2. In welke mate bent u het eens met onderstaande beweringen.**

Omcirkel het cijfer dat het beste past bij uw mening

Hoe aantrekkelijk vindt u Kiel-Windeweer als woonplaats?

1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Zeer onaantrekkelijk					Zeer aantrekkelijk				

Kiel-Windeweer is veranderd de afgelopen tien jaar:

1	2	3
Eens	Oneens	Weet ik niet

De verandering, als die plaatsgevonden heeft volgens u, is positief geweest:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Kiel-Windeweer is een afspiegeling van mij:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Ik heb het idee dat ik echt mezelf kan zijn in Kiel-Windeweer:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Ik kom tot rust wanneer ik in Kiel-Windeweer ben:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Ik voel me gelukkig als ik in Kiel-Windeweer ben:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Kiel-Windeweer is de beste plek om dingen te doen die ik het liefste doe:

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

Naar mijn mening zijn er betere plekken om te zijn dan in Kiel-Windeweer

1	2	3	4	5
zeer mee eens	mee eens	neutraal	mee oneens	zeer mee oneens

*De enquête gaat verder op de volgende pagina*

**3. Wat is uw geslacht?**

- Man
- Vrouw

**4. Wat is uw leeftijd?**

.....

**5. Hoeveel jaren woont u inmiddels in Kiel-Windeweer?**

.....

**6. Wat is uw hoogst genoten opleiding?**

- Lager onderwijs (basisschool)
- Lager beroepsonderwijs (ambachtsschool, lts. Huishoudschool, leao)
- Middelbaar algemeen voortgezet onderwijs (mulo, ulo, mavo, vmbo)
- Hoger algemeen voortgezet onderwijs (hbo, mms, havo)
- VWO (atheneum, gymnasium)
- Middelbaar beroepsonderwijs (mts, meao)
- Hoger beroepsonderwijs
- Wetenschappelijk onderwijs (universiteit)

**7. Als er nog dingen zijn aangaande de identiteit van Kiel-Windeweer die nog niet genoemd zijn, maar die u wel van belang acht, kan u die hieronder invullen.**

*Hartelijk bedankt voor uw medewerking!*

## Appendix II - Interview guide

- Warm-up: chit-chat / small talk (for example about the weather, busy day, canal etc.)

- Informed consent

Topic	Primary question	Possible secondary questions
The business		
	Could you tell me something about your business?	How many hours a week do you work in your business?
	How long have you been doing this?	Can you make a living of the profits of your business?
	What has changed in the time that you have run you business?	
Canal		
	What role does the canal play in your business?	Do you profit from the tourists that navigate the canal? Can the canal potentially be used for your business? What would it take for your business to do so?
Kiel-Windeweer	What do you think of the entrepreneurial climate in Kiel-Windeweer?	How does that compare to ten years ago? Has the reopening of the canal played a role? Could it?

		What other factors play a role?
	Are there things we haven't talked about, but are important for Kiel-Windeweer, the opportunities for entrepreneurs etc.?	

Appendix III

**Number of businesses in Kiel-Windeweer**

Year	2011	2012	2013	2014	2015	2016	2017	2018
Total number of registered businesses	80	85	90	95	95	100	105	100
A Agriculture, forestry and fishing	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
B-F Manufacture and energy	15	15	15	20	20	20	20	20
G+I Wholesale and retail trade, and accommodation and food service activities	15	15	15	15	15	15	15	15
H+J Transportation, Information and communication	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
K-L Financial institutions and real estate	5	5	5	5	5	5	5	5
M-N Specialised business services and business support services	20	20	20	20	20	25	25	30
R-U Culture, sports and recreation	5	5	10	10	10	10	10	10

#### Appendix IV - Informed consent form

Thank you for agreeing to participate in my study of Kiel-Windeweer, which will take place in July and August 2018. This form details the purpose of this study, a description of the involvement required and your rights.

I am a Master student of Cultural Geography at the Faculty of Spatial Sciences at the University of Groningen. I am carrying out a research on the identity of Kiel-Windeweer, how it may have changed due to the reopening of the canal and in what way opportunities for entrepreneurs have been used and how they could better be used or accommodated. For this reason you were selected for this research.

The interview will be conducted at a place of your choosing and will last about half an hour. It comprises a semi-structured interview about your business, Kiel-Windeweer and the entrepreneurial climate there.

Our conversation will be audio taped in order to better analyse the data collected, and to give them more validity by using your own words. Only the researcher and perhaps his supervisor, Prof. Dr. Dirk Strijker, will listen to the recording. If you feel uncomfortable to answer some of our questions, feel free to ask to turn the recorder off.

You are encouraged to ask questions either about the nature or the methods of the study, and can contact me by telephone (+31630037327) or email (j.e.dankert@student.rug.nl)

The findings of this research will be included in the Master Thesis with the working title “On the grid again, a case study of identity and change in the Veenkoloniën.”

By signing this informed consent I certify that I \_\_\_\_\_  
agree to the terms of this agreement.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Signature)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Date)

## Appendix V - Formulier voor het geven van weloverwogen toestemming

Bedankt voor het meedoen aan het onderzoek naar Kiel-Windeweer. Het onderzoek zal plaatsvinden in juli en augustus 2018. Dit formulier informeert u over het doel van het onderzoek, een beschrijving van de van u verlangde medewerking en uw rechten.

Ik volg aan de Faculteit van Ruimtelijke Wetenschappen van de Rijksuniversiteit Groningen de Masterstudie Culturele Geografie. Voor mijn scriptie doe ik onderzoek naar de identiteit van Kiel-Windeweer, hoe die verandert kan zijn door de heropening van het kanaal en op welke manier kansen voor ondernemers benut zijn, hoe kansen beter benut kunnen worden of hoe meer kansen gecreëerd kunnen worden. Om die reden bent u gevraagd om mee te doen aan het onderzoek.

Het interview zal afgenomen worden op een plaats die u kiest en duurt ongeveer een half uur. Het bestaat uit een gedeeltelijk gestructureerd interview over uw bedrijf, Kiel-Windeweer en het ondernemingsklimaat aldaar.

Ons gesprek wordt opgenomen zodat de verzamelde data beter geanalyseerd kan worden, en om de conclusies beter te onderstrepen door het gebruik van uw eigen woorden. Alleen ik, en wellicht mijn begeleider, Prof. Dr. Dirk Strijker, zullen naar de opname luisteren. Als u zich oncomfortabel voelt bij een van de vragen of om wat voor reden dan ook, voel u dan vrij om het interview af te breken of de opname stop te zetten.

U bent welkom om vragen te stellen over de aard van de studie of de methodes en u kunt me bereiken via telefoon (+31630037327) of via email (j.e.dankert@student.rug.nl). De resultaten van het onderzoek zullen opgenomen worden in de Master scriptie met als werktitel: “On the grid again, a case study of identity and change in the Veenkoloniën.”

Door het ondertekenen van dit formulier verklaart u, dat u \_\_\_\_\_  
akkoord gaat met de bovenstaande voorwaarden.

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Handtekening)

\_\_\_\_\_  
(Datum)