

WESTHOEKOVERLEG



SAMENWERKINGSVERBAND VAN  
GEMEENTEN VAN DE WESTHOEK



# Service hubs in rural Flanders

Dieter Hoet

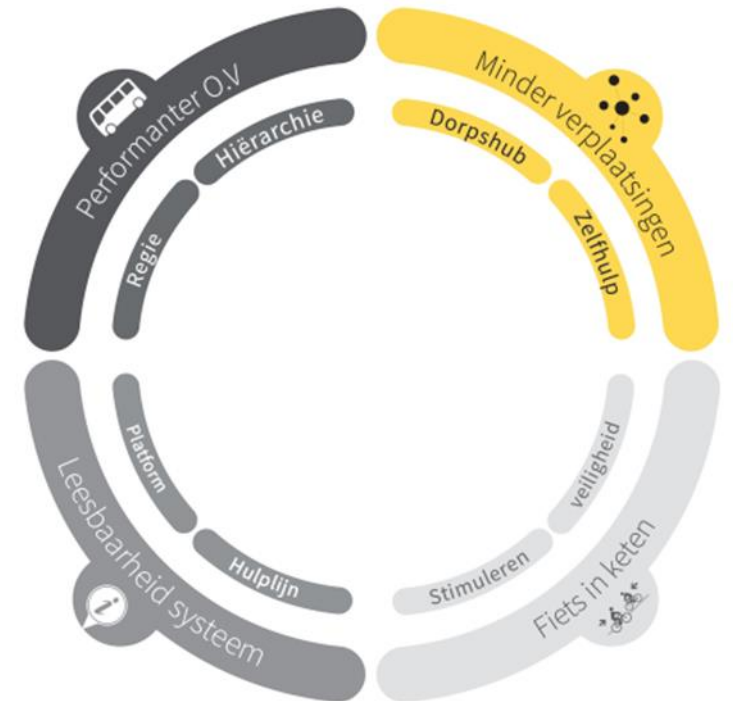
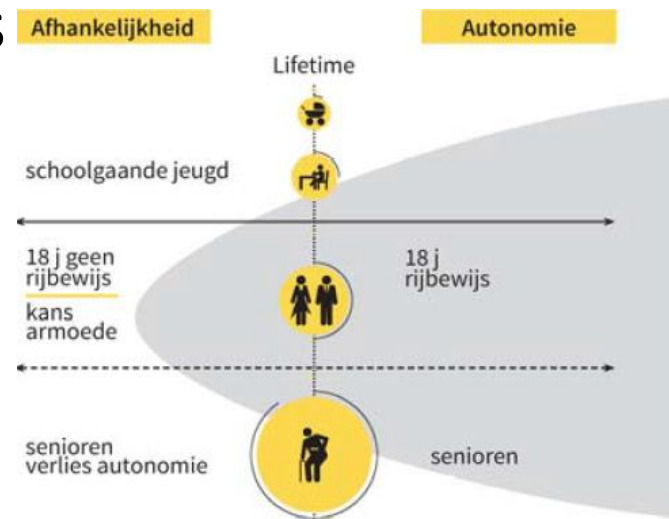
Staff member VVSG

Coordinator Westhoekoverleg

Service Hubs in the Westhoek:  
the most rural part of Flanders

# Challenges - Trigger

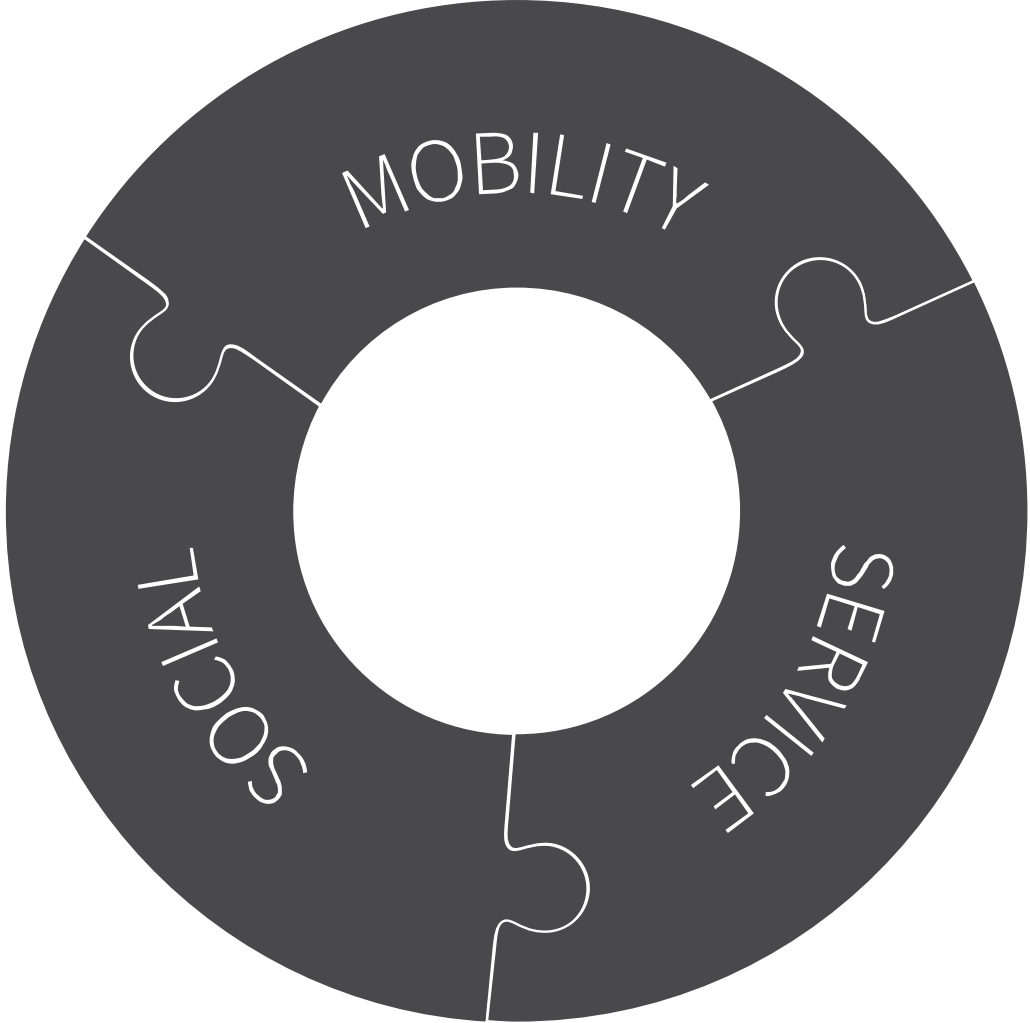
- Rural
- Cutting costs in Public transport
- Withdrawing commercial and governmental services
- High suicide rate
- Brain drain
- ...



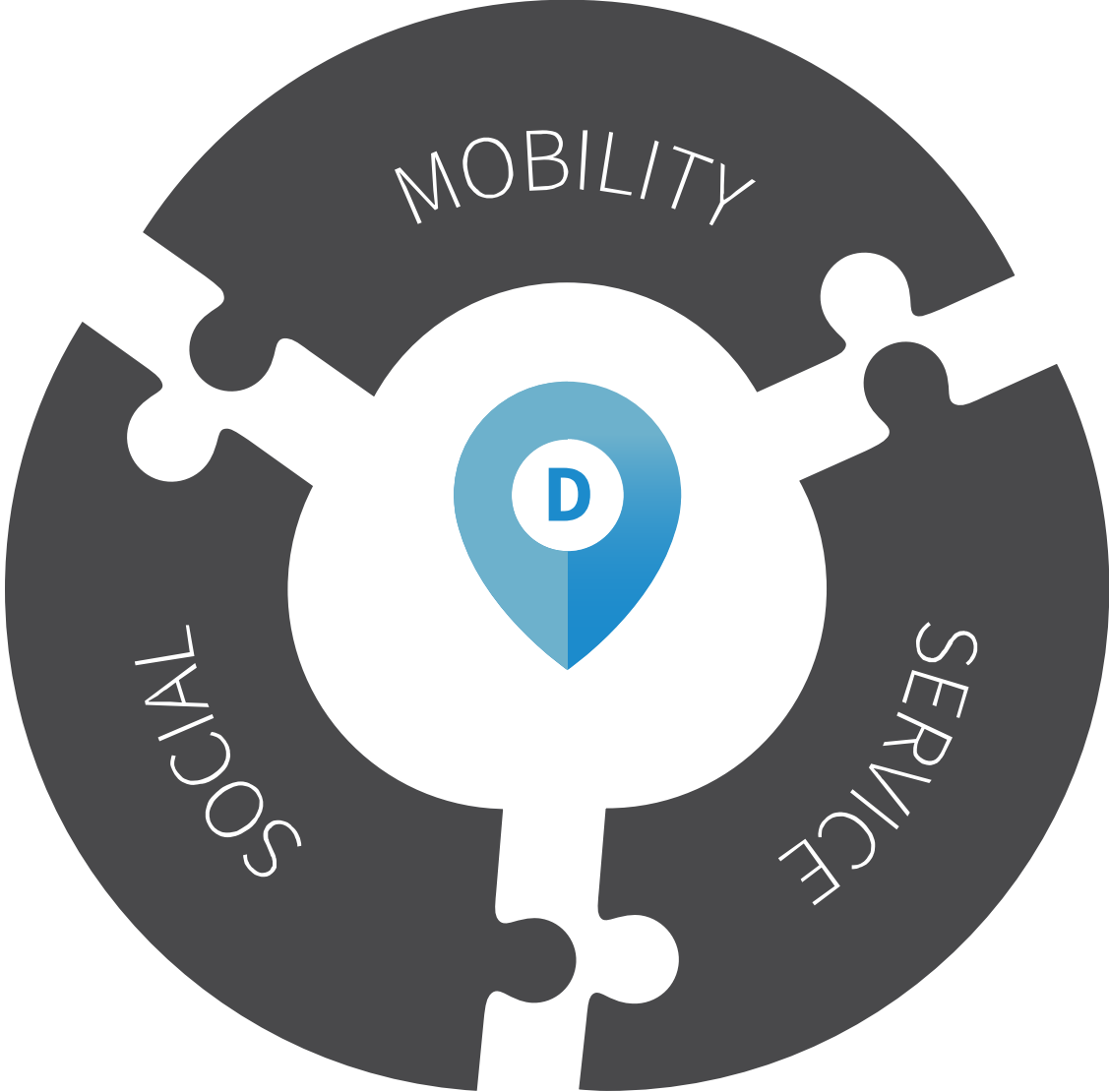
# Service Hubs

The concept

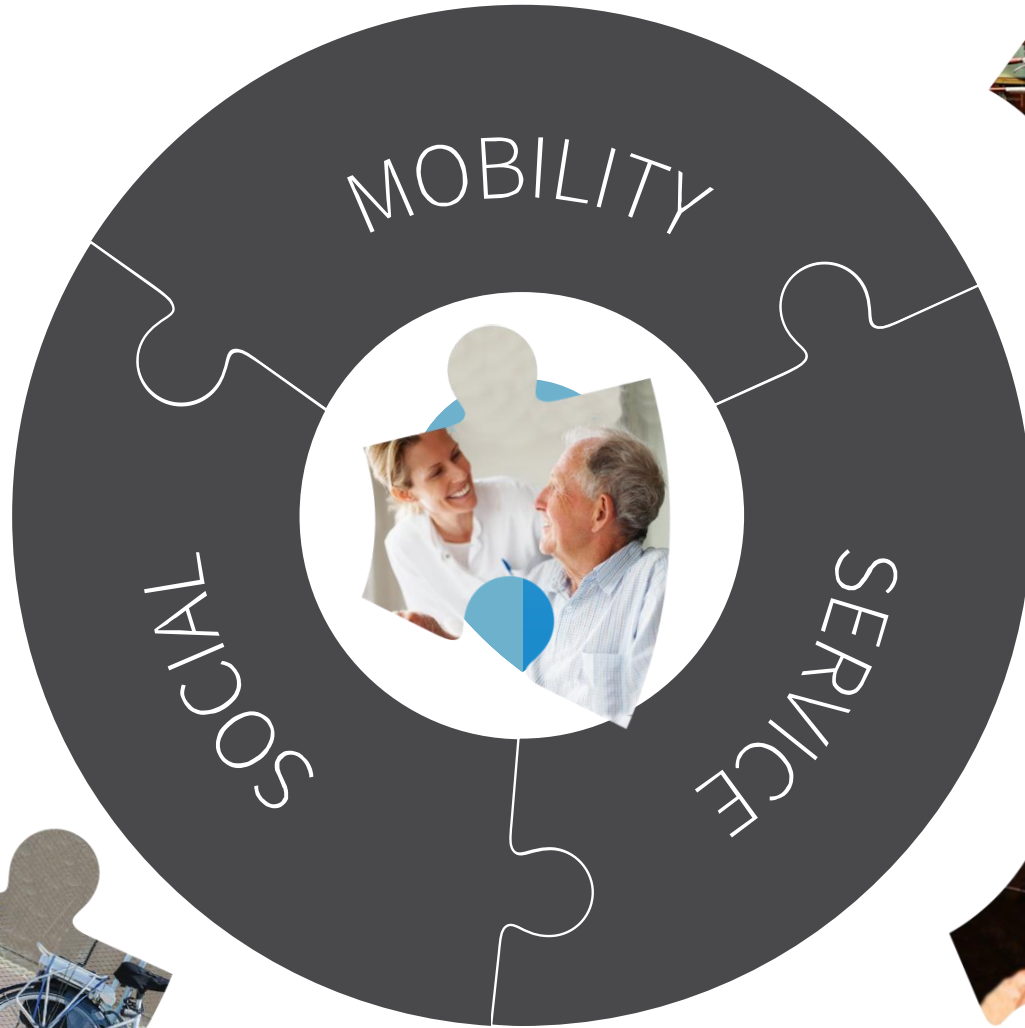


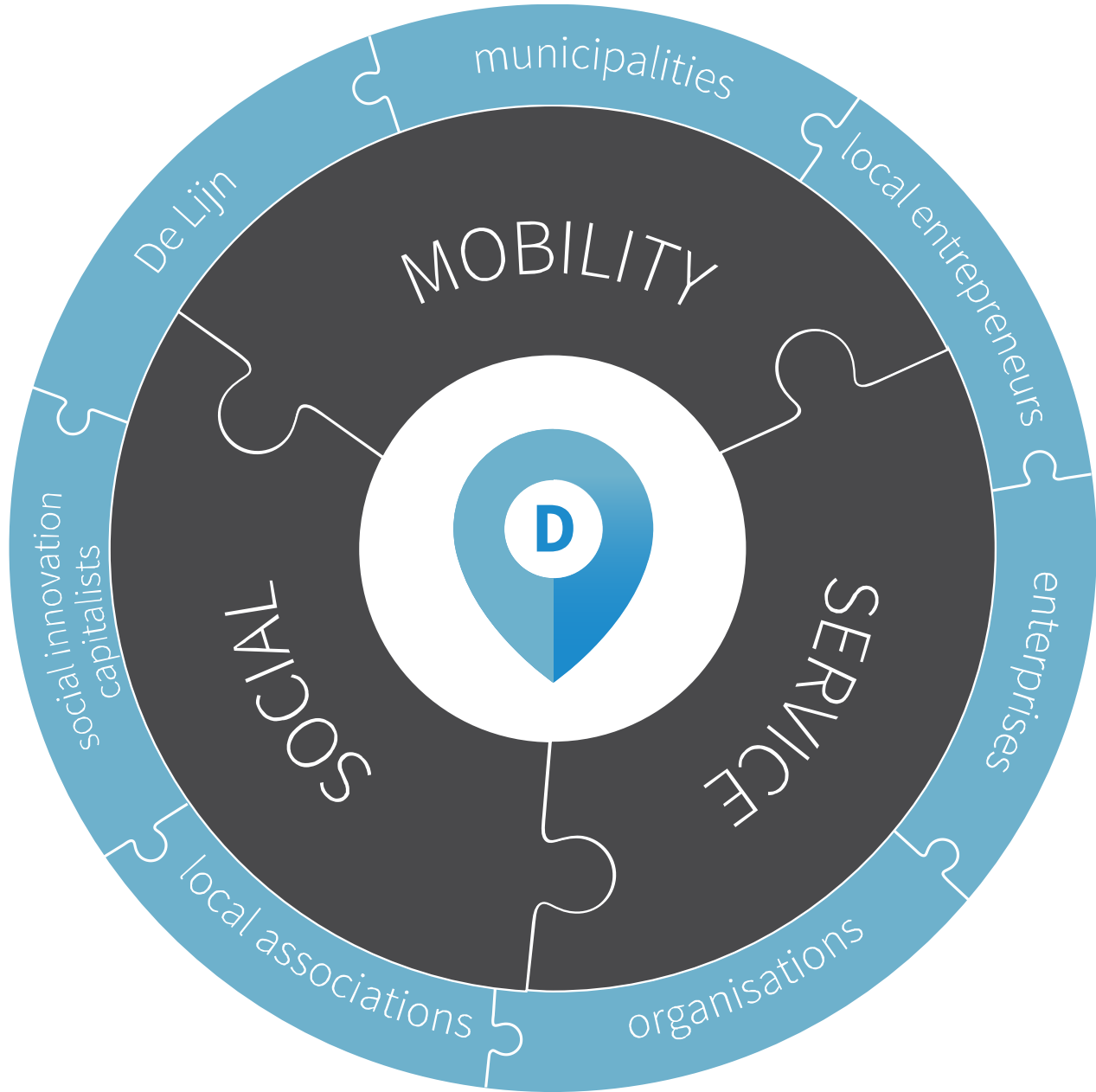












Service Hub  
Beveren a/d Ijzer

# Village Hub @ Beveren a/d Ijzer (Alveringem)



# 2 objectives – 3 components

## Objectives

- A meaningful daytime activities for persons with a disability



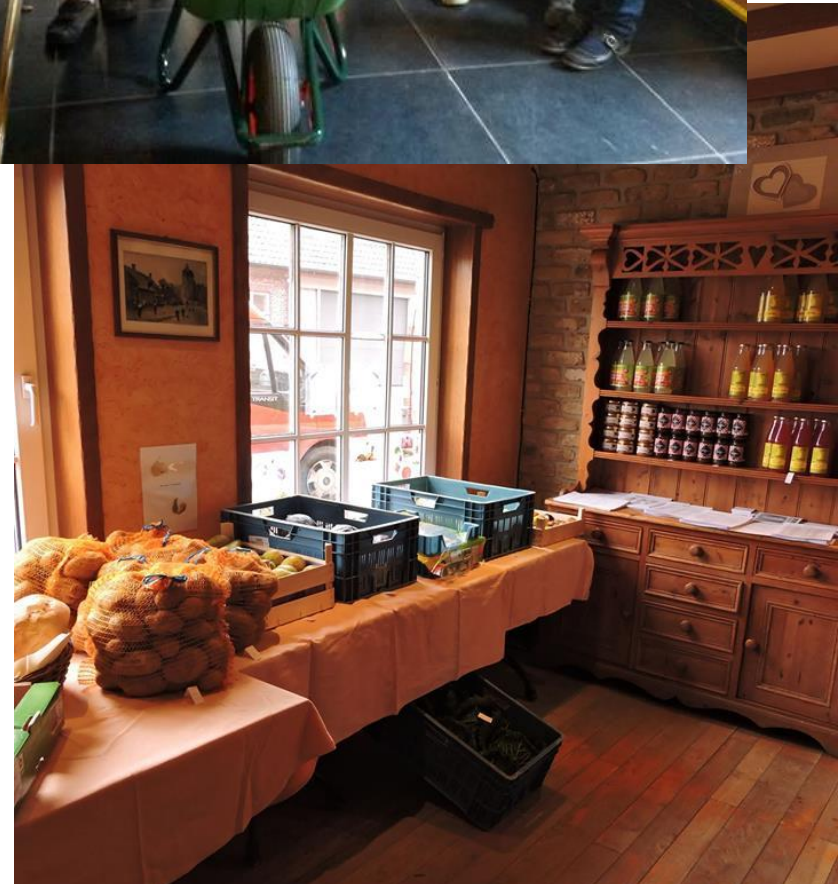
- To reduce the necessity of functional trips to the city centre and bring services back to the people

## Central components

- Local store / shop
- Mobility hub
- Community Center

# Local store


- Cooperating with:
  - Local bakery store
  - Local farmers
    - Meat
    - Fruit and vegetables
  - Regional products
- Performing small tasks for local inhabitants



# Community center



**Hobbynamiddag**  
17 augustus: 14 - 16 uur



**Kidsnamiddag**  
Wafels eten  
goedechapspeken + puzzelen + kleuren  
29 augustus: 14 - 16 uur



**Activiteiten**  
**Dorpspunt**  
**Maand augustus**

**Muziek met Frederik**  
23 augustus  
14 - 16 uur

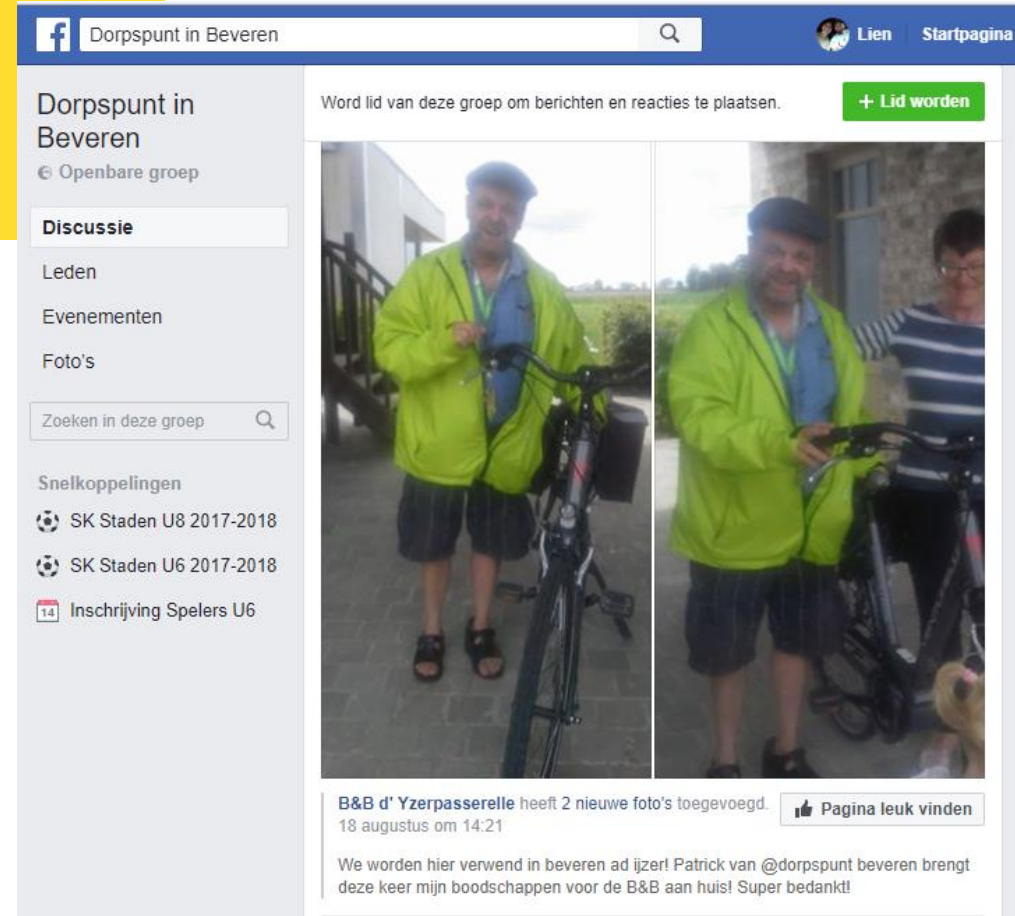






# Mobility hub

- Cargo bike
  - Inhabitants can borrow the cargo bike
  - Delivering groceries
- Bike repair
- Car sharing
- Meeting point for functional trips



The image shows a screenshot of a Facebook group page for 'Dorpspunt in Beveren'. The page header includes the Facebook logo, the group name, and search and navigation icons. Below the header, there are navigation tabs for 'Discussie', 'Leden', 'Evenementen', and 'Foto's'. A search bar is present with the text 'Zoeken in deze groep'. Underneath, there are 'Snelkoppelingen' (quick links) for 'SK Staden U8 2017-2018', 'SK Staden U6 2017-2018', and 'Inschrijving Spelers U6'. The main content area features two side-by-side photos of a man in a bright green jacket standing next to a bicycle. Below the photos, there is a caption in Dutch: 'B&B d' Yzerpasserelle heeft 2 nieuwe foto's toegevoegd. 18 augustus om 14:21'. A button 'Pagina leuk vinden' is visible. At the bottom of the post, there is a text block: 'We worden hier verwend in beveren ad ijzer! Patrick van @dorpspunt beveren brengt deze keer mijn boodschappen voor de B&B aan huis! Super bedank!'.



# Future

## Interreg V - Transmobil



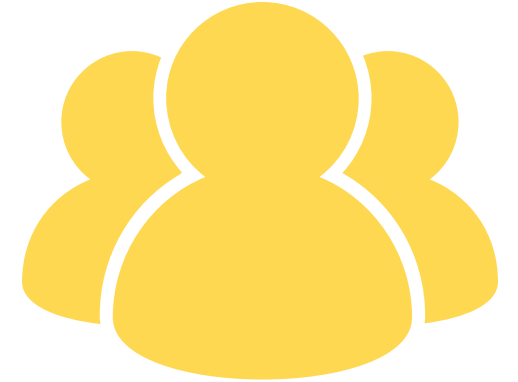
# Workshop

Analysing service hubs – key components

# Key Partners

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- municipality: hub could be a community house at the same time
- municipality (and OCMW - social welfare agency) : as supplier of local services (one day open house per week with services moving to the citizen ...)
- health insurance : one open day per week; they rent the space on a part-time contract)
- trade union : idem health service
- employers | institutions who provide their bus for shuttle service to upper hub outside peak hours: provide e-bikes
- delivery services (drop off | pick-up) : mail, dhl, ups, post.nl ... ; internet sales; grocery stores
- de lijn (bus stop)
- local (social) entrepreneur : retail activity (food, bike, hairdresser) and permanence and coordination's
- local associations - as 'step-up' to volunteers



# Key Activities

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## MOBILITY

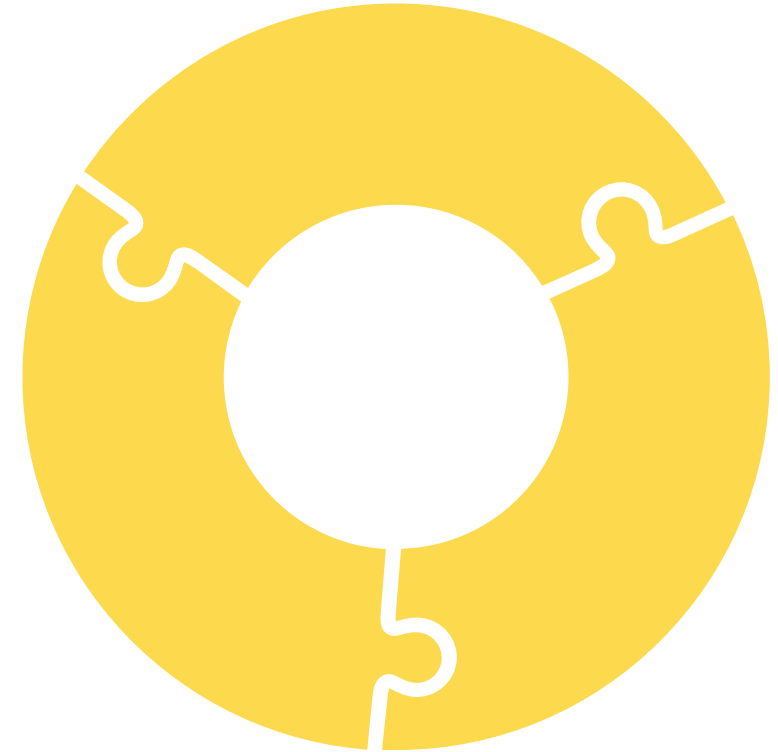
- safe bike storage
- kiss and ride
- busstop with frequent service to next hub of public transport
- info on mobility (link with "director" of public transport)
- internet acces to consult platform (including help)
- charging station e-bike; air pump for bikes

## SERVICES

- conciërge (incl. signposting and referrals role)
- basic food (in case not available in the village)
- open house of health services | community | social welfare | werkwinkel VDAB | etc.
- free wifi
- mail services

## SOCIAL

- exchange of supply and demand on mobility
- community center/café used by clubs, groups



# Key Resources

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## HUMAN

- sociale entrepreneur
- coördinator
- volunteers; "empowered people"
- employees;

## PHYSICALLY

- location
- space (100 to 250 m<sup>2</sup>)
- store and café | pub
- place to rent cars, bikes

## BRAND

strong concept, corporate ID



# Value Proposition

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Basic needs covered : safety, mobility, security, social contact

The security feeling of the village where everyone knows everyone and everyone helps everyone in case of an emergency

To reduce the necessity of functional trips to the city centre and bring services back to the people

A real "hub" where everyone feels at home; where bridges can be built between different "groups" of the village.

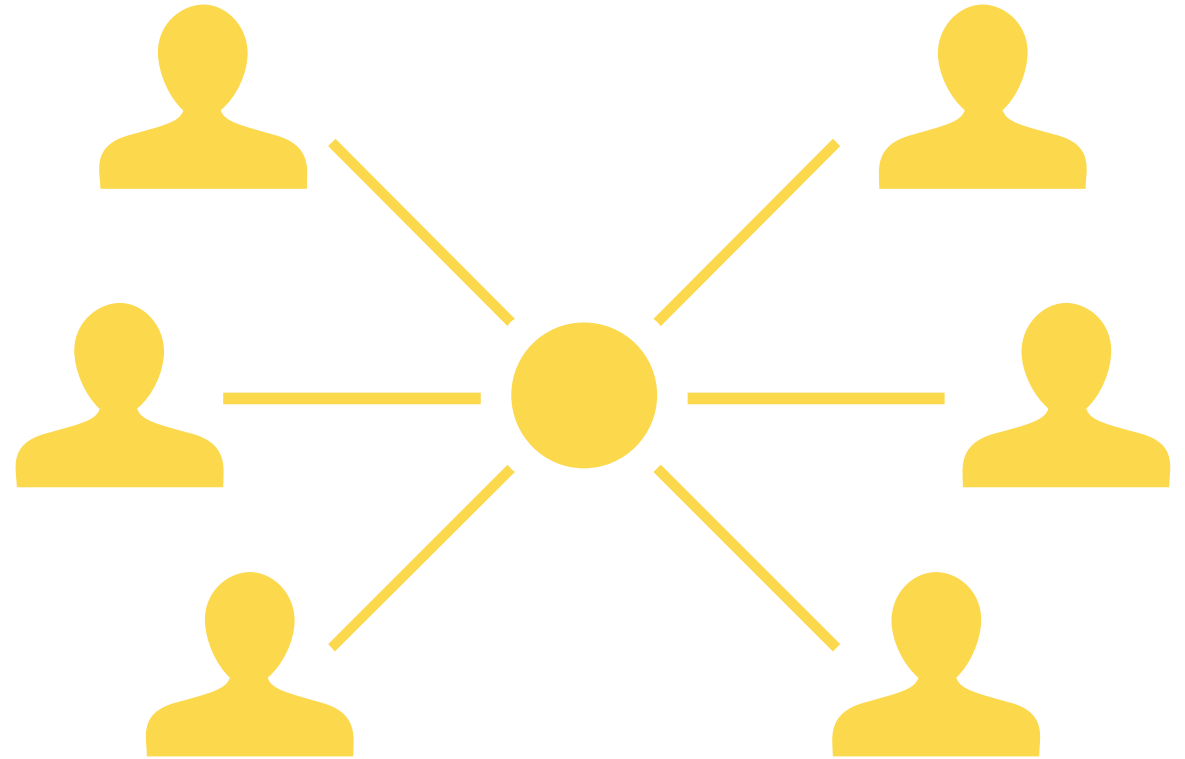
A safe place to:

- ° meet
- ° share transport, to transfer mode
- ° park my e-bike
- ° buy small purchases
- ° drop off and pick up parcels
- ° find wide range of services that, for the moment, are located far away
- ° consult info on many subjects linked to the community, but certainly on transport



# Customer Relationships

- starting point for access to mobility services for vulnerable groups
- attractive enough to attract early adopters
- dedicated personal assistance on mobility issues
- self-service via vending machines
- co-creation with citizens





# Channels

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- build regional awareness of the concept
- local awareness via communities and local clubs, associations
- social media to support the relation
- word of mouth (real world and social media)



# Customer Segments

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## SENIORS

both the active as those with loss of autonomy: a meeting place; place for services; place to meet for mobility

## YOUTH

meeting place and place to meet to go to school together, to go out; to go the sports club

## VULNERABLE GROUPS

a place to feel at home; to get support and help; to do things together; where they depart and arrive

## EARLY ADOPTERS

to share knowledge; to rent out cars; to teach; to meet like-minded people

## AVERAGE FAMILIES

a convenience function to get in touch with the community; with other "groups" of the village; with like-minded people.

To organise and optimize trips.

Some of the KEY PARTNERS also are customers; to rent space or to act as an intermediary

° services like municipality, social welfare, health service etc renting space for

open house days, provide services

° rent space for delivery boxes

° services (eg ironing service)

# Cost Structure

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## SINGLE FIXED COSTS :

- ° concept development - incl. co-creation with citizens
- ° equipment and decoration of the space

## FIXED COSTS linked to the building:

- ° rent for 100 tot 250 m<sup>2</sup> about 6K to 15K €/yr in commercial value (TBC)
- ° maintenance (about 75% of the rental value: 4,5K to 12K €/yr) - possibility to lower costs through volunteers

## PERSONNEL

- ° FTE: 30K to 40K €
- ° incentives en coordination of volunteers: 10K €

## VARIABLE COSTS

- ° in principle linked with sale|revenue, so therefore covered by the revenue and increase proportionately

# Revenue Streams

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- ° rent of space
- ° margin on retail activity
- ° commissions on mediated services (eg ironing service)
- ° catering industry
- ° subsidies for salaries
- ° subsidies for volunteer work
- ° subsidies for infrastructure