

Award ceremony, 28.06.2024 at SCHLOSS DYCK / JÜCHEN

Laudations for category: Climate mitigation measures in parks and gardens

By Philipp Sattler, Stiftung Die Grüne Stadt, Berlin and Initiativbündnis Historische Gärten im Klimawandel (IHGIK), Member of the jury, EGHN

Winners:

- 1. Mount Steward, The National Trust, UK**
- 2. Waterdunen, Stichting Het Zeeuwse Landschap, The Netherlands**
- 3. Bunker Skt. Pauli, Hildegarden e.V.; Landscape Studio L+; Matzen Real estate KG; Lorenz von Ehren nurseries, Hamburg, Germany**

Intro

In recent years, the climate crisis has become increasingly tangible for us all. Living conditions for humans, animals and plants have worsened dramatically in many regions: drought and heat, but also the change in precipitation as frequent heavy rainfall events and floodings as well as rising sea levels are threatening the existence of many works of garden art and cultural landscapes.

Not to forget: this development is accompanied by a change in fauna systems, which affect centuries-old garden art throughout Europe, such as the box tree moth.

In this respect, climate adaptation measures in gardens and landscapes have become the key issue for their preservation.

At the same time, our gardens are more in demand than ever as places for experiencing nature, relaxation and quality of life – already for a long while, but especially since the corona pandemic. This applies to classic gardens as well as urban landscapes and inner-city projects.

This years EGHN Prize underlines this dynamic: Compared to last year, the applications have risen from 11 to 18 in our category “Climate mitigation measures in parks and gardens”.

Generally, all of the EGHN awards pose a challenge for us jury members as all finalist candidates are exceptional, and this year is no exception. In addition, climate mitigation – as described before - is a broad field, due to its overall approach. So: how can we find and award role models of exceptional gardens and landscapes that combine the necessities of climate mitigation with engineering solutions and fascinating offers for the people, that also are valuable for and biodiversity?

In one word: well-designed, sustainable „green infrastructure“ in the best of senses!

After intense discussion, the jury therefore decided to award three different projects this year!

1. Mount Stewart, The National Trust, UK

History

Mount Stewart, is a fascinating estate with a series of beautiful gardens, located east of Belfast in Northern Ireland. It sits on the eastern shore of the nature reserve Strangford Lough, the largest sea inlet in the British Isles. The gardens were mainly created by Edith Lady Londonderry, who transformed and diversified the formal gardens of the former centuries in the 1920ies.

Since 1957 Mount Stewart is owned by The National Trust.

Context

Already in the early 19th century, the estate's "sea plantation" was created as a buffer to the benefit of the ornamental gardens. Studies have shown that the sea plantation raises temperatures, prevents sea spray from depositing salt, and reduces wind speeds. The microclimate allows species to flourish within the gardens that otherwise wouldn't exist there.

Due to climate change related storms, parts of the gardens have been intruded by salt water in recent years. As a consequence, many plants were damaged or destroyed. Regarding the future, such flooding seems inevitable and the sea may - in the worst case - take the whole sea plantation with it.

Concept

In the ongoing project The National Trust commissioned a study on the changes on the microclimate of the site, in order to better understand how it operates, what its thresholds are, and how it can be protected.

For this aim, sensors all over the estate measure the temperature, humidity, soil temperature, soil moisture and precipitation. These sensors cover the ornamental gardens, the walled gardens, the surrounding area, agricultural areas and the shoreward side of the sea plantation. The collected information will be used to plan the next measures. The National Trust is already realizing a new generation of “sea plantation” further away from the sea. In the end the majority of the gardens may have to move as well. The microclimate data will help to best relocate the existing structures.

Thus Mount Steward represents a prototype and can be carried out similarly at other gardens throughout the UK.

Appraisal

This concept has deeply impressed the jury with its at-one-time sensibility towards the garden structures and the innovation within the field of climate mitigation: saving cultural heritage means to utilize all technical means available!

As a perfect example, the Mount Steward proves that “updating” garden art is a key topic in the mediation of transformation processes. The history of the gardens and their maintenance make the phenomenon of climate mitigation

understandable for everyone.

The convincing linkage of the historical and the scientific approach results in an attractive future garden lay out that maintains high esthetical quality and an inviting area for the visitors.

In addition, Mount Stewart serves as best practice for other gardens threatened by climate change.

On behalf of EGHN I would like to congratulate Mount Stewart with this award.

We ask **Robert Wilson, (assistant Head Gardener in Mount Stewart)** on stage to receive the award in the category

Climate mitigation measures in parks and gardens.

Congrats!

2. Waterdunen, Stichting Het Zeeuwse Landschap, The Netherlands

History

Waterdunen is a nature reserve at the northern sea in Zeeuws-Vlaanderen, on the southwestern end of the Netherlands. Since the 1990s, the region and especially the coast was facing a difficult situation: economy and quality of life had declined, the seawall had to be reinforced, a large part of the coastal ecosystem had badly suffered by the deepening of the Westerschelde.

Context. The project opened in 2022 and is still in development. Waterdunen combines a unique nature with a recreation area for local people and tourists. It brings together coastal reinforcement, water safety, saline tidal nature, saline aquaculture, nature and recreation.

Concept

The water in Waterdunen comes from the North Sea, which flows into the area via a special tidal culvert. The tide is muted and brings life to the area with all kinds of animals, such as worms, crabs and shrimps. This in turn attracts thousands of birds. Under the influence of tides, salt marshes begin to grow and cultivation of saline organisms such as sea vegetables and oysters is possible.

Meanwhile, 350 hectares of mudflats, salt marshes and recreational nature have been created. New roads, cycling and walking paths and parking facilities have also been built. There are a dune campsite and recreational houses.

Even though the area has only just opened, you can already watch large numbers of birds and plants here. As a climate adaptation project Waterdunen also contributes to nature, landscape and a recreational environment.

Appraisal

This concept has won the jury's sympathy with its at-one-time structural clearness and diverse perspectives: At a short distance, you can see, the sea, dunes, reed belts, flowering grassland, cultural heritage and a sky full of birds. As a perfect example, the Waterdunen proves that landscape architecture is a key discipline for green-blue-infrastructure to bring forward climate adaption.

The convincing combination of technical, ecological, and social aspects results in a clear and functional design that develops high esthetical quality, an inviting urban leisure area and a precious nature reserve in one project. In addition the Waterdunen project gives the area also new economic impulses in the fields of marine agriculture and tourism.

On behalf of EGHN I would like to congratulate Waterdunen with this award. We ask **Rob van Westrienen** (Managing Director, Het Zeeuwse Landschap) und **Jeroen de Maat** (Senior project manager, Provincie Zeeland) on stage to receive the award in the category
Climate mitigation measures in parks and gardens.

Congratulations!

3. Bunker St. Pauli, Hildegarden e.V.; Landscape Studio L+; Matzen Real Estate KG; Lorenz von Ehren nurseries, Hamburg, Germany

History

This unique project, located close to Heiligengeistfeld, Millern Tor Stadium and Reeperbahn in Hamburg-Skt. Pauli is the transformation of a former WW II Bunker. Built in 1942, the square building covers an area of 5600 square meters. The project was started in 2019 and will officially open next week!!

Context. 40m Building, already used for cultural events there has been established an additional 5-storey pyramid in a public-private cooperation. The new structures host a hotel, a concert hall, event locations and rooms for social projects. Its urbanistic unique selling point is the fascinating green skin, consisting in both dense and various façade and roof garden elements. These form a “jungle-helmet”, a contemporary new urban element, widely perceptible in Hamburg’s skyline. A 560 metre long green “mountain path” leads up to roof garden open to the public. In total, more than 7,600 square metres of public and communal green areas await the visitors, with an additional 2,000 square metres of façade greening. Some 4,700 plants make the bunker a new Hamburg landmark – or should one say flagship and a natural oasis in the city.

Concept

For this spectacular project, it was particularly important to take into account

the special conditions of the site. Due to the exposed location, the trees and shrubs had to be not only drought and frost resistant, but also wind resistant. The trees selected and supplied by the Lorenz von Ehren nursery included many species for example *Acer campestre*, *Malus domestica*, *Pinus sylvestris*, *Acer* and *Prunus*, as well as various shrubs, climbers, hedges and overhanging shrubs.

The green roof and façade of Grüner Bunker act as a natural and attractive air-conditioning system for the entire complex and bring climatic benefits to the urban surrounding city quarter as well. This pioneering landscape architecture project is also scientifically monitored in terms of humidity, temperature, etc. by the Technical University of Berlin since construction started.

Appraisal

The Green Bunker took the jury by storm with its sensational aspects, the elaborated underlying concept and the positive climatic effects. Engineering, ecology and aesthetics unify in a new landmark capable to gather top position as motive for transformation worldwide. The cooperation of private investors, public responsables, citizens initiative, landscape architects, nursery experts and garden contractors result in a synthesis not often found in top areas of our cities. The project illustrates in a most attractive way, how a genius design idea can combine business development with necessary transformation of existing urban structures to the benefit of many.

The convincing integration of complex aspects, the cooperation of so many professionals and members of Hamburg's society have created a masterpiece

of landscape architecture and an iconic example of contemporary climate mitigation.

On behalf of EGHN I would like to congratulate Grüner Bunker with this award.

We ask **Lena Selchert (Landschaftsarchitektur L+), Urte Ußling (Hildegarden e.V.) und Jens-Uwe Kretzer (Loren von Ehren)**. on stage to receive the award in the category

Climate mitigation measures in parks and gardens.

Moin, Moin, Herzlichen Glückwunsch, Congratulations!