



Walking routes in Westerveld, Drenthe

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TOURISM RESEARCH PROJECT

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Abstract

This report has been created on behalf of Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality Westerveld, in order to further investigate the walking routes that are present in the municipality. Currently, there is a lack of information that can be found online, or the information is contradicting. In order to create a research around this, the motivation, value and, experience have been researched using the conceptual model. Furthermore, a look has been taken into the hiking behaviour of people in Drenthe, especially during the COVID pandemic. Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality Westerveld wondered how they could attract more visitors, and even improve the quality of the walking routes, especially when looking at accessibility with public transport. In order to get a great view of the current situation, six walking routes have been participated in by the researchers, and created a customer journey map for each route. Afterwards, the customer journeys have been analysed, and overall findings, pain points, and suggestions for development have been merged together into an overall customer journey. Also, in the meantime, several stakeholders have been contacted and interviewed, in order to get a better view of the experiences, creation of new routes, adapting of existing routes, and possibilities. Additionally, the results from the interviews have been analysed, and strengths and weaknesses have been determined. Lastly, these results have been used to create recommendations for Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality Westerveld, and suggestions for further research have been made.

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Introduction

The province of Drenthe is home to pristine nature, authentic villages, and a culture that has been there for centuries. Because of these aspects, Drenthe is a popular destination for people who like to walk. In fact, walking and cycling routes have been existing for ages to show people the nature and culture of the province (Drenthe.nl, n.d.). Currently, Recreatieschap Drenthe offers 21 different walking routes on their website, all spread throughout the province. While walking these routes, one can enjoy nature, history, and the famous Dolmens. The walking routes start at different places; for example, at a museum, train station, or church. Moreover, Recreatieschap Drenthe also offers routes especially for children, containing a scavenger hunt, creating a potion for gnomes, or other fun activities. Furthermore, Drenthe consists of several national parks and nature reserves, where people can walk and cycle.

A previous study conducted by Drenthe.nl (2018), brought forward that people who go for a day walk in Drenthe mostly originate from the province itself (87%). Whereas neighbouring province Groningen represents 4% and Friesland only 2%. Visitors from other provinces such as Gelderland come down to 2%, followed by Overijssel with 1% and 4% indicates visitors from remaining provinces. It has been researched by Wandelnet (2020b) that during the ongoing COVID-19 pandemic, more people decided to walk. Because working from home can be tiring, more people want to get fresh air; they either walk in their own surroundings or make use of walking routes. This increase in interest for walking has caught the attention of the municipality Westerveld, located in the west of the province of Drenthe. The municipality accommodates several walking routes and has noticed that they are becoming significantly more popular, which they and Recreatieschap Drenthe would like to sustain for the future. Despite the lack of explicit numbers of visitors' origin who make use of the walking routes, the municipality wishes to attract visitors originating from other provinces than Drenthe and thus increase visitor number amongst this group.

This research therefore aims to investigate how Westerveld could attract more visitors from the surrounding provinces, especially those who are travelling to the walking routes using public transport. The stations Meppel and Steenwijk have been selected for this research as main train stations as they are closest to the municipality and are common stations for people from other provinces to travel over. Nevertheless, the connection between these stations and the starting points of the walking routes are poorly developed, meaning that from these stations, it is difficult to reach the walking routes if one is using public transport. This is something Recreatieschap Drenthe has to look into in the future as people might be repelled when it is hard to reach. Furthermore, it is also important to consider if the walking routes in Westerveld are easy to find, and easily accessible after arriving by bus. To further research this, Recreatieschap Drenthe and the municipality of Westerveld have decided to collaborate with three NHL Stenden students, who have conducted this research in a period of nine weeks.

In order to assess the accessibility and the quality of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld, a customer journey has been created for several walking routes. These journeys will be used to identify the current strengths and weaknesses of the walking routes, and the motivation, experience, and value

of current hikers. By interviewing a selection of stakeholders, information in regard to their relation with the routes and their perception towards strengths and weaknesses will be retrieved. This will support the outcomes of the customer journeys. By comparing these aspects, the most important improvement points can be dealt with, in order to maintain the increased visitor numbers and attract more visitors from other provinces. To conduct this research, several objectives have been created. The objectives are as follows:

- To identify the strengths of the walking routes in Westerveld;
- To identify the weaknesses of the walking routes in Westerveld;
- How the walking routes of Westerveld are currently perceived by visitors;
- To establish recommendations for the improvement of the quality of the walking routes in Westerveld

This study begins with the literature review, in which a broad collection of literature has been uncovered regarding the target group, motivation, valuation, experience, and the customer journey has been further enlightened. The methodology introduces the problem statement and brings forward how the research has been conducted. Then, the research results will be analysed and discussed. Following to that, conclusions will be stated, and recommendations are presented.

1. Literature review

The introduction of this study introduced that since the COVID pandemic started, a significant increase in demand for walking routes in Drenthe has been noticed. Even though that there is no research available stating specific numbers that proof this increase, research conducted by Wandelnet shows that there is indeed a visible increase in demand for walking throughout the entire country. As a result of the measures taken by the Dutch government in March 2020, people had to (re)discover different ways on how to escape from their daily routines and hiking still was an approved activity. Wandelnet conducted research on hiking in the Netherlands twice since the pandemic started; first, in April in which 581 respondents participated and second, towards the end of the summer in 2020 where 772 respondents participated in the research (Wandelnet, 2020b; Wandelnet, 2020c). When the first research was conducted in April, 59% of the participants went for a walk within their close surroundings and 37% also travelled to other areas (Wandelnet, 2020b). Results from the second research unveiled that two-third of the respondents (69%) go for a walk both within their direct surroundings as well as in different areas including Drenthe (Wandelnet, 2020c). It is of importance to indicate which target group(s) particularly go for a walk in this area, and what the underlying motivation is to do so. The municipality of Westerveld wishes their walking routes to remain successful and to deliver a valuable satisfying experience. Therefore, this section reviews literature of five different topics that are fundamental to successfully execute the research. The topics involved are target groups, walkers' motivation, valuation, experience and finally the customer journey.

1.1 Walking in the Netherlands

To construct and market successful walking routes within the area, the first step is to identify the target group(s). It is important to question who currently uses the walking routes, or who is most likely to do so. Wood (2017) states that a group of potential customers for products, services and possible other offerings, together form a market. Within the understanding of 'market', she explained that the potential market is considered the broadest group, involving individuals that may be interested in a product, service or other offering. Following the same source, the author also brought forward that "often some characteristics, such as gender, family status, age, education or ethnic background, affects what customers need and buy" (p.53). Apart from those characteristics, also cultural elements, social connections and personal and psychological elements including motivation and lifestyle, belong to influencing factors (Wood, 2017).

No recent research has been found concerning specific groups that are targeted by the municipality of Westerveld, or even for the entire province of Drenthe. Nevertheless, it is possible to understand consumer behaviour from Dutch people who participate in walking in general, specifically within Drenthe. Hiking is considered the number one leisure activity across the Netherlands. In fact, approximately 11 million Dutch people (65%) participate in walking, both recreative and sportive. It was hereby also proven that the average walking distance is 7 kilometres (Drenthe.nl, 2018; Wandelnet, 2020a). Drenthe.nl (2018), found that the total Dutch population goes for a walk 441 million times, with 15.4 million of these walks taking place in Drenthe. The source also uncovered that hiking is the second most popular activity

during a vacation in Drenthe; respectively, nearly 900.000 tourists go for a walk more than once. The majority of day walkers visiting Drenthe originate from the province itself (87%). Neighbouring province Groningen represents 4% and Friesland 2%. Furthermore, Gelderland comes down to 2%, followed by Overijssel with 1% and 4% of the visitors come from remaining provinces.

When it comes to age, Wandelnet (2020a) investigated that people aged 45-55 take most walks of all age groups; however, when looking at participation in recreative walking, the same source reveals that the percentage is the highest amongst people between 30 and 35 years (78%). This group is followed by people aged between 50 and 55, in which 76% percent participates in recreative walking and the group representing people aged between 45 and 50 indicates 75%. A relatively small percentage (54%) aged 65 and above, participates in recreative walking. However, the research also unveiled that the participants within this specific group who do participate, count the most walks per person per year (Wandelnet, 2020a).

Furthermore, considering the percentage of people going for a walk in Drenthe, it was measured that 52% of walks within the province are taken by people aged between 45 and 74 years. From this percentage, 51% is part of an adult household, 28% is part of a family with children and 21% is single (Drenthe.nl, 2018). Wandelnet (2020a) pinpointed that the social class influences participation in recreative walking. In fact, the higher the social class, the higher the participation. Drenthe.nl (2018) stated that approximately 60% of the hikers are part of the highest social classes. Significant is however, that the number of walks per person per year states the opposite. Explicitly, the higher the social class, the fewer number of walks.

1.2 Motivation for walking

Well-constructed products and services could encourage an individual to use walking routes (Bregenzer, Wagner-Hartl & Jiménez, 2019). However, as Bowen and Clarke (2009) explained, motivation amongst people may differ into a wide extent, as something that motivates one individual, might not even come close to be of motivation to another. For years, motivation has been a fundamental part of literature, resulting in a great number of studies done on the topic. Furthermore, the authors mentioned motivation can be considered a driving force, as it helps to master consumers' decision-making process and the evaluation of satisfaction and their experiences. Wright (2006) describes motivation as a process in which the internal or external needs, function as an action or driver that contribute to the achievement of satisfying and fulfilling an individual's needs. Wood (2017) considers motivation, yet also an individual's attitude, as being a crucial part of personal and psychological elements in analysing customers in consumer markets.

Despite the enlarged collection of theory on tourism motivation, push and pull theories of motivation are commonly used and therefore applied to the topic. According to Yoon and Uysal (2005), push factors concern internal aspects and pull factors are related to external factors. Whereas push factors include for instance the need for rest and relaxation, social interaction, adventure and escaping from daily routines, pull factors involve cognitive or situational aspects that 'attract' consumers to their chosen

destination. Examples of pull factors include natural or cultural characteristics or aspects belonging to leisure infrastructure such as products and services. People going for a walk have a diverse number of reasons to do so, therefore motivation among hikers is likely to differ. The most common reasons to go for a walk are, according to Drenthe.nl (2018), to be outside (30%), to relax (23%), to keep in shape (13%) or to visit and experience a natural area (8%). Out of those examples, to be outside, to relax and to keep in shape are considered push factors as that is what 'motivates' people to go for a walk. Visiting a natural area on the other hand, can be a push and/or pull factor, because selecting a natural area is majorly done based on the attractiveness of the area its characteristics. Selecting a natural area, and a walking route in specific, is part of the pre-service process of the customer journey, which will be explained in the next sub-chapter. Furthermore, when it comes to walking routes within Drenthe, the same source presented that people select the routes based on multiple different aspects. The most prevalent aspects concern the scenery (52%), length of the route (47%) and the route itself (47%), in which the starting point and end point are the same. Hence, also the accessibility to the starting point is considered important (34%). Contrarily, hikers, as of current, seem to attach less interest to themed routes (12%) and routes they need to outline themselves (8%). In other words, several pull factors can be of influence on an hikers' decision-making process (Drenthe.nl, 2018).

Hikers can be segmented based upon their leisure behaviour and underlying motivation. Within the field of leisure, different styles are developed by using the BSR model. Based on this model, Wandelnet (2020a) developed six main types amongst recreative hikers. The original model is presented in appendix 2 whereas figure 1 shows the translated English version (Figure 1: Translated BSR Model Different Types of Hikers). When it comes to hikers who use walking routes within Drenthe, three types are considered to be best applicable – namely, the cultural hiker organized hiker and the quiet hiker. To explain this into a further extent, the cultural hiker values reliable walking routes and preferably goes for a walk with friends or family and wishes the route to be well developed, easily accessible and combinable with cultural visits. Furthermore, the organized hiker prefers to participate in an organized or marked walking route in which he/she should be able to easily walk his or her way through the route. The quiet walker follows an easily accessible outlined route, preferably within his/her close surroundings (Wandelnet, 2020a).

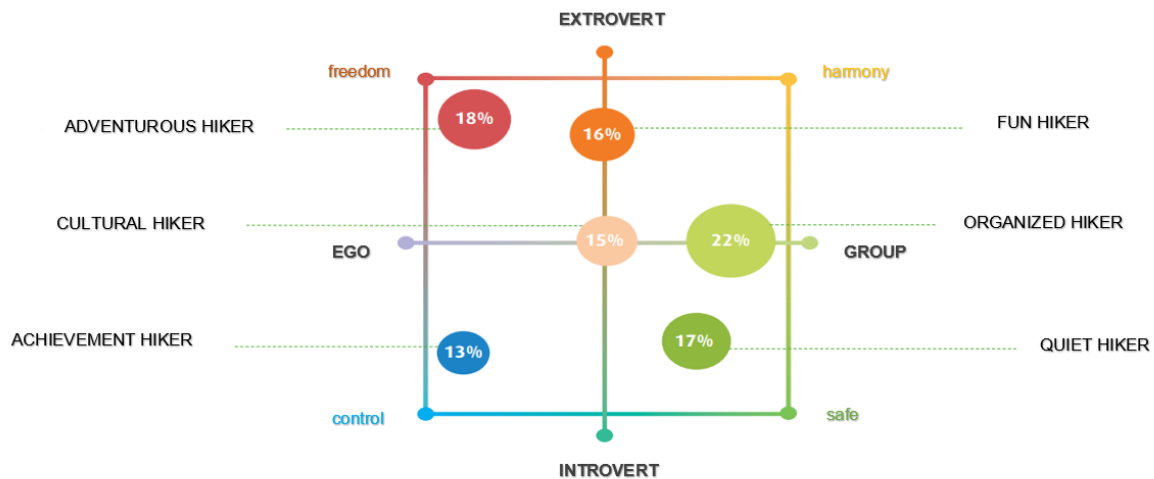


Figure 1: Translated BSR Model Different Types of Hikers. From [Adapted form] Infoblad Kerncijfers Wandelen 2020, by Wandelnet, 2020a. Retrieved on November 23, 2020, from <https://www.recreatieschapdrenthe.nl/kennisbank/wandelen>

1.3 Valuation of walking routes

When it comes to value, Oliver (1999) is of the opinion that the term comes in a diverse number of interpretations, from both a customer and marketers' perspective. Holbrook (1999) for instance, defined consumer value as an "interactive relativistic preference experience" (p.5). He considers consumer value to be applied to the evaluation of an object, by a subject, in which the subject refers the consumer and the object to that what is of interest to the consumer. Consumer value is an important concept in the context of this research, specifically because Holbrook (1999) stated that "value is found in the experience of consumption" (p. 148). Hence, bringing forward the customer journey of walkers and thus their experiences helps to identify what value is attached to the walking routes. However, in this research it is important to mention that there is a considerable difference between markets and non-markets as goods and services can be subdivided under either one of them. The "nature" provides goods and services which are mostly provided directly to humans instead of needing be passed through markets first and therefore referred to as "non-markets" (Mathis, Fawcett & Konda, 2003). Ruiz and Bernabé (2014) explained that facilities including cycle and pedestrian facilities, green zones and access to rural areas are amongst the examples of non-market goods. Thus, valuing nature and walking routes are considered non-market goods, as they cannot be traded for money, however can still be valued.

Mason (2002) is of the opinion that value is commonly used in two divergent senses. On the one hand, he explained that it can function as an individual or collective action coming from individuals' principles or morals. While on the other hand, value can point out to characteristics and qualities that one perceives from products and services, in which is particularly looked at the positive actual and potential characteristics. The second sense is to be applied to the walking routes as the aspects hikers will encounter during this route can bring forward certain characteristics and qualities that are of value to them. When looking at the walking routes within Drenthe, certain characteristics and qualities, both positive and negative have been acknowledged. Drenthe.nl (2018) identified for instance, that the number and overall décor of the walking routes is attractive as it provides a great variety of scenery, cultural and historical aspects. Besides, the majority of walking routes include a large number of sand

paths of high quality which is highly valued by hikers. On the contrary, it was indicated that digital presence is poorly developed, as well as hikers find it difficult to find specific routes and their starting points. Additionally, connection between different villages is considered rather weak (Drenthe.nl, 2018).

1.4 Experience of walkers

When individuals convey they had a good time, it does not automatically mean that each individual carries the exact enjoyable and meaningful experience (Ooi, 2005). In other words, individuals, who undertake the same thing at the same location, can interpret their experience differently. The author justified that the way a product or service is interpreted by people can be influenced by their backgrounds, interests or even internal feelings and moods. Therefore, operations within the field of leisure and tourism continue to investigate ways on how products and services can deliver meaningful experiences to everyone (Ooi, 2005).

Drenthe.nl (2018) stated that the interest for themed walking routes in which involving cultural, historical or culinary themes is increasing on a national level. Also, it becomes more difficult to indicate what recreationists and tourists desire which makes that their decision-making process is less predictable. Hence, they set high quality standards in order to have a valuable experience (Drenthe.nl, 2018). The overall experience is a crucial aspect of the customer journey as this visualization indicates into what extent the hiker is satisfied with the fulfilment of the need for recreative hiking.

1.5 Customer Journey of walkers

To begin with, Rosenbaum, Otálora and Ramirez (2016) defined a customer journey as “a visual depiction of the sequence of events through which customers may interact with a service organization, during an entire purchase process.” (p. 3). The same authors explained that each encounter between the providing organization and the customer can be referred to as a ‘touchpoint’. In practice, Customer Journey Mapping (CJM) is used to develop strategies and tactics that must enhance customer experiences and improve the quality of service.

In order to create an insightful customer journey, a multitude of aspects must be included, namely the user's actions, touchpoints, related emotions, pain points and possible solutions (Figure 2: Customer Journey Map Example). A distinction that is not clearly specified on the example journey is the separation between pre-service, service and post-service, periods that indicate when exactly an encounter takes place (Rosenbaum, Otálora & Ramirez, 2016). After completing a detailed customer journey map, the internal strengths and weaknesses from a company's service can be determined easily and plans can be made accordingly.

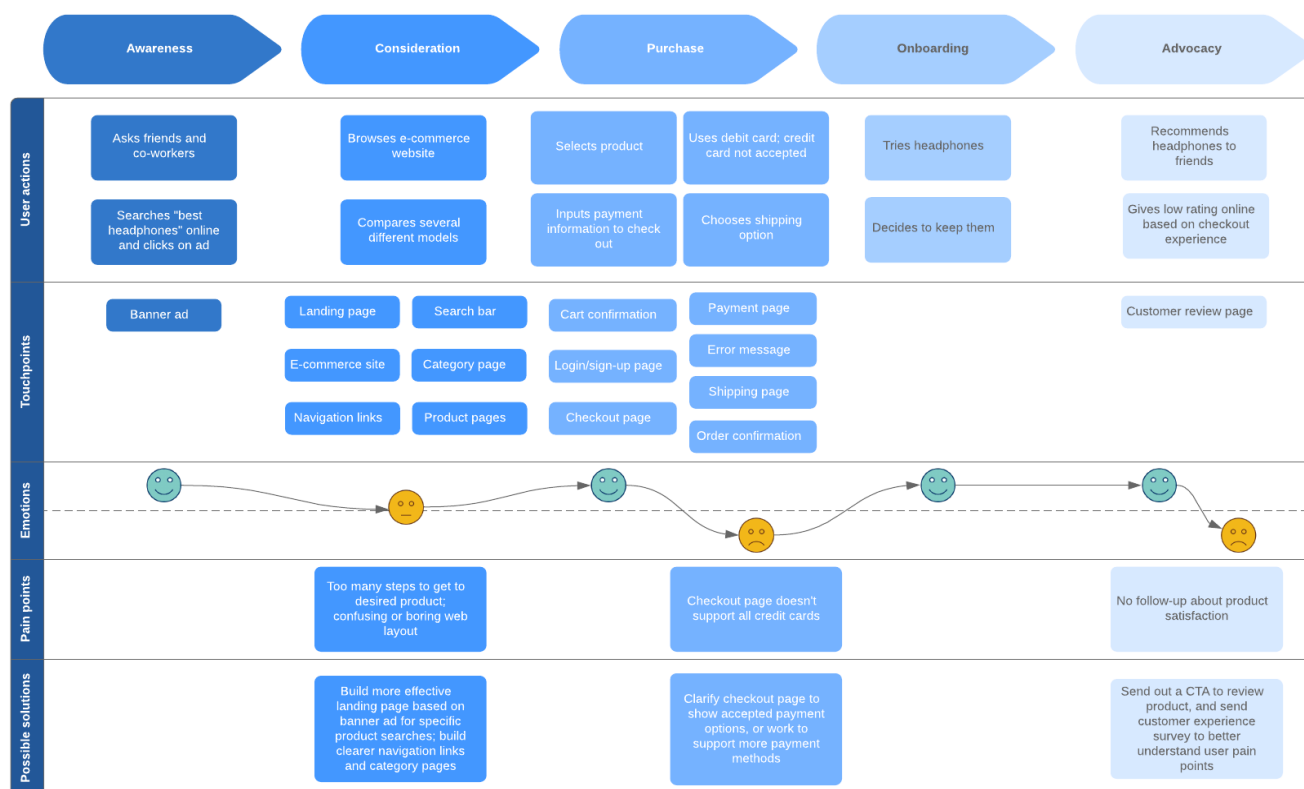


Figure 2: Customer Journey Map Example. From *How to create a customer journey map*, by Lucidchart, n.d., Retrieved on November 24, 2020, from <https://www.lucidchart.com/blog/how-to-build-customer-journey-maps>

To elaborate on the details of customer journey map, each encounter belongs to a specific period in time. As mentioned before, these are categorized as pre-service, service and post-service. Nevertheless, simultaneously they are also categorized based on the state of mind of the customer, namely awareness, consideration, purchase, onboarding and advocacy. Per category, user actions are assigned and the touchpoints with the company are brought forward. These first layers of the CJM are relatively straight forward and easy to discover. The next step however, is extremely subjective and harder to visualize as this concerns the emotional experience of the customer in question. Despite the complexity of this layer, it is very significant as the indication of pain points and possible solutions are based upon these experiences.

Before continuing to the research that is connected to the walking routes of Drenthe, it is essential to illustrate the complexity of CJM. Rosenbaum, Otálora and Ramirez (2016) brought forward that while creating a CJM, misconceptions are made regarding the experience of a customer and the value they assign to a touchpoint or action. Due to these misconceptions, the focus might shift to a relatively unimportant topic and the service provision will not increase greatly.

Taking a closer look at the customer journey of a visitor of the walking routes of Drenthe, very little research is currently available. Nevertheless, the province was used as an example in research from Bohemia Amsterdam (n.d.), regarding online and offline customer journeys. To be more specific, they mentioned that Staatsbosbeheer has a big influence on the awareness state of the customer, as they have a broad reach with their 200.000 website sessions each month and variety of online and offline

distribution channels. Nonetheless, one of the uncovered pain points is that there is not enough Google Maps coverage for the routes which makes them harder to research for modern walkers.

Furthermore, Hensen and Dreyer (2018) have created a customer journey from an overnight visitor (tourist) in south-west Drenthe, which includes the municipality of Westerveld. They demonstrated the touchpoints and experiences of guests while getting inspired, orientated, booking, preparing and staying at the destination. The research institution focussed on three nationalities; German, Belgium and Dutch participants engaged in the research and released statements that were used for CJM. Nevertheless, since this report focusses on attracting visitors from other Dutch provinces, only the Dutch customer journey will be brought forward (Figure 3: Dutch Customer Journey (potential) overnight visitors south-west Drenthe).

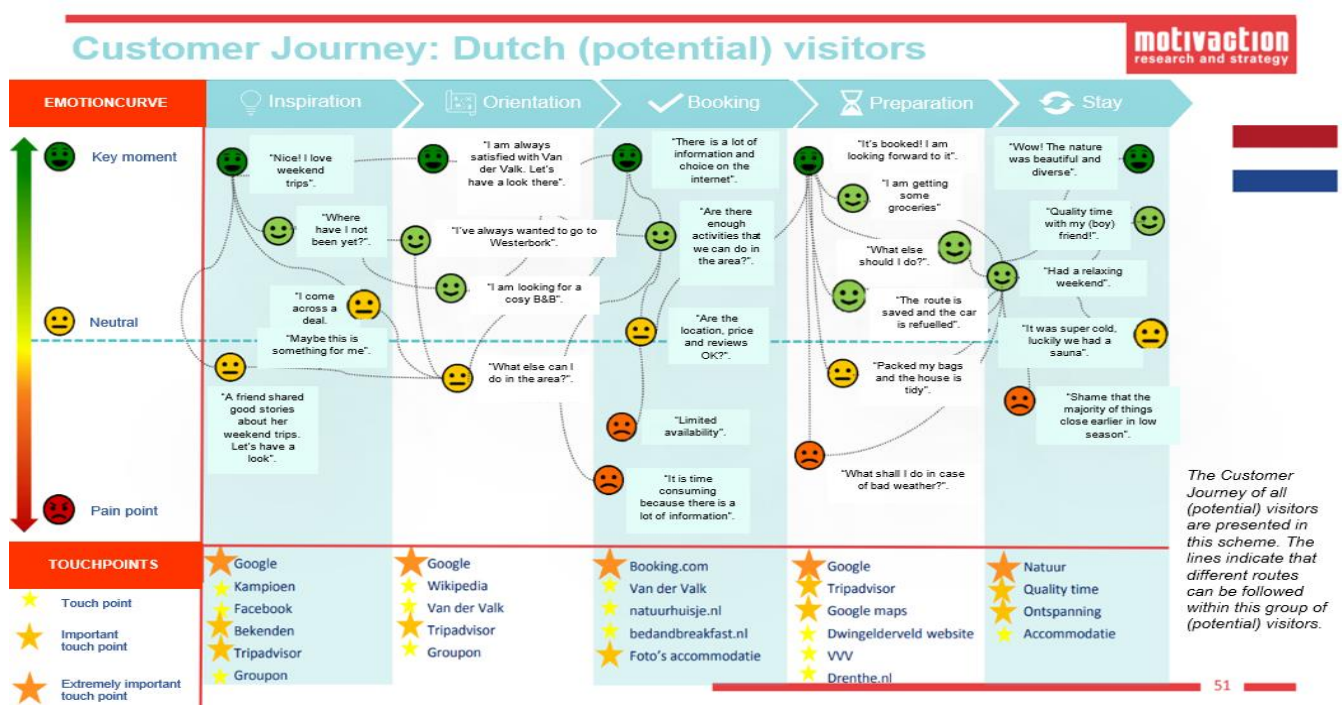


Figure 3: Translated Customer Journey (potential) overnight visitors south-west Drenthe. From [Adapted form] Customer Journey onderzoek: (Potentiële) Verblijfsbezoekers, by Hensen, H. and Dreyer, M., 2018. Retrieved on November 26, 2020, from https://www.gemeentewesterveld.nl/Ondernemers/Recreatie_en_toerisme/Cijfers_en_rapporten

Conclusion

The purpose of this review was to indicate which target group(s) go for a walk within the municipality of Westerveld, and what the underlying motivation is to do so. Besides, it was to understand what motivates (potential) hikers to go for a walk, as well as to view valuation, experiences of walking routes within the area and finally the customer journey. It is clear from the research reviewed that there is little information available on hiking and walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld. Most of the research found was on hiking within the Netherlands and walking routes within Drenthe.

The research showed that over half of the walks within the province of Drenthe are taken by people aged 45-74 years and are originated from the province itself, Groningen and Friesland. Moreover, Dutch hikers tend to have mixed reasons for participating in hiking and attach value to diverse aspects of walking

routes, particularly to digital presence, scenery, route length, paths, accessibility to the starting point, finding the starting point and the connection between different villages. It was also seen that themed routes in Drenthe were indicated as being less popular, however recent research stated that on a national level, the demand for those routes increases. Creating a customer journey will reveal the touchpoints and experiences of hikers while getting inspired, orientated, booking, preparing and using the walking routes. More research on walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld is needed to gain understanding of the course and quality of the routes.

2. Methodology

The methodology of this research report discusses how the research has been conducted. While conducting the research, there has been a strong focus on people from other provinces than Drenthe. Therefore, the near NS train stations Meppel and Steenwijk will be taken into account accordingly, as those stations can function as an important part of departure/arrival for people visiting the municipality of Westerveld. In order to clarify the main aim of this project, the following problem statement has been developed:

How can the quality of the walking routes in Westerveld be improved to develop the visitor numbers of other provinces?

For this research, a selection of six stakeholders have been interviewed to obtain fundamental knowledge about the walking routes. Furthermore, an inventory has been created which will generate a clear overview of the offered options. The stakeholders all have contrasting roles in the walking routes and can provide different types of information. This information will be retrieved by the means of interviews and will contribute to the creation of the inventory as well as the customer journeys. Nevertheless, the most essential information for the customer journey will be uncovered through observational research. In order to guide this research, several research questions have been established, and will be further elaborated on.

2.1 Conceptual model

*The customer journey in relation to effective yet realistic recommendations
conceptual model*

External Influences

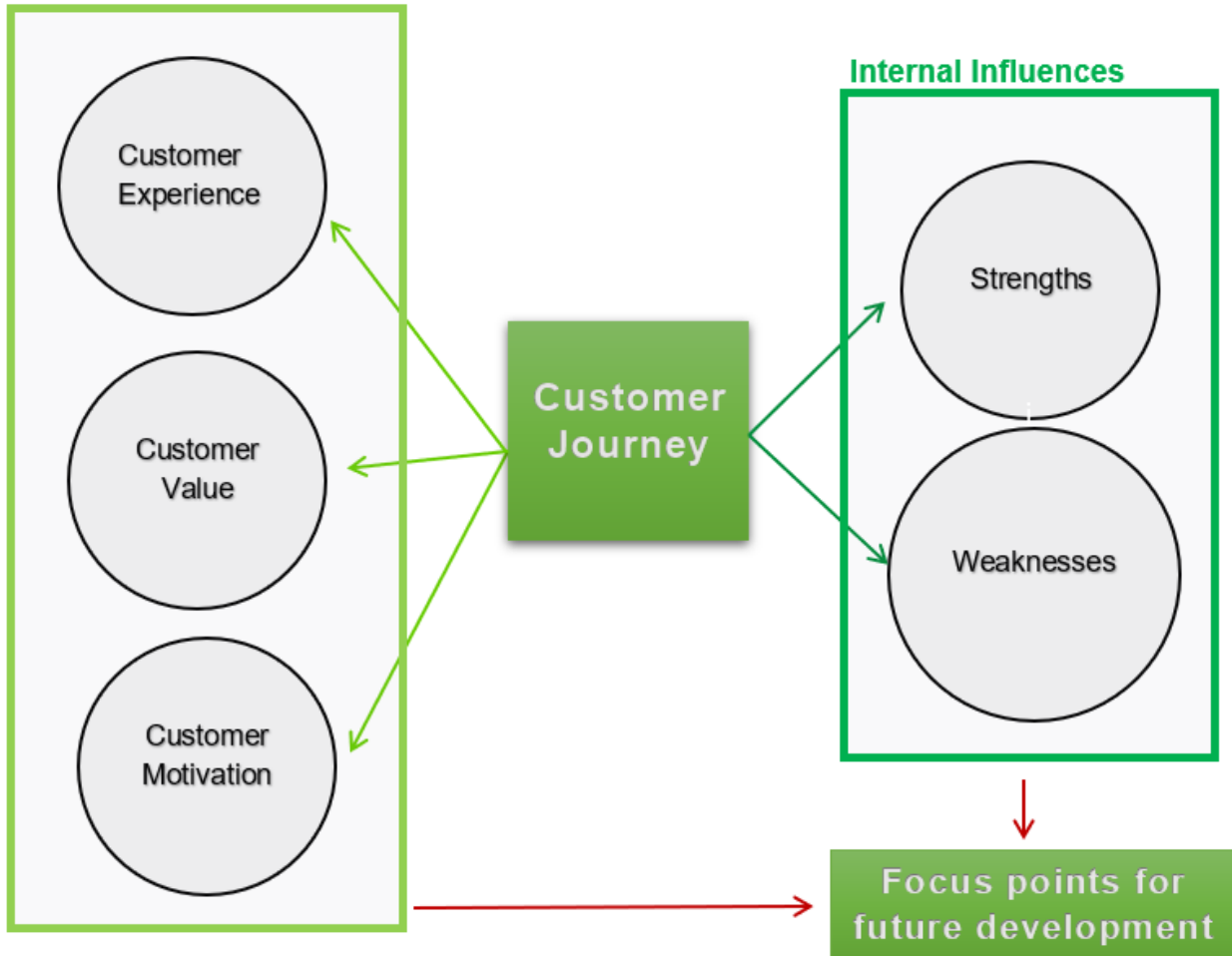


Figure 4: The customer journey in relation to effective yet realistic recommendations conceptual model

Taking a closer look at the presented conceptual model, it becomes evident that the customer journey is a centralized aspect in this research. To elaborate on this, when applying the customer journey correctly, it shows both internal weaknesses and strengths, and the external motivation, value and experience of the customer. As the customer journey identifies the customer's pain points, areas in need of development are easily uncovered. After these points have been established, the service provider can consult their internal strengths and weaknesses in order to compose a development plan that suits the company best, and is therefore most adequate. Combined with the severity of the dissatisfaction of the customer, it becomes indisputable which development point should be prioritized and what the biggest focus points for development are in the near future.

2.2 Research matrix

As displayed in the research matrix (appendix 3: Table 1: Research Matrix), the most relevant topics from the literature review have been reviewed into more depth. At the same time, each topic has been included in the conceptual model as they are essential for the success of this research. In fact, each component of the research matrix is of equal importance as they sketch the entire picture. Not including one would limit the service company in the successfulness of its development plan. Therefore, each topic has a research questions that will guide the process of this research:

1) What do customers currently experience while participating in the walking routes?

When understanding how the customers experience the walking routes, gaps between assumptions and the actual information can be identified. Not every customer shares their experience in a way that the information will reach the company it concerns. Furthermore, a company could deem something not important, whereas the customer experiences it entirely different, effecting the overall satisfaction. Therefore, including this research question will allow the companies involved with the walking routes to understand the customer's point of view and their overall experience.

2) What motivates current visitors to take part in the walking routes of the municipality of Westerveld?

In order to become more attractive to hikers outside the province of Drenthe, it is essential to understand what motivates them. Once discovered, this information could be used to promote the routes differently or develop aspects that might have been lacking. Nevertheless, as the number of these participants is rather small, taking a closer look at the current participants (both from Drenthe and other provinces) will give a clear insight.

3) What do people currently value about the walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld?

When the service providing companies are aware of what is being valued, they know what to prioritise. Moreover, it might be difficult for companies to recover this information as they have a different role in the process. Therefore, this research questions will enlighten the concerned stakeholders with detailed information.

4) What are the weaknesses of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?

As explained in the conceptual model, knowing the weaknesses of a company allows a well-structured development plan to be created. This for the reason being that when a company is aware of an internal weakness, they might want to avoid using it in the development plan. Also, when a big part of the customer dissatisfaction derives from this weakness, the company should realize that drastic measures must be taken to minimize the weakness, or eliminate it entirely. This research question will give a clear overview of the company's weaknesses which will assist the process of determining focus points.

5) What are the strengths of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?

In the same way a company has to consider its weaknesses, it should utilize its strengths. To elaborate on this, when pain points have been established, the strengths of the service provider can eliminate these points if used correctly in the development plan. When the customer journey is created, clear strengths occur, for all involved companies. When analysed properly, these customer journeys will allow the companies to have a clear and coherent overview of their strong well developed abilities.

2.3 Research method

Research can be conducted either by using a quantitative or qualitative research method, in which the second method is considered to be most suitable for this research project. According to Veal (2011), qualitative research results in more specific and extensive information, which can greatly benefit to the final outcome of the research. Furthermore, the same author pointed out that qualitative research involves the process of collecting and analysing qualitative data including any form of informative communication, images or sounds. This data can be collected by using a variety of qualitative methods such as person and group in-depth interviews, focus groups, or observations within the field (Veal, 2011).

For this project, observation will be the key research method as it will generate data used to create a customer journey. Veal (2011) pinpointed four different types of observational research; structured, unstructured, quasi / experimental and participant. The researchers will use the participant observation method as they are participants in the field they study; the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld. In fact, the researchers walked a selected number of routes and 'pretend' to be users of walking routes in order to obtain specific information on the services' quality and to sketch an overall experience. This situation within observational research is called mystery shopping, however in this specific project the researchers are considered 'mystery users'. When using the routes, the researchers will bring a customer journey template where they can clearly pinpoint all aspects that they wish to assess, including for instance accessibility, signposting, infrastructure and the length of the route. Performing this observational research method is considered extremely useful, since the researchers will have expertise in assessing routes, whereas routine hikers will most likely not notice certain aspects that can eventually be of high importance (Veal, 2011).

Whereas observation can play a fundamental role within a project, Veal (2011) highlighted that this may not be the method an entire research can be based upon. Therefore, for this research project, also interviews will be conducted which will assist in creating the preliminary customer journey. The interviews will be conducted with the stakeholders who are involved in the walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld. These stakeholders were discussed in the sub-chapter sampling and population. According to Veal (2011), interviews can either be structured or unstructured, depending on what information a researcher wishes to retrieve. The interviews for this research were structured and brief, as well as the same questions will be asked during each interview. The outcomes of the conducted interviews and the observations by the means of the mystery users situation are useful for the creation of the customer journey, and to be able to provide useful recommendations to external stakeholders.

2.4 Population and sampling

According to Veal (2018), a population is the total category of subjects and the focus of attention in a research. In case of this research, the population consists of all visitors with the purpose of using a walking route in the municipality of Westerveld and all stakeholders who are involved. Moreover, a sample is a selected part of a population and should be representative, according to Veal (2018). Accordingly, the sample is only the people who are traveling to the walking route using public transport and who do not originate from the province of Drenthe. For this research, the sample is embodied by the researchers, who will walk several routes in order to create customer journeys. Whereas the sample that has been selected for the interviews are stakeholders within the reach of the researchers, due to the utilization of the convenience sampling method.

To elaborate on the stakeholders that are selectable for the sample, a table has been created which will present and describe their purpose below. These stakeholders were presented by the principals of Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality of Westerveld as they have a great involvement in the walking routes in Drenthe, and therefore the sample will be selected from this list.

Stakeholder	Purpose
Weldadig Oord	Offers information about walking, cycling, and discovering the nature and heritage. They have created seven colonies, where the municipality Veenhuizen, located in Drenthe, is one of them
Staatsbosbeheer	Takes care of the forests, and nature reserves, where several walking routes are located
Natuurmonumenten	Takes care of heritage and monuments that can be visited while walking, such as the Dolmens.
Tourist Info	Provides the walking routes in paper to hikers and further information
Stichting het Drentse Landschap	Provides information on walking routes, but also on activities that take place in the province. Furthermore, it is there to protect the nature and heritage of Drenthe
NS	Several walking routes have their starting point at an NS train station, furthermore, people may decide to travel to walking routes by train
Marketing Drenthe	Markets the walking routes on their website and makes sure brochures are being distributed to local leisure related businesses
Recreatieschap Drenthe	Manages and maintains the walking junction network and a selection of marked walking routes in Drenthe
Municipality Westerveld	Westerveld is home to several walking routes, and wishes to improve those

Table 1. Overview stakeholders

2.5. Plan of approach

To build a good foundation for the research, firstly a walking routes inventory has been created. This inventory will show all the routes that are completely or partly located in the municipality of Westerveld. To be more specific, information that is required of all the routes is its name, colour indication on the

signs, starting point, length in km, owner, address, acceptance of dogs, parking and recreational options. This information will be retrieved through the utilization of secondary research.

Furthermore, as visible in the conceptual model, the customer value, experience and motivation are important for this research as they have a big impact on the customer journey. Nevertheless, they are difficult to discover through interviews with the stakeholders as they will only be aware of a fraction of the information. Therefore, the researchers adopted the role of visitor and finalized customer journey maps with personal observations, uncovering new information. This has been done by completing six routes and documenting touchpoints with photographs and notes. Moreover, after completing these customer journeys, common points of interest have been merged and an overall customer journey that represents all routes followed. This customer journey shows the current strengths and weaknesses of the routes and pain points that were discovered by the researchers. Important is that all of those journeys started from either NS station Meppel or Steenwijk, in order to discover how the connection is between the station and the starting point of the route. The routes that were selected for this research came from the inventory and stakeholders have expressed requests.

In order to retrieve more useful information about walking routes in the municipality Westerveld, several stakeholders have been interviewed. First, a sample was selected from the table provided above, based on convenience sampling. In practice, this sample consists of six stakeholders, namely: Weldadig Oord, Staatsbosbeheer, Stichting het Drentse Landschap, Marketing Drenthe, Recreatieschap Drenthe, and municipality Westerveld. All these stakeholders were within the reach of the researchers and easy to contact. Then, questions were created which could provide the researchers with inside information, as not all information on walking routes is available online. Furthermore, due to the current pandemic, it was impossible to visit information centres located near the walking routes as they were all closed. Consequently, all stakeholders had to be interviewed online. This fact has been taken into consideration while creating the interviews. Therefore, the interviews were structured meaning that every stakeholder has been asked the same questions, regardless of difference in expertise. Based on the uncovered aspects, from both the interviews and the customer journeys, suitable recommendations for future development points will be formulated and elaborated on. Based on those recommendations, the involved stakeholders can continue to research or act on the suggestions given.

2.6. Reliability and validity

2.6.1. Reliability

When it comes to the reliability of the research, it can be said that it is possible to derive the same results from the study in case a different researcher would duplicate the research. It is expected that the results derived from similar research will be comparable in certain aspects, however it remains a social study and social sciences never represent the whole truth due to personal perception. On the other hand, the researchers were occasionally supported by an external partner, either a friend or family member sharing the same experience, which increases the reliability of this study. However, in case a different researcher uses a walking route in the municipality, and experiences certain aspects such as the number of facilities

available differ compared to the current research, the outcomes of the customer journey is likely to differ. Specifically because peoples' value and experiences may differ, despite certain aspects that do come forward as being pain points.

2.6.2. Validity

As the study aimed to identify how the quality of the walking routes in Westerveld can be improved to develop the visitor numbers of other provinces, the quality of the routes and the customers' experience was to be measured. It became evident from the results derived, that there are certain aspects that need improvement when it comes to the quality of the routes. Specifically, because the customer journeys, overall identified the same pain points. These are therefore important to take into account in order to develop the visitor numbers. The results derived from the research conducted are accurate and correspond to what was aimed to be measured and are therefore considered valid.

2.7. Limitations

This research has to deal with a small number of limitations. To begin with, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, social gatherings are limited and a variety of companies are closed. Consequently, arranging interviews might be a struggle as the companies are not able to physically meet with the researchers. Nevertheless, the interviews could be conducted online in order to get the answers desired. Unfortunately, this could affect the overall outcome of the interview as communicating is different online and body language is not pick up on. Therefore, it is easier to misunderstand each other. Additionally, as the research is conducted in December, the six selected stakeholders might not have the time to assist the researchers. This for the reason being that December is a busy month, filled with holidays and festivities. Hence, it could occur that interviews have to be rescheduled and take place after the finish date of the research or that a stakeholder is not available before that date. Lastly, due to the limited time period of this research, no further research can be conducted building on the outcomes of this report. Ergo, the stakeholders are encouraged to continue with the fundamental knowledge given to them by this research.

3. Research results

The following results present the outcomes of the customer journeys, that have been created for the six walking routes that have been used by the researchers. In these customer journeys, the before phase, the during phase, and the after phase are presented. Each stage provides information regarding the experience and value, as well as further knowledge on the routes' strengths and weaknesses. Moreover, pain points that were detected along the way are included. Also, based on these pain points, several suggestions for development have been created. After each customer journey is presented, the maps will be further elaborated on with text and photographs.

3.1. Customer Journeys

For this research, several of the walking routes located in Westerveld were completed by the researchers. The walking routes were selected for various reasons. While walking, several aspects were noticed and analysed, such as accessibility, signposting, conditions of the paths, available facilities, and the location of the starting point. All findings are personal opinions of people who have never walked these routes before, and therefore analysed from a visitor's perspective. All findings are presented in a customer journey. The customer journey is divided in the process prior to departure, during the walk, and afterwards. During the creation of a customer journey, several aspects such as accessibility by bus, the condition of the route, and signposting are taken into consideration, and are ranked on a scale of happiness. The green smileys present an overall satisfaction level, the yellow smileys indicate that something could be improved, and the red smileys indicate that there is a lot that could be improved from the customer's point of view. The customer journeys are further elaborated on below, and per customer actions, there is an indication given on why aspects are ranked this way, supported by pictures that have been taken on site.

In total, six walking routes that are present in the municipality Westerveld have been researched, namely Dwingeler Ommetje Mars, Vledderhof, Lange Poel, Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje, Kibbelhoek and Familiepad. Useful information such as signposting, location of starting point, and nearby restaurant facilities, have been presented in an inventory, which can be found under appendix 5. The inventory was created because Recreatieschap Drenthe desired a clear overview of all the walking routes and simultaneously, it made choosing walking routes for this research easier.

Walking route: Dwingeler Ommetje Mars – 02-12-2020

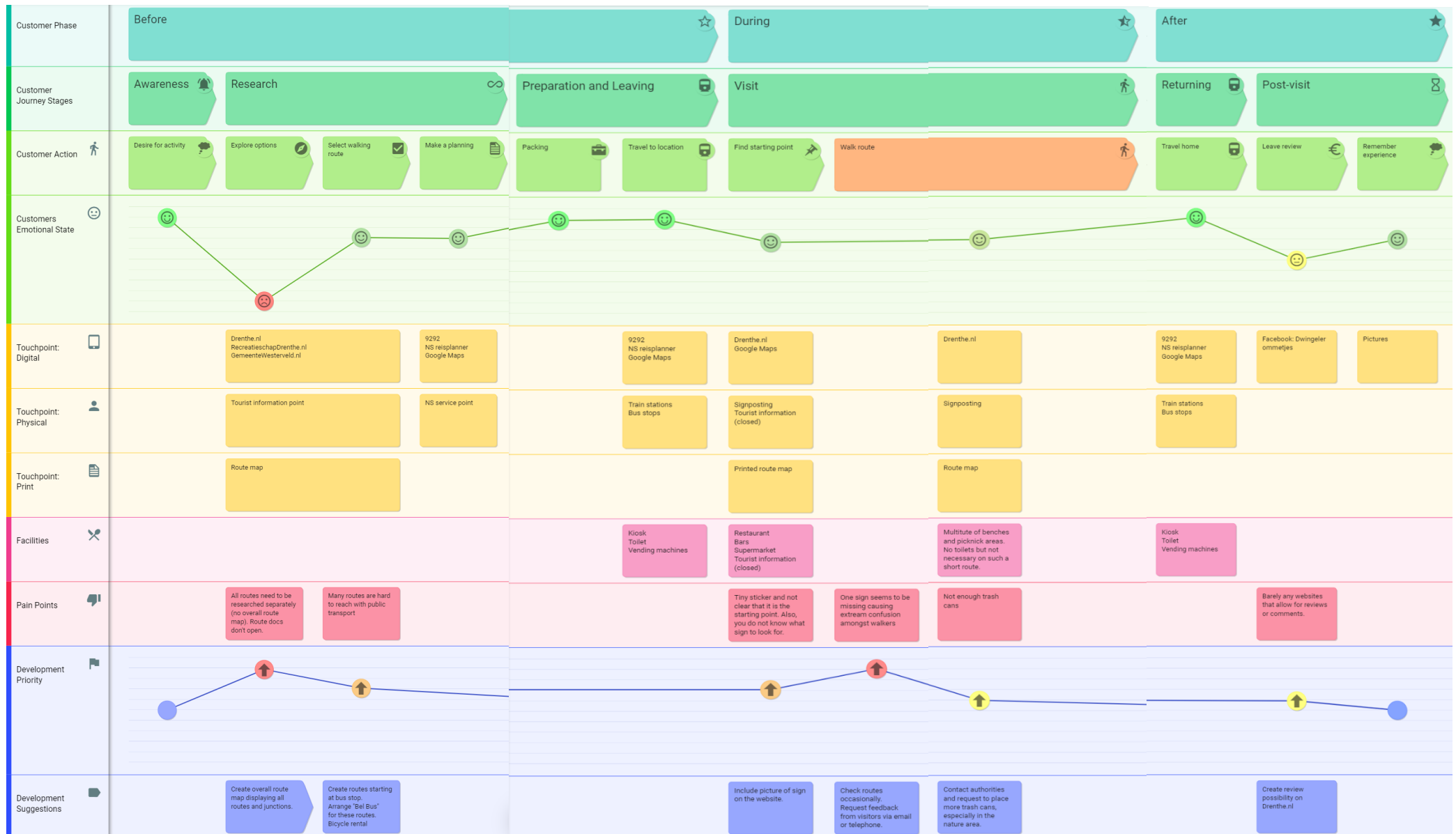


Figure 5: Walking route Dwingeler Ommetje Mars

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 5: Walking route Dwingeler Ommetje Mars. As this was the first time that the researchers were exploring options concerning walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld, the first step was to simply use Google. As it was aimed to find routes that were easily accessible by public transport, this was taken into consideration when exploring the options. The first website that popped up was Drenthe.nl, the provinces' main website. It was discovered that only a limited number of walking routes in Westerveld were found on this website. These were referred to as "Dorpsommetjes" and come in three different types namely Mars, Uranus and Leda, all of them with an average length of 4 to 5 kilometres long. The researchers considered this to be a very limited number of routes and decided to check other websites as well. They found walking routes on RecreatieschapDrenthe.nl, however it was unclear if these routes take place in the municipality and also by clicking on a specific route, the researchers ended up on Drenthe.nl. Then, after already one hour of searching for routes the researchers ended up checking the official website of the municipality of Westerveld and found the same 'Ommetjes' here. Only the length of the routes and the starting points were indicated, however by clicking on the link attached, the researchers end up at the Drenthe.nl website again. Also, two other links included on gemeentewesterveld.nl lead to a very limited number of walking routes. Hence, as the websites that were researched provide only limited information, several websites had to be researched to retrieve a considerable amount of information and to find other routes.

Select walking route

It was found that there was no information provided on how to reach the starting points by using public transport. After some research conducted concerning this matter, it was analysed that the majority of routes that were found, were rather difficult to reach with public transport. However, the users investigated that there was a bus stop close to the starting point of 'Dorpsommetje Mars' which is why this particular route was chosen for the observation.

Make a planning/Travel to location

The starting point was Tourist Information Point 'de Brink' in Dwingeloo, this was clearly indicated on the websites which made it possible to check whether a bus stop was close. After doing some research on 9292.nl, it was found that there was an actual bus stop in Dwingeloo named 'de Brink'. Hence, this made it possible to make a planning and to predict that it would be easy to find the starting point. From Meppel station, people can take bus 28 with final destination Dieverbrug and the bus departs from the station only twice per hour.

During

Find starting point

As soon as the researchers arrived at the bus stop, they tried to look for the Tourist Information Point (TIP) as this was referred to as being the starting point. This information point was closed unfortunately, this was not mentioned online. Finally, after some time the sign was noticed at the TIP, and the researchers started the route. At the end of the route it was unveiled that the researchers started from the wrong point, even though this was at the tourist information point. This raised confusion, especially because the researchers in the end were unsure if they had actually started at the right signpost. The surrounding area provided a diversity of possibilities for people to buy take away coffee or to buy products at the supermarket.



Walk route

As soon as the starting point was indicated, the researchers could start the route. The first part of the walking route was experienced as pleasant due to the clear signposting and the appearance of the village itself. At one point, it was unclear which way to go. Accordingly, the researchers decided to go straight ahead, as that is the general rule when it is not indicated how you should continue. However, after 20 minutes of walking they arrived at the starting point, which seemed to be incorrect as it was explained on the websites that the routes takes approximately one hour. Therefore, the researchers decided to go back to the point where they were unsure where to go, and they went on an investigation. There was indeed a sign presented somewhere on the right, however this was not noticeable and therefore it could be stated that one sign was missing which caused extreme confusion. Throughout the route, multiple benches and picknick areas were noticed. Contrarily, no toilets only a little number of trash cans were present.



After

Leave review

The researchers found a 'Dwingeler Ommetjes' Facebook page where information concerning the routes is provided and few experiences of people are shared. However, it seems that this page is not used frequently as the last post originated from October 2020. Apart from that what is stated above, there are no other options for people to leave reviews or comments.

Remember experience

Despite the fact that some errors were encountered, the accessibility to/from the start and ending point and the route itself were experienced as pleasant.

In a nutshell, it was examined that multiple websites have to be researched before a route can be selected. Besides, it was not found online how to reach the starting point using public transport. Apart from the fact that this is time consuming, it also raises confusion and irritation. Furthermore, the fact that the starting point could not be found and seeing that a sign was missing during the route, raised the same negative feelings. However, the route itself including a combination of visiting the village 'Dwingeloo' as well as the natural aspects, which contributed to an overall pleasant experience.

Walking route: Landgoed Vledderhof – 09-12-2020

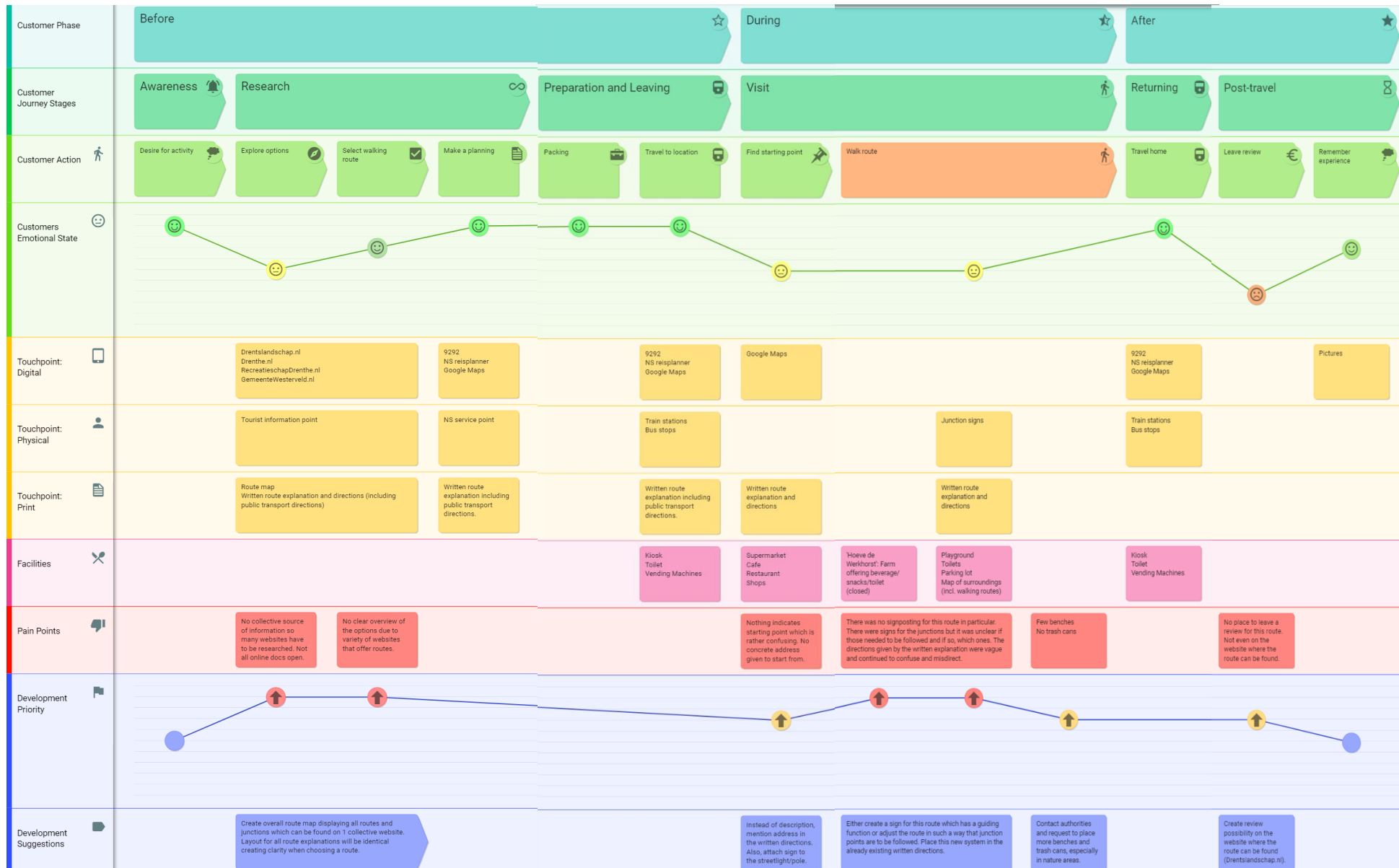


Figure 6: Walking route Landgoed Vledderhof

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 6: Walking route Landgoed Vledderhof. While exploring the options for the second observation, the same websites were used in order to discover routes that could have been overlooked last time. As this was not the case, an additional website was consulted to broaden the available routes. DrentseLandschap.nl gave other options than the other three websites that were previously used. However, the routes were presented differently with a PDF document providing directions and information about the surroundings. This information made it easy to compare a route to different routes on the website but on the other hand, comparing it to routes on other websites was confusing. This for the reason being that the type of information differs extremely per website. So again, researching the options was a confusing experience which did not present all the options.

Select walking route

When starting to select a route, it was decided to pick one with the PDF as those directions seemed thought through and easy to follow. Also, the explanation included guidelines in regard to public transport and how to use it to arrive at the starting point. Nonetheless, the starting point was rather vague as it read: Starting point parking lot on 'het Kerkepad' behind the church in the village Vledder. It intrigued the researchers to walk this route and see if a vague description like this, without an actual address, could be a limitation for the route. Apart from that, the written description seemed detailed enough to find the way and this was worth researching.

Make a planning/Travel to location

The written description stated that there was a bus stop close to the starting point, making a planning therefore came easily. By using google maps and 9292.nl, an appropriate bus was selected that travelled over the bus stop Dorpsstraat. In practice, bus line 20 to Assen via Dieverbrug allows people to arrive at that bus stop in fifteen minutes. The bus stop is located right in front of a supermarket, restaurant and other facilities, creating the opportunity for visitors to do some last-minute shopping before starting the route or to enjoy a coffee in the restaurant on their way back home.

During

Find starting point

After having arrived in Vledder, visitors need to find the church, as no direct address was given. For this, Google Maps was used but also signposting was present, guiding walkers into a certain direction. However, it was never clear if these signs were applicable to the walking route Vledderhof. Once having arrived at the church, it was difficult to find the starting point. It was unclear what sign to look for or if there even were any signs for that matter. After having walked around the church multiple times and observing the street names, the written directions were being followed. Hence, no actual starting point was ever found which is confusing to visitors as it is not clear if one has arrived at the right location.

Walk route

The first direction from the written explanation was followed from what was believed to be the starting point. Right after the first right turn was taken, a little arrow sign became visible. Not knowing it was a junction sign and it belonged to the junction network, it was not clear if it should be followed or not. Continuing with the written directions a junction point was reached. For a while the written explanation and junction signs continued to point into the same direction. Nevertheless, it was still uncertain if it was coincidental or the route was based on these points, as there was no mention of junction points in the written explanation of the route. However, the real issues occurred while following the instruction of point 2 in the written document: 'Ziekte der



essen'. It gave directions that did not coincide with the actual situation and therefore, it was no longer possible to follow the written directions. Unfortunately, it was still unclear if the junction points could be followed as well and this caused a tremendous amount of confusion and irritation. After a small debate, it was decided to compare the overall route map of the PDF and google maps, in order to find a way that would not stray from the original route too much. Coincidentally, it was in the same direction as the junction



signs and after a while these were the new main guides, as the written explanation was not accurate. Once arrived in the forest, everything became easier, as there were less routes to choose from. It was an experience full of wonderful nature with well maintained paths and a variety of facilities. To be more specific, after approximately 5 kilometre there was a parking lot with toilets, a playground and a picnic area. This was a great opportunity to rest and recharge for the rest of the route. Returning to Vledder was easier as different signs started to point out the village, indicating that the written directions were still not enough to finish the route. Overall, the route consists of both culture and nature that allows for a valuable experience. The paths are well maintained and the route is easy to walk. Nevertheless, the poor directions are extremely confusing and therefore, walking the route is not an entirely pleasant experience.

After

Leave review

The written directions provided by Drentslandschap.nl were clearly not accurate and it confuses visitors more than it helps them. During the observation, the feeling arose that changes were made in the surroundings but that the document was outdated and still considered the old environment. This would be something that should be communicated with the provider of the PDF so it can be looked into and

changed. The website where the document was retrieved from, Drentslandschap.nl, does not have an easy option for such feedback. This results in the fact that the dysfunctionality of the directions cannot be communicated other than to send an email, which is often too much effort for a visitor that has already completed the route.

Remember experience

After returning home and looking back on the experience, it becomes clear that the positive outweighs the negative. The nature and culture made up for the poor directions and confusion that was an ongoing error in the execution of the walking route.

To conclude this walking route, the research process was rather pleasant. A route was selected with ease and information regarding the public transport was included. Nevertheless, finding the starting point was difficult, as well as following the directions given with the route. This caused confusion and irritation especially in the beginning, after the forest was entered there were less options in terms of direction and there was more time for experiencing the pristine nature, instead of figuring out where to go.



Walking route: Lange Poel – 28-12-2020

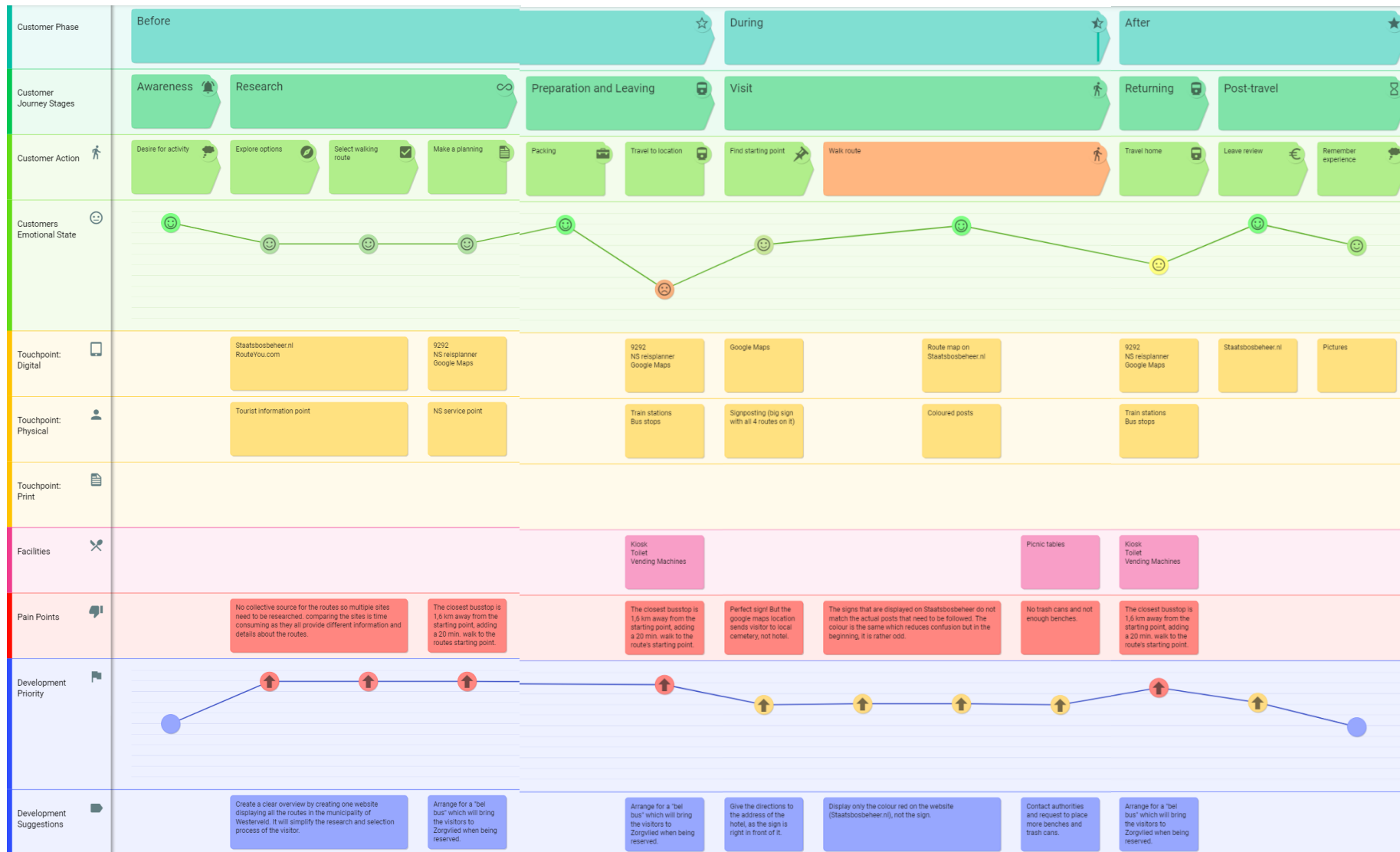


Figure 7: Walking route Lange Poel

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 7: Walking route Lange Poel. For this Customer Journey, an external party was asked to participate in the research and overall execution of the walking route. This option was decided upon as the researchers had gained certain experiences while creating the walking route inventory and wanted to know how other first-time visitors interpreted the situation, especially online. In practice the external party was a close friend of one of the researchers. The process uncovered that the external party had the same level of confusion as the researchers had the first time they conducted research on the possible routes. Information in regard to the available routes can be found on a variety of different websites which means that they are all presented differently. This causes confusion and an uneven comparison between the routes. In the case of this route, 2 websites were looked at; staatsbosbeheer.nl and routeyou.com. When the external party was unable to find a clear overview, she went back to the first website and decided that one from staatsbosbeheer.nl would be selected.



Select walking route

The route selected was based on its length and location, as it is situated in the 'Drents Friese Wold' which is a forest. As explained before, it was difficult to make a comparison between different routes since there were so many different websites involved in the process. Therefore, it was decided to select a route from staatsbosbeheer.nl, to limit the options. Due to this, a wide variety of options were eliminated from the selection process which is unfortunate. Staatsbosbeheer was the chosen website as it has a clear and detailed layout with all the essential information highlighted, such as the starting point and the length.

Make a planning/Travel to location

As the website provided the address of the starting point, it was easy to base the planning on that. It was decided to leave at ten o'clock to allow room for delay. From Meppel, it takes roughly one hour and ten minutes to reach the bus stop that is closest to the starting point of the route; Zuivelfabriek, which is situated in the village Elsloo. Into more detail, people that are interested in going there have to take a train from Meppel to Wolvega, which travels twice an hour. From there, bus line 517 to Steenwijk via De Blesse will bring them to bus stop Vlechtmuseum in the village Noordwolde. Here they need to wait two minutes before continuing with bus line 217 to Oosterwolde and exit the bus at bus stop Zuivelfabriek. Important to mention is that this is a 'bel bus', indicating that it needs to be reserved in order for it to show up. Once the bus stop is reached, a 20 minute walk (1,6 KM) has to be completed before arriving at the starting point. As the purpose of this visit to Zorgvlied is to go walking, it seemed rather unnecessary to do an additional walk before and after the actual route.

During

Find starting point

As mentioned before, the address that was provided by Staatsbosbeheer.nl was used to find the starting point: Hogeweg/Dorpsstraat, 8437 PG Zorgvlied. Unfortunately, this leads to a local cemetery which is not close enough to the starting point for it to be seen. Nevertheless, the starting point is easily found when continuing to walk into Zorgvlied as it is a big sign with clear letters. Also, the sign is in front of hotel Villa Nova, which draws the attention of walkers. Therefore, even though the address is slightly vague, it does not take long for the starting point to be found.

Walk route

Starting the route was easy since the starting point was so clear. However, the website of Staatsbosbeheer displays the sign that needs to be followed, but in practice, it is nowhere to be found. The colour of the sign does match with the colour on the starting sign and the posts that are present but it throws the visitor of course a little in the beginning. After a while it get clear that there are no other signs to follow and that it is probably the right path. Other than that, the posts were frequently displayed always guaranteeing the walker that they are on the right path. The route was easy to follow, easy to walk and full of nature experiences. In fact, cows roam freely on these lands encountering



humans often. A slight pain point was the lack of trash cans, meaning that the visitors have to hold on to their trash until a trash can is found. There were a few picnic tables around but more benches would have been appreciated. There were also no toilets but as the route is only 7 km long, this is not essential.

After

Leave review

While selecting the route on Staatsbosbeheer.nl, reviews were displayed. This is a great inspiration to potential walkers and encourages them to leave a review after they completed a route. Nevertheless, it were just two reviews, which is rather little.

Remember experience

The walking route Lange Poel was full of little errors. Nevertheless, nothing major that would affect the entire experience. Hence, the remembrance of the route is rather positive. The only flaw worth mentioning is the 20 minute walk prior to and after the actual route.

To summarize this route, it can be said that the exploration process was rather pleasant due to the fact that the researcher and her friend stuck to one website; staatsbosbeheer.nl. The starting point was clearly mentioned online but did not quite correspond with the actual position. Also, before the starting point was reached, a 20 minute walk has to be completed. The route itself was clearly mapped and the

signposting was frequent and consistent. However, the sign that was displayed online did not represent the actual posts that were present, but the colour matched. Lastly, the route was filled with nature experiences and it is possible to encounter animals that roam freely.

Walking route: Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje in Uffelte – 02-01-2021

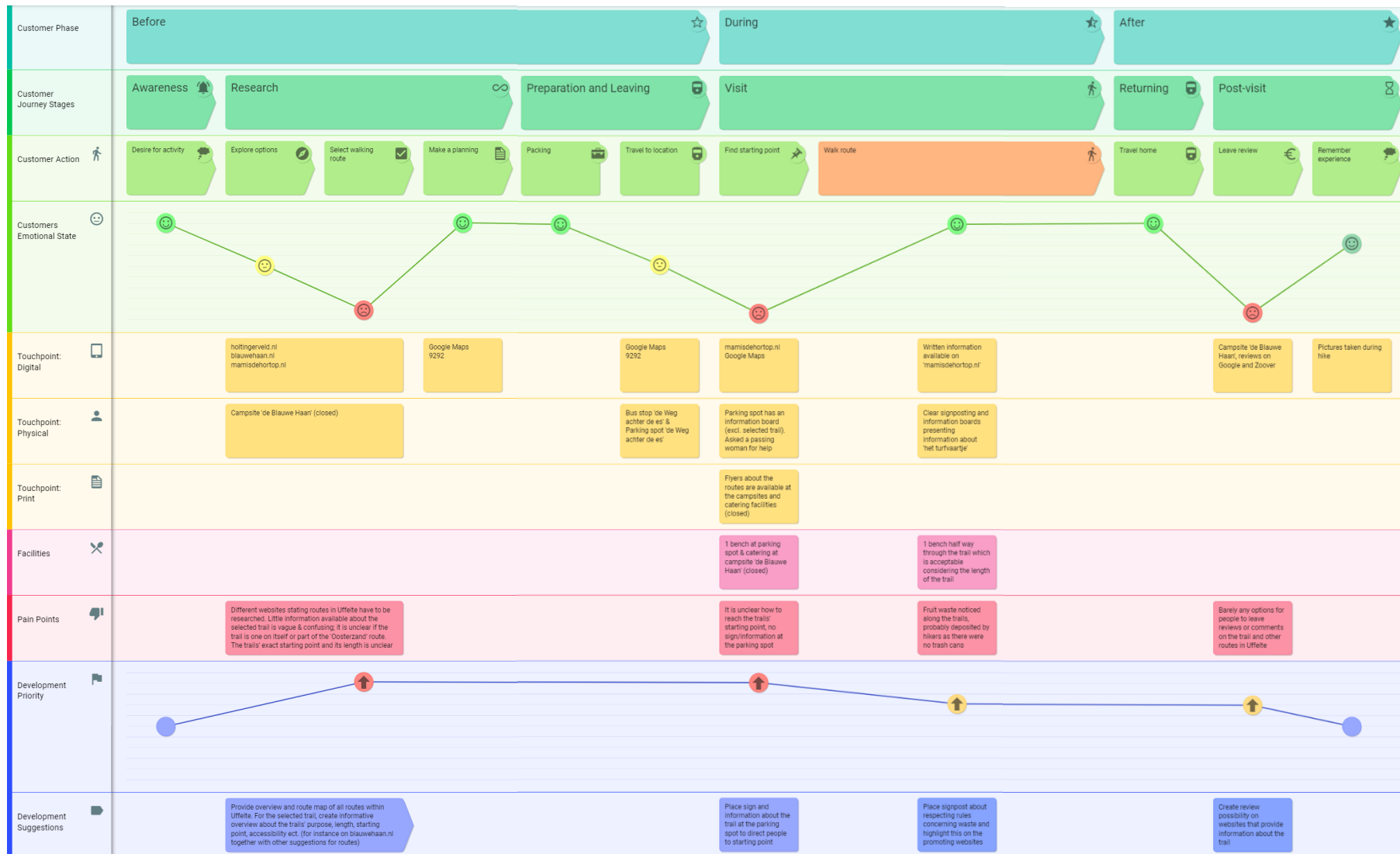


Figure 8: Walking route Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje in Uffelte

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 8: Walking route Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje in Uffelte. Before the exploration phase, the researchers contacted Recreatieschap Drenthe to ask for suggestions on interesting walking routes in order to uncover what they experience as problematic routes that are in need of research. It was suggested to have a look at the routes in Uffelte, particularly the recently discovered 'Wandelbeleefpad het turfvaartje', that starts at parking spot 'de Weg achter de es'. As there were multiple options that start at the same point, all options were explored and to be researched. There are a few websites that provide information on walking routes in Uffelte, such as holtingerveld.nl, blauwehaan.nl and mamisdehortop.nl. The last mentioned website is a blog, providing most information on 'Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje' amongst others.

Select walking route

To begin with, the selection of the route and walking the route was done by the researcher and her mom. Both decided to choose Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje, and started doing more research on the trail that was developed in 2010. Soon it was discovered that there is little information available about the selected trail. In fact, the information available is considered to be vague and confusing as it is unclear if the trail is a route on itself or part of the 'Oosterzand' route. Specifically, when looking at the routes' description given on blauwehaan.nl, one paragraph provides information on 'het Turfvaartje' and therefore seems to be part of the route. However, holtingerveld.nl and mamisdehortop.nl treat the trail as a route on itself and therefore arises confusion. Besides, the trails' exact starting point is unclear as mamisdehortop.nl states that the trail start can either start from campsite 'de Blauwe Haan' or the other way around from 'Brandeveen', whereas holtingerveld.nl writes that the parking spot 'de Weg achter de Es' is the starting point. Additionally, the length of the trail is not clear and can therefore only be unveiled by walking the route.

Make a planning/Travel to location

It is possible for people to reach the routes' starting point when using public transport. When travelling from NS station Meppel, people can simply take Qbuzz 28, direction 'Dwingeloo via Dieverbrug' which will take them to the routes' nearest bus stop; Weg achter de Es. People travelling from NS station 'Steenwijk', can either take the train to Meppel and then take bus 28, or take the bus to Dieverbrug (Qbuzz 20, Assen via Dieverbrug) and eventually take Qbuzz 28 to bus stop 'de Weg achter de Es' (direction Meppel Koedijklanden). As soon as people reach the bus stop, they will notice a sign that will direct them to Campsite 'de Blauwe Haan'. The signposting along the way was clear and easily leads people to the parking lot, however the hike to the starting point takes approximately 20 minutes which was considered a little unfortunate.

During

Find starting point

Despite the fact that the address given for the starting point was somewhat vague (parking spot 'De Weg achter de Es'), finding the parking spot was quite easy. The parking spot has a bench to sit on, and a billboard which was easily noticeable from a distance and clearly shows that this is the starting point for the routes. This board provides a map and some side information about three routes, which were referred to as 'Dorpsommetjes'. The selected trail, 'Wandelbeleefpad het turfvaartje', was shortly mentioned in the description for the 'Oosterzand' route, but there was no specific information presented about the trail on this board. Also, signposting for the trails' sign or any other signs directing to the trails' starting point were nowhere to be found. Therefore, it was unclear how to reach the trails' starting point.



The board did bring forward that flyers about the routes are available at the campsites and catering facilities in the surrounding areas, so it was assumed the trail would then probably start at campsite 'de Blauwe Haan' as written by mamisdehortop.nl. Currently, catering facilities as well as campsites are closed, and therefore the information could not be retrieved. A lady who passed by the parking lot was approached and she was asked whether she knew the area. She was a tourist, but experienced the routes herself and could tell to continue walking on the 'Postweg', then go left and pass the campsite; this would lead the student and her mom to Brandeveen. And indeed, it was figured that this was the starting point of the 'Oosterzand' route; this route can be followed by following the signs with the Uffelte flag sign and red marks and is 5 or 8 kilometres depending on where you start/end.

A little side note is that the length of the routes for the red and green marks on the board, do not match the signage which may be confusing to people who decide to walk one of those three 'Dorpsommetjes'. The lady was right, after a short walk the starting point of the trail was found, somewhere behind the campsite.

Walk route

From beginning to end it can be stated that signposting is clear and easily visible due to its attractive design.

Also, the information boards that present information about 'het Turfvaartje' are unique additional touches that makes the trail an educational route. Along the way, people will get amazed by the views of Brandeveen and see a glimpse of the wild cows; these aspects mean that the path is indeed a real experience path. Along the trail people will only find one bench, situated on a perfect spot that allows people to enjoy the views and have a little rest. One bench is acceptable as the trail is only about 3 kilometres long. Along the trails, fruit waste noticed. This was probably deposited by hikers as there were no trash cans available.



After

Leave review

There are barely any options for people to share their experiences with the trial or any other walking routes in Uffelte. It was noticed that some people shortly mention the walking routes on Google and Zoover when they leave reviews or comments following the time they spent at 'Camping de Blauwe Haan'. Apart from this, there is no channel for people to share experiences, leave reviews and/or comments.

Remember experience

When looking back at the pictures taken during the hike, the researcher and her mom agreed that 'Wandelbeleefpad het Turfvaartje' has been a pleasant experience. Specifically, due to the trails' surroundings, clear signposting and the length of the path. In other words, if you wish to escape from your daily routine, do something healthy and at the same time and to improve your historical knowledge, the trail can definitely meet those needs.

To summarize, it became evident that the trail is rather unknown as the information provided online is very limited. Moreover, no information was found on public transport, however it was experienced that the walk prior to the route is rather long. Furthermore, finding the starting point was a challenge as the information found online contradict each other, and the information board does not state where this can be found either, resulting in irritation and confusion. Not being able to post any reviews or leave comment



was considered as being unfortunate. When people are not aware of the trails' existence or find incomplete and confusing information, they may leave it for what it is and choose another route. The trail itself however, provided enough variety in terms of nature, culture and historic information about 'het Turfvaartje', and due to this, the overall experience was considered as being pleasant.



Walking route: Kibbelhoek – 10-01-2021

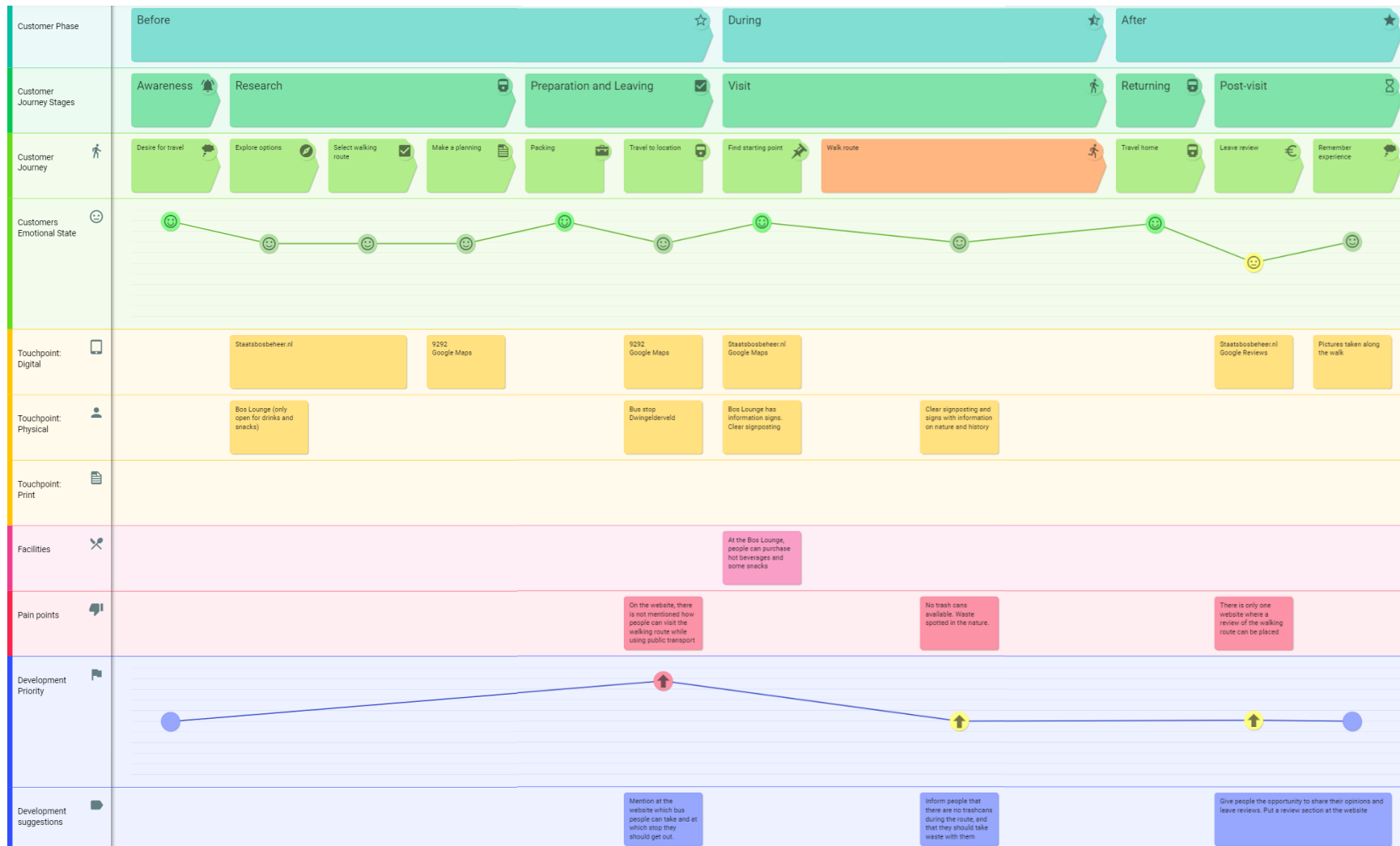


Figure 9: Walking route Kibbelhoek

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 9: Walking route Kibbelhoek. For this research, an inventory of the walking routes located in Westerveld has been created as asked by Recreatieschap Drenthe. In this inventory, several routes in the nature reserve 'Dwingelderveld' have been mentioned. While investigating the several routes, which are being mentioned on the website of Staatsbosbeheer, the Kibbelhoek route caught interest, as well as the Familiepad, and Boswandeling Spier. The website provides information such as a small map, indicates which signs the walkers should follow, where the starting point is located, and a section where walkers can leave reviews of their walking experience.

Select walking route

The selection of the route was done by the researcher and her boyfriend. The Kibbelhoek route was selected because it was not too long and Dwingelderveld offers a lot of different routes. Furthermore, the boyfriend used to walk here as a child with his mom and dad, so it brought back some nice memories. The website of Staatsbosbeheer provides clear information about the route, but no more. No background information such as when the route was established is given. Additionally, the other students who have walked in this area before mention the presence of cows and sheep. This caught interest and made the progress of selecting a walking route easier.

Making a planning/Travel to location

It is super easy to travel to the walking route using public transport. From the NS station Meppel, one can easily take bus 28 to Beilen, which takes people directly to the starting point of the Kibbelhoek. From the bus stop 'Dwingelderveld', it is only a one-minute walk to the starting point. The starting point can be found easily, because there are signs directly across the street, which can be spotted directly once people get out of the bus.

During

Find starting point

The starting point is very easy to find, as mentioned before. Once people get out of the bus it is immediately clear where they have to go. There are clear signs at the starting point which provides the routes and information. Furthermore, the starting point is also accompanied with a small cabin, called the 'Bos Lounge'. Here, information about the routes and surroundings can be collected. Furthermore, it is possible to grab a hot beverage and/or snack, such as coffee, tea, cookies, and cake. The employees of the Bos Lounge could also provide hikers with information about the trails. Unfortunately, there were no maps or brochures present, because the information center in the Bos Lounge was closed



due to the Corona pandemic. For the Kibbelhoek route, one must follow the red signs. The route starts across the street.

Walk route

Once the hikers have crossed the street, it becomes very clear where the hikers have to go. The red signs are located at logical spots and are therefore easy to see. The signs are furthermore clear and were not confusing. Along the route, several signs can be found that provide the hikers with information about nature and the history of the nature reserve. However, some signs were hard to read because they were extremely dirty.



The Kibbelhoek route takes the hikers into the natural area of the Dwingelderveld where they can enjoy forests, but also water and fields. Along the route, several benches can be found where people can rest. The benches are placed at spots where people can enjoy the view and the nature. There were no trash cans placed along the routes, only at the beginning and end of the route. This led to finding some coffee cups in the nature. The walk was nice and was not boring at all. There was however one minor thing that was considered a little disappointing. At the Bos Lounge, it was already notified that there was some construction going on. This resulted in a piece of the nature being completely cut down.



After

Leave review

Besides the website of Staatsbosbeheer, it is also possible to leave a review on Google Reviews. Other than that, there are no further options to leave reviews on the walking route. Which is a shame, considering the reviews that are already online. These reviews emphasize the beauty of the nature reserve and the route itself. If there would be more options to leave a review, and that people are made aware of it, loads of positive reviews could be gathered.



Remember experience

When looking back at the route, it can be said it was a pleasant experience. The Kibbelhoek route is not too long, and alternately. The signposting is very clear which made walking the route extremely pleasant. It was also seen that the route is already very popular; on the day of the visit it was extremely busy. Furthermore, Hotel Van der Valk in Spier has created the 'Nature Game', which is a game especially for children that will experience the walking route through games and exercises. This is a nice addition and also makes the route more accessible for families with young children. The only pain point was that the information signs were dirty and therefore hard to read.



To sum up, the Kibbelhoek route is well developed in terms of accessibility, online information, and signposting. However, there is only one option where a review can be placed, in order to share the experiences with other hikers. This felt as a pain point and has been suggested as a point of improvement.

Walking route: Familiepad Spier – 10-01-2021

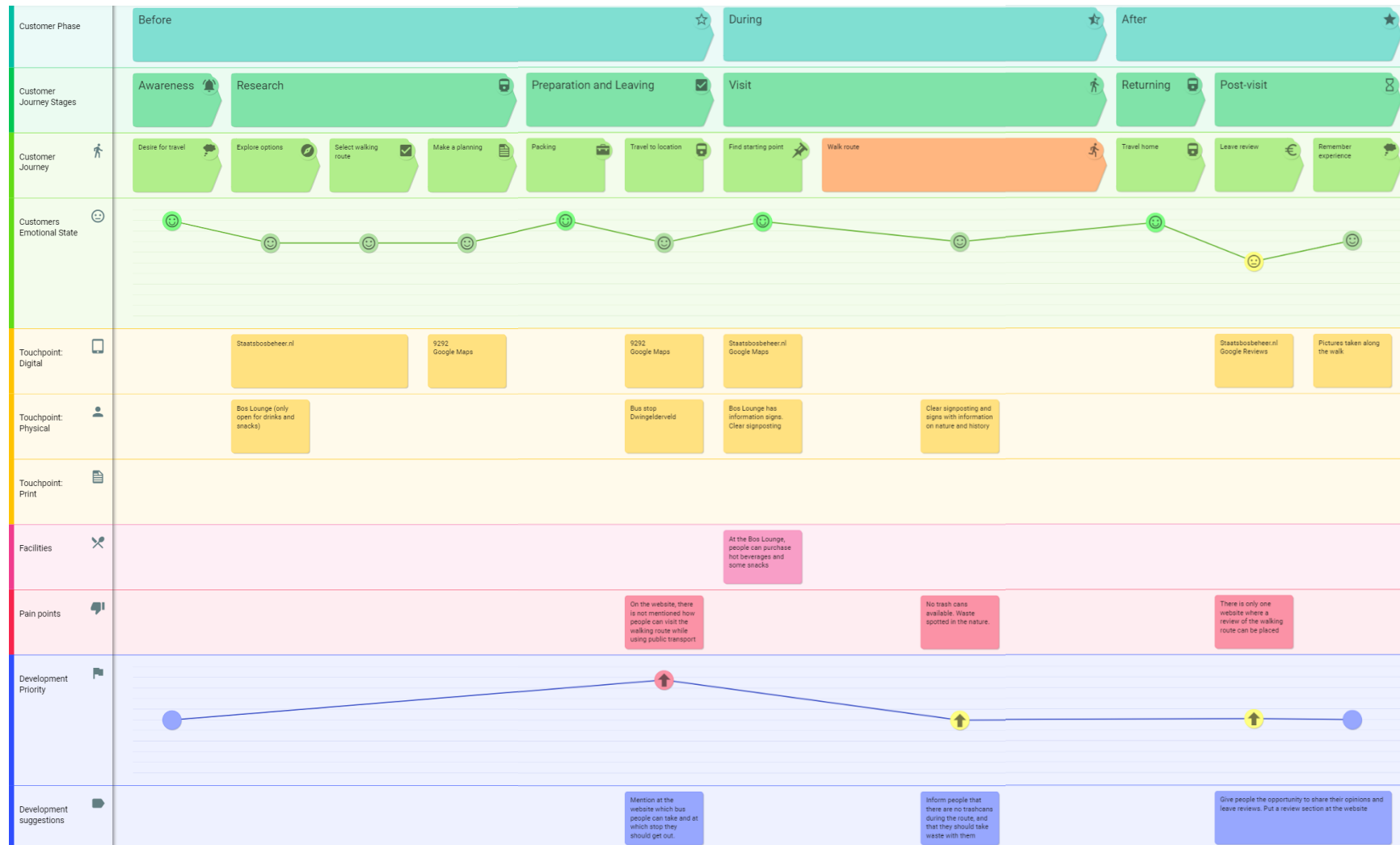


Figure 10: Walking route Familiepad Spier

Before

Explore options

The corresponding customer journey can be found in figure 10: Walking route Familiepad Spier. It was recommended by Recreatieschap Drenthe to take a look at a wheelchair friendly route. As the student and her boyfriend were already present at the location, it was decided that this route would also be taken. Looking at the inventory that was provided by Recreatieschap Drenthe, and further filled in by the students, it seems like the Familiepad route in Spier is one of the few options that are wheelchair friendly.

Select walking route

This route was selected based upon the question if the student could examine this route. The route is mentioned on the website of Drenthe.nl, and Staatsbosbeheer. Drenthe.nl gives a small explanation in terms of the length of the route, facilities which are near the starting point, and a map that points out the route. Also, the address of the starting point is clearly mentioned. Staatsbosbeheer provides the exact same information on their website, with a review section as addition. The website of Staatsbosbeheer also mentions which colour belongs to the route, this information is not mentioned on Drenthe.nl. Both organizations state that the route is hardened, and therefore easily accessible for wheelchairs, but also elderly people with a walker. However, Drenthe.nl has mentioned a length of 2.5 kilometres, and Staatsbosbeheer mentioned a length of 2.3 kilometre. In short, this route can be walked with the entire family, which is also why this route was selected.

Make a planning/travel to location

As mentioned in the sub-chapter of the Kibbelhoek route, the route is easily accessible by public transport. From the NS station Meppel, people can take bus 28 to Beilen, and get out at the bus stop 'Dwingelderveld'. Then, directly across the street, a sign can be seen which mentions all the routes present, including the colours that people should follow. It is directly clear where people should go for the starting point.

During

Find starting point

To begin with, the starting point is clearly visible, as signs clearly direct people in the right direction. Furthermore, the starting point can easily be spotted due to the presence of the 'Bos Lounge'. Here, hikers can enjoy a hot beverage or a snack. Also, normally it would be possible to gather brochures at the information point that is in the Bos Lounge, however this was closed due to the lockdown. For the Familiepad, people should follow the blue signs, which are clearly indicated at the beginning. The actual length of the route, as mentioned on the signposting at the location, is 2.3 kilometres. The information stated on Drenthe.nl is therefore not correct.



Walk route

While walking the route, the path is at all times hardened, but also very clean. The signposting is great; the signs are in great condition and are easy to spot. The path is greatly accessible for people with wheelchairs, or walkers. The route is not too long, 2.3 kilometres, which is great for families. Along the route, many families were seen, who were enjoying the nature. The route itself has not much variety and the noise of the street can be heard at all times, which did not contribute to the experience. Along the route, one bench is placed, which is enough considering the length of the route. However, if it is a busy day, the bench will be taken at all times, resulting in families who are not able to sit down for a while. Also, there are no trashcans along the route, but there was no waste spotted in the nature. The walk was nice, but nothing too fancy. It felt more like walking on a random cycling path.

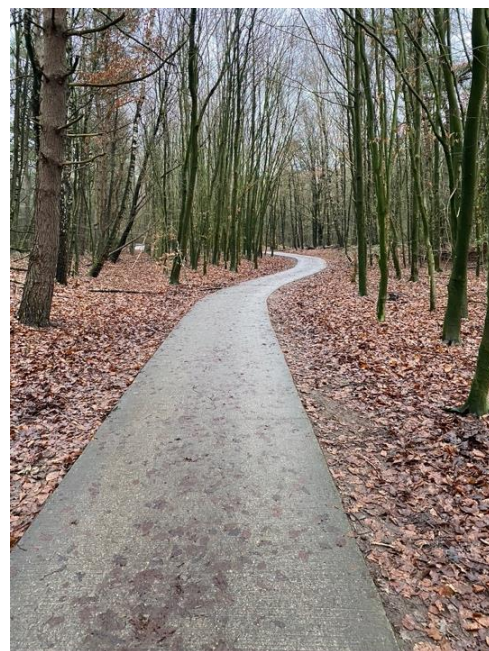
After

Leave review

After walking this route, and being surprised with the fact it was so accessible, it was only possible to write a review on the website of Staatsbosbeheer. Besides this, there are no further options to leave a review. As this path is marketed as a family route, and wheelchair friendly, it would be nice to be able to let other families know that this route is recommended.

Remember experience

When looking back at the walk, it can be said it was a somewhat pleasant experience. It was nothing too special, but it is definitely great for families with younger children or elderly, who make use of a walker or wheelchair. The route is in great condition; the paths are hardened and clear of dirt, which made a great impression. It can clearly be seen that Staatsbosbeheer takes the accessibility of this path seriously, which would make it a great experience for families.



The Familiepad is a great route, especially for families with smaller children, or elderly. The path is hardened and cleaned, and is therefore easily accessible for buggies or walkers. It was a pity that there was only one bench along the way. Furthermore, there were limited options for leaving a review, and this has been suggested as a point of development.

3.2. Interviews results

As previously stated in chapter 2.5, six stakeholders were selected for the interviews. In total, interviews have been held with four stakeholders, as Staatsbosbeheer and Recreatieschap Drenthe did not respond. In this chapter, the outcomes of these interviews will be analysed. One interview has been conducted through Microsoft Teams, the other interviews have been sent by email. Transcript of all interviews can be read in appendix 3.

The first question that was asked to the interviewees was what the organization they work for exactly does for the walking routes in the municipality Westerveld. The principal of the municipality Westerveld explained that she is responsible for funding, contact with the landlords such as Staatsbosbeheer, and the overall preparation of the walking routes. Furthermore, she explained that municipality Westerveld and Recreatieschap Drenthe recruit volunteers, who think of how the walking routes can become more attractive, but are also asked to report missing signs, or to maintain the walking routes. Interviewee 2 of Het Drentse Landschap mentioned that they also maintain the walking routes, but then only the routes they own. Furthermore, they also make sure the sign posting and directions are up to date. Interviewee 3 of Marketing Drenthe stated that the organization is responsible for the marketing of the walking routes, but are advisors in terms of the creation of new walking routes. Moreover, they bring attention to the walking routes using the website Drenthe.nl and social media channels. Lastly, interviewee four of Weldadig Oord mentioned that they create walking routes with a story, and create brochures.

The next question asked if the interviewees could express in numbers how much the popularity of the walking routes in Westerveld have increased during the COVID-19 pandemic. The first interviewee said that Westerveld is still investigating this matter, and that she could not state exact numbers. However, she mentioned that Tourist Info points have mentioned that they see an increase in the demand for walking routes. Additionally, all interviewees have mentioned that there are no numbers yet, but that they are busy investigating this. Interviewees do know there was an increase, for example by the number of downloads of a route, or just by seeing how busy the parking lots were. It is difficult to research this, as the pandemic is still an ongoing.

The third question that was asked to the interviewees was where they pay attention to while creating new walking routes. Municipality Westerveld thinks it is important that a walking route starts at a restaurant or café, and that there is a parking lot available. Furthermore, they try to make each walking route as attractive as possible; thus, having walking routes that go through nature as well as through villages. Interviewee 2 looks at if a new route is necessary to create in the first place. Interviewee 3 mentioned that they are not necessarily responsible for creating new routes, but advice the creators (Westerveld and Recreatieschap Drenthe) to take the identity of the area, and the demand into consideration. Interviewee 4 mentions that a route should have a theme that is of importance to touristic entrepreneurs. In addition to this, interviewee 1 mentioned that there are several themed routes in the area of Westerveld, for example, the Nature Game in Dwingelderveld, or the Mammoet Route in Holtingerveld. These routes are especially created for children. Also, she mentioned the creation of the

Space Layers app, which is an app that provides the walking route with additional information such as the history of the area.

Moving on, the next question asked the interviewees what according to them is the reason to adapt existing routes. Interviewee 1 stated that the main reason is actually the maintenance. Interviewee 2 added to that, that they also look if the route is still up to date, and interviewee 4 mentioned that the feedback of hikers is also of great importance to that. Interviewee 3 could not reply to this question, as this is not part of the activities of Marketing Drenthe.

The fifth and sixth question that was asked are the strengths and weaknesses of the walking routes, according to each interviewee. All the interviewees mentioned that strengths of the walking routes are definitely the peace, calmness, space, nature, and diversity. For weaknesses, all the interviewees had another opinion. For example, interviewee 1 mentioned that hikers find it often a pity that they do not encounter much wild animals while walking. Interviewee 2 states that in her opinion, the route descriptions could be more specific sometimes. Interviewee 3 mentioned that weaknesses are not something she works with, as this is the responsibility of Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality Westerveld. Lastly, interviewee 4 stated that according to his opinion and that of the stakeholders of Weldadig Oord, a weakness would be that the walking routes do not attract as much hikers as they would like.

The second to last question was through which channels hikers can share their opinions on the walking routes, how often this information is being observed, and what is done with it afterwards. Interviewee 1 mentioned the presence of a Facebook page, where hikers share experiences and pictures of their walks. This is often observed by municipality Westerveld. Furthermore, also social media channels such as Instagram and Twitter are observed. This is however dependent on the target group, as older people might not be so familiar with such applications. Additionally, she mentioned that municipality Westerveld is still working on a better platform to leave reviews on. Interviewee 2 mentioned that they observe this on a daily basis, through channels such as the website, social media, e-mail, and telephone. She also mentions that comments are taken seriously and that those are forwarded to the responsible colleague. Furthermore, they keep the commenters up to date by responding to them, and telling them what they are going to do with the comment. An answer is given mostly within a couple of hours. Interviewee 3 mentioned that Marketing Drenthe is not responsible for such matters and that those are the responsibility of Recreatieschap Drenthe and municipality Westerveld. However, Marketing Drenthe does keep an eye on comments, and like to see the positive comments on the beauty of Drenthe. Lastly, interviewee 4 mentioned that hikers can send their comments to the email address that is mentioned on their website, and that this is being observed on a daily basis. Comments are forwarded to the owners of a route and then discussed.

Lastly, the question 'to what extent has there since the COVID-19 pandemic been a difference in the number of hikers that are not living in the province Drenthe'. Interviewee 1 and 2 mentioned that Westerveld has noticed an increase of visitors, especially last summer. Because the contaminations

were much less in the north, which resulted in people from the larger cities moving towards the countryside. This could be seen through an increase in hotel and camping bookings, but no specific numbers could be mentioned. Interviewee 3 noticed that because of the lockdown, more people were forced to stay in the Netherlands for their holidays, resulting in more hikers on the walking routes of Westerveld. Interviewee 4 stated that more hikers have become interested in the story of Weldadig Oord. The organization spends loads of time to public relations, advertisements on tv, newspapers, and tourism journals. He sees great developments and noticed that the stakeholders of Weldadig Oord are becoming more satisfied.

To put it in a nutshell, almost all answers are similar to each other. All interviewees have mentioned an increase in hikers on the walking routes of Westerveld since the Corona pandemic, but exact numbers could not be given yet. Furthermore, all interviewees state that they are curious about the experiences of hikers, but from the information given, it can be concluded that there are not enough channels, or one platform for hikers to leave their experiences and reviews on. While looking at the creation of new routes and the adaptations on existing ones, all the interviewees have a different stake in these processes, but all make sure the routes remain in excellent condition.

4. Analysis & Discussion

This chapter combines the interviews conducted and the customer journeys created. By combining them, a thorough analysis can be completed unveiling the internal strengths and weaknesses and the external value, experience and motivation of the visitors. In order to do this clearly, each research question created for this research will be answered separately. Later, all customer journeys will be merged and an overall map will be created to illustrate the general journey of a visitor. This will assist the process of understanding and shortly summarize the findings.

4.1. Experience

The first research question is “What do customers currently experience while participating in the walking routes?” From the customer journeys was learned that researching the available routes and selecting one causes a rather negative experience, especially for the first, second and fourth route. To elaborate on this, it was uncovered that this arose from the level of confusion that was experienced. For instance, there is a broad variety of websites available with different information making the researching visitor unsure about having found all the routes. Also, the information that is shown online is limited, not allowing the visitor to grasp a full understanding of the route in minimal time. As visitors that arrive with public transport are centralized in this research, it is important to mention that almost no information regarding the routes’ accessibility with public transport was provided, leaving the visitor to research that for himself. This could lead to frustration as it occasionally occurs that a 20 minute walk has to be completed before the actual route starts, changing the visitors opinion on the route. Also, researching these matters are time consuming, especially if you need to do it for a multitude of routes and wish to compare them. Apart from lacking information in regard to public transport, other information was missing or incorrect on a regular basis, such as the sign that needs to be followed and the correct starting point.

Continuing with the topic of signposting, it became evident that not all routes have the same level of quality. Especially route one and two show that there is prominent room for improvement concerning the signs used. To elaborate on this, there are problems in regard to finding the starting point and the display of signs. For instance, the first route was clearly missing a sign and the explanation of the second route seemed outdated, which made completing both routes more of a challenge. Another experience related to this is the lack of feedback opportunities. When a route is completed and something seemed incorrect, there is no option on the website that allow for easy suggestions. Nevertheless, from the interviews was obtained that the feedback of visitors is important to the stakeholders as they use it to change and update routes accordingly. Also, it was mentioned that they are currently working on improving the possibility of leaving reviews. Apart from the signposting, the visitors of the walking routes in Westerveld experience a calm and peaceful environment filled with nature experiences. Wild animals can be spotted but also culture is touched upon with routes that include local villages. Furthermore, themed routes are created by stakeholders which add to the experience of visitors.

4.2. Motivation

Turning to the second research question, this one researched “What motivates current visitors to take part in the walking routes of the municipality of Westerveld?”. The customer journeys did not generate a clear answer to this research question, but the interviews did. In fact, stakeholders brought forward that current visitors are motivated by the idea of being outside, clearing their head and being able to relax. Also, these motivational factors became more important during the COVID-19 pandemic as the popularity of walking routes increased. This statement is supported as stakeholders noticed an obvious increase in online downloads and parked cars at the parking lots. Nevertheless, statistics in regard to the increase of visitors is not yet available due to the complexity of that research and the fact that the pandemic is ongoing.

4.3. Value

In order to uncover what level of value the walkers assign to what aspect of the route, the third research questions was developed; What do people currently value about the walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld?. The interviews brought forward that most value is assigned to the surroundings in which the walking route is located. This corresponds with the motivation of the visitors and therefore, justifies the high level of value assigned to it. The customer journeys that were created confirm these statements as the visualization shows that even though the experiences during the walking routes were mediocre, the remembrance of the route is rather positive. As no customer journey shows any problems with the environment the route is located in, but with the signposting and guidance, it can be concluded that the environment weighs heavier in the overall evaluation of the route than the errors regarding the execution of the route. Ergo, there is a significant amount of value assigned to the surroundings of the routes. Additionally, a clean surrounding is also valued, as the trash that could be found in nature areas bothered the researchers while executing the walk. The level of value is lower but it is worth looking into.

Moreover, the customer journeys show that clarity in regard to the research process and online environment is valued considerably. As explained before in the experience paragraphs, the online research process is time consuming, especially when one wishes to compare different routes with one another. As the purpose and motivation of participating in a walking route is to relax and be outside, such extensive research is unwanted and frustrating. A clear overview on the other hand reduces the time spend on research and the majority of the routes is easily found. Moreover, when having a clear overview, comparing the routes is simplified, reducing irritation. Hence, it is valued by the visitors of the walking routes that the information is easy to find and clear. The interviews support this as interviewee two stated that they had received feedback that route descriptions were not specific enough, thus, not clear.

4.4. Strengths

Turning to the internal concepts that are included in this research process, strengths have to be analysed. This was done with the assistance of research question four; What are the strengths of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?. While conducting the research and creating the customer journeys, a variety of strengths came forward. Firstly, the collection of routes in Westerveld is extensive and allows for great variety. Into more detail, there are routes including, nature, culture, activities and themes, assuring that everybody can find something that fits their personal interest. The stakeholders of the routes are aware of this as the interviewees brought this forward frequently. At the same time, the location of the routes is considered a strength due to the vast nature areas and peaceful environment, where no car sound can be heard. This statement is based on the personal observation of the researchers that have completed several routes and the feedback form other walkers who informed the stakeholders accordingly. Both of these aspects originate from the basis, the strength to create interesting, desirable and entertaining routes, which the stakeholders are truly capable of.

In practice, all stakeholders have a clear role in relation to the functionality of the waking routes and together they guarantee the quality and success. From the interviews it became evident that all stakeholders are aware of not only their own responsibilities, but also those of the other stakeholders. This shows solidarity and that they are truly dedicated to one shared goal. Moreover, from the interviews the conclusion can be drawn that all stakeholders work together well and this, combined with the solidarity, is considered a strength.

Regarding the online situation, the observational research and interviews both determined that Drenthe.nl is an important asset in the first stage of the customer journey; research. Multiple stakeholders mentioned that they monitor and work with this website frequently. Also, when researching walking routes in Drenthe it is the first website to arise on google, including a multitude of search keywords. When researching the municipality of Westerveld in specific, excluding Drenthe as a keyword, the website of the municipality will be shown first. However, when researching specific walking routes, a link will guide the visitor to Drenthe.nl. In fact, more websites do this, creating a broad online presence for the website in question. As a result, Drenthe.nl is an important website that should be well maintained and frequently updated. The interviews highlighted that multiple stakeholders stated that they monitor online platforms on a daily basis, ensuring quality. This situation is considered a strength as it allows the stakeholders to communicate via one website and reach a broad audience.

4.5. Weaknesses

The last concept that was investigated with this research was the weaknesses of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld. The research question that belonged to it was: What are the weaknesses of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld? The first weakness relates to the lack of trash cans. Mr. Veldhuis (personal communication, Dec 18, 2020) argued that it is not allowed by the municipality to place more cans and that therefore, this problem cannot be resolved that way. In practice, this weakness eliminates the possibility of applying one of the suggested solutions that were mentioned

in multiple customer journeys; place more trash cans. Nevertheless, it was not the only suggested solution, indicating that there are still options for improvement.

The second weakness regards the starting points of the walking routes. As mentioned before, this research focusses on visitors that arrive by public transport but not all starting points have a bus stop in close proximity. Consequently, additional kilometres have to be completed before a variety of routes can be reached, affecting the complete experience of the visitor. Adding to this weakness is the fact that this is not easily uncovered. In fact, a route has to be researched extensively before this information surfaces and when this fact is considered a deal-breaker, the research process has to start from the beginning again.

To assist the understanding process of the findings presented above, all customer journeys were merged into a final representation. The most important and frequent points have been selected and combined in the process (Figure 11: Overall customer journey map)

To conclude the analysis of the results, most visitors are motivated by the idea of being outside and being able to relax. The experiences that are most notable are the those related to the level of confusion during the research process, the unavailability of information, incomplete signposting and the lacking ability to leave or read reviews. Moreover, great value is assigned to clarity, both when researching the route and while completing the route. Turning to the strengths and weaknesses, the surroundings and variety of the routes are considered important strengths as they at the same time. Furthermore, the strong online presence of Drenthe.nl, close collaboration between stakeholders and the fact that social platforms are monitored on a daily basis are additional strengths. Lastly, the weaknesses that were uncovered are the inability to place more trash cans and that not all routes have a bus stop in close proximity.

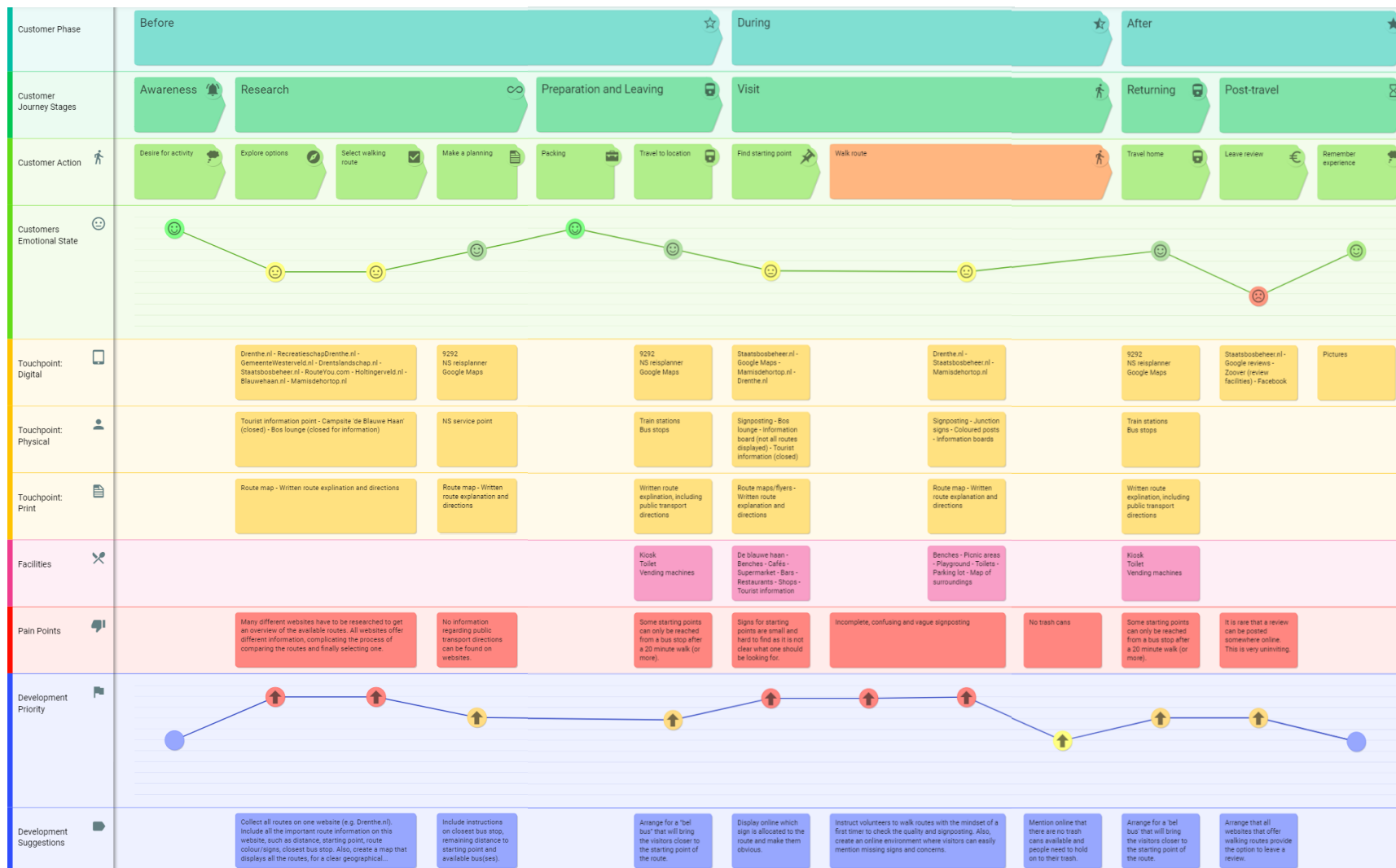


Figure 11: Overall customer journey map

5. Conclusion and Recommendations

The aim of this research was to reveal how the quality of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld can be improved in order to increase visitor numbers from different provinces. By using observational research in the form of customer journeys and structured interviews, all research questions have been answered. Combined they discovered that the visitors of the routes are motivated by the possibility to be outdoors and relax in nature areas. Additionally, this motivation has increased since the start of the COVID-19 pandemic. Consequently, the location of the route and the nature surrounding it is highly valued by the walkers as this is their main motivation. Furthermore, clarity is valued in regard to signposting and the online environment where the routes can be researched. This came forward as the current experience with the online research process is confusing and irritating. To elaborate on this, there is an extensive number of websites providing different sorts of information, creating difficulties in terms of research and comparison. Therefore, it can be concluded that the way information is communicated should change in order to improve the quality of the routes.

Other experiences that stood out during this research were the inability to leave reviews online, the meagre amount of trash cans available and the inconsistent quality of signposting. Nevertheless, the surroundings filled with nature and outdoor experiences proved more important which makes the overall experience a pleasant one, concluding that the different levels of value assigned to experiences influence the order that improvements should be realized in. In this case, the online research is more essential than the errors while executing the route. For this reason, the location of the routes is considered a strength, just as the wide variety of routes, strong online presence of Drenthe.nl, solidarity of stakeholders and the fact that social platforms are monitored on a daily basis. The research also brought forward that the inability to place trash cans and occasional distances between a bus stop and a starting point are weaknesses.

In order to answer the main question of this research, the quality of the walking routes should have improved greatly once the process concerning the online research has changed significantly. However, also the signposting needs to be accurate and visitors need to be able to read and leave reviews but that is less essential. With the findings of this research, Recreatieschap Drenthe and the Municipality of Westerveld are able to identify improvement points to increase the quality of their routes and therefore attract more visitors from different provinces, especially the visitors that travel via public transport. For further assistance, the researchers created four recommendations that are believed to contribute to the improvement plan. By comparing the strengths and weaknesses with the experience, motivation and value, only the recommendations that seem realistic and achievable have been presented. This means that no solution for the trash cans have been suggested as this is also a part of the routes' weaknesses:

- 1. Create an overall website where all information regarding walking routes is presented (Drenthe.nl).**

With this recommendation the strength of the online presence of Drenthe.nl will be used to eliminate negative experiences related to the research process. To elaborate on this, it became evident that the information and the locations where it could be found are insufficient to create a clear overview. As Drenthe.nl is widely used by a variety of stakeholders and it is easily found when using google, this website will reach most potential visitors and is therefore the collective source of the routes. In practice, all routes should be displayed on this website allowing the visitor to find the most important information, such as the starting point, a visual representation of the sign that needs to be followed, the total distance of the route and the closest bus stop. Other information can be added but these are the ones that must be presented in order to reduce confusion.

2. Include public transport information on Drenthe.nl such as bus stop and bus direction.

Building on the previous recommendation, it was stated to include the closest bus stop on Drenthe.nl. This recommendation continues with suggesting to include a small explanation of how to get from NS station Meppel or Steenwijk to the starting point. This includes an indication of which busses can be taken to the closest bus stop and how long the walk is from this bus stop to the actual starting point. By including this on the website (Drenthe.nl) the time spent on research becomes significantly less and confusion and irritation is reduced or even eliminated.

3. Check if the information about the walking routes on the website is still up to date with the actual route.

As it became evident in the conclusion, information provided online concerning the walking routes do not always correspond with the actual route. To ensure that no confusion or irritation arises amongst walkers concerning this matter, actual routes and the information provided should be checked upon regularly. This can be done by contacting current or newly recruited volunteers, asking for their assistance when it comes to evaluating the accuracy of the route. Any errors that occur, can then be solved and the information provided online can adjusted accordingly.

4. Create a review section on Drenthe.nl where hikers can leave their experiences of the routes they walked.

Another aspect that was emerged from the conclusion, is that there is limited to no ability for people to read and post reviews on the websites that offer walking routes. Considering the fact that Drenthe.nl is an easily accessible and important channel for both visitors and stakeholders involved in the walking routes in the municipality, a review selection on this website should be created. This review selection is mainly beneficial to hikers, potential hikers and the owner of the route. First, allowing hikers to post reviews, enables them to share their experiences and potential pain points they encountered, will then be brought to the routes' owner attention, for example when a route is missing signage or information is outdated. Second, positive reviews posted by hikers can also encourage potential hikers to take part in a certain walking route, which consequently stimulates participation in the walking routes.

5.1 Limitations

Although the research was well thought through for this research project, a limited number of limitations were discovered. To begin with, walking the route and creating a customer journey did not contribute to the identification of possible motivation of walkers. Furthermore, the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to research the motivation of hikers in the area of Westerveld, as people are expected to do social distancing, and are expected to stay home. Therefore, not a lot of people were encountered while walking on the walking routes. Additionally, the distance made it difficult to interview other participants regarding their motivations. Moreover, the restrictions that were created by the Dutch government, forbid to be on the streets with more than two people, if those are not from your own household. Therefore, the researchers were forced to conduct the research with others. This created another perception as family and close friends perceive the walking routes differently than the researchers together. If the situation was different, more could have been research, making this research even more extensive.

5.2 Suggestions for further research

While this research provided information that helped to answer the problem statement created, it is possible to make suggestions for further research. This study shows that the quality of the routes can be improved to develop the visitor numbers from provinces other than Drenthe. Despite the fact that the overall factors for motivation could be derived from the interviews conducted, not having specific information on potential motivation for visitors from outside Drenthe to use walking routes gives motivation for further research. To do so, questionnaires could be developed that focus entirely on this specific populations' motivation.

Furthermore, seeing the fact that some routes within the municipality of Westerveld have their specialties or are even uncovered, but worth using, it is recommended to identify the unique selling points of each individual route. Knowing the UPS of each route may contribute to the promotion of the routes within the municipality in Westerveld to its fullest. This again, can be identified by the means of a questionnaire, or in collaboration with volunteers or hikers who are interested in doing so.

Moving on, the interviewee of municipality Westerveld provided the researchers with information regarding the Space Layers app. This app provides background information on the walking routes while walking. A suggestion for further research would be to research if this app could be applied to more walking routes. This would provide walking routes with more in-depth information, making it interesting to use. Maybe this can be collaborated with Weldadig Oord, as the organisation has mentioned to find themed walking routes of great importance.

Lastly, a suggestion for further research would be to research if it is profitable to create a package together with the NS, as this was one of the initial ideas for this research. It could be interesting to research if a train ticket could be combined with for example, a cup of coffee at the Boslounge, before taking part in the walking routes.



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Appendix

Appendix 1.1 Project brief

Project 6: Walking Routes & Packages

Students: Linda Hartog, Lisa van Slooten & Manon Weusthof

General Overview:

- *Explain the context of the research and why it is done*
Overall, the province of Drenthe is popular for its walking routes. However, the demand for walking routes has increased during the COVID-19 period. Therefore, municipality Westerveld would like to research their current portfolio in order to maintain the walking routes its popularity, and possibly expand into new target groups. Furthermore, the current connection between Meppel and Steenwijk and the municipality Westerveld is poorly developed which should be looked into to construction of a tourism package.
- *Discuss the SMART objectives of the research (what to accomplish?)*
Problem statement: How can the current customer journey be developed in order to maintain the increased popularity of the walking routes within the municipality/province, after the Covid pandemic has ended?

Objectives →

- To identify the strengths of the walking routes in the customer journey.
 - To identify the weaknesses of the walking routes in the customer journey.
 - Pinpoint the motivation of why people choose Drenthe as a hiking destination.
 - How the walking routes are currently perceived by hikers.
- *Discuss the (preliminary) issues for research*
The corona measures may be an issue to conduct this research; participants may want to maintain 1.5 meters distance from others. Furthermore, people may not feel like filling in a questionnaire due to lack of time, or because they want to hike in peace.
Online questionnaires may be an issue to older people (70+), as they are not familiar with technology such as the internet.
It may not be fully possible to identify the current popularity of the walking routes, as there are no numbers given.
 - *Discuss (preliminary) secondary research methods*
The internet, personal communication with the principle, and project leader of 'Vitale Vakantieparken', flyers and brochures, ANWB, VVV.
 - *Discuss (preliminary) primary research methods*
Interviews, questionnaires, and self-conducted research.

Stakeholders:

- *Present the stakeholders and discuss their different roles*
Recreatieschap Drenthe: Creators of the walking routes and responsible for accurate signposting etc.

NS Dutch Railway: Makes sure that the hikers can travel to their desired destination to make use of the different walking routes within.

Province of Drenthe: As the walking routes are situated in the province of Drenthe, Drenthe takes care of financial matters, and marketing.

Staatsbos Beheer: 'Staatsbos Beheer' owns and maintains the local nature grounds in the entire country, thus Drenthe. The more hikers, the more maintenance and guidance might be required.

Accommodation providers: Provide accommodation for hikers that do not live close by and are therefore involved. If hikers want to participate in a multiple day route, they can choose to stay at one of the different accommodations.

RTV Drenthe: RTV Drenthe is the local tv channel of Drenthe. Therefore, the channel often makes reports on the different municipalities and their attractions.

Hikers: The people who use the walking routes in order to get to know the natural development of the municipalities.

Municipalities Drenthe: The municipalities within the province of Drenthe e.g. Westerveld, de Wolden, Emmen and 'Midden Drenthe' are considered important stakeholders as they facilitate infrastructure within the province to, for example, construct walking paths that make it possible to create these walking routes. Furthermore, waste management to reduce waste within the province and retain its natural environment.

Tourist Info Point (VVV): Tourist info points and VVV's distribute local information and useful tips for visitors. By understanding the current customer journey, they can provide better information for (potential) hikers.

ANWB: The ANWB functions as an information point in all municipalities in the Netherlands, therefore it is well known, and many tourists and hikers go there for accurate information. This research can reveal information that helps the ANWB to anticipate questions and be prepared with informative answers.

Vitale Vakantieparken: They benefit greatly from tourists that travel to Drenthe to walk the routes. Therefore, the more tourists, the more potential guests for the holiday parks.

Drenthe.nl: Drenthe.nl is a website with all the information about Drenthe, including tourist information such as walking routes, bike routes, and more. Useful information about the province can be found here.

- *Present a plan on how to communicate with the supervisor, principal, team members (who, medium, frequency and initiative)*

With team members: Communication will go via email, teams, WhatsApp and via any other mediums that are used by the students. Most likely, the contact will be daily, and the initiative will be equally shown by all members. During meetings, all students must be present unless agreed upon otherwise beforehand.

Supervisor: Ideally the supervisor will be contacted every week with updates and related questions. The initiative for these meetings or updates has to be shown by the students. The

contact can be established via team or email. If a meeting is desired, the students must leave enough time for the supervisor to arrange for a meeting.

Principal: The principal can be contacted by the students via email or telephone. A teams meeting could be arranged when truly necessary, but the other mediums have the preference. The weekly updates have to be sent by the students, so the principal stays updated.

- *Propose a date/time with the supervisor and principal to discuss the content of the project*
 1. Wednesday November 11 at 10:30 with supervisor and principal
 2. Week 3
 3. Week 5 → also with principal
 4. Week 7
 5. Before conference! → also with principal

During the start of each week that is mentioned above, the group will contact the supervisor to set a date and time for a meeting. Ideally, the supervisor is contacted at least 3 days before the proposed date. The same goes for the meetings with the principal.

Critical Success Factors:

- *Present the resources needed to accomplish the research*

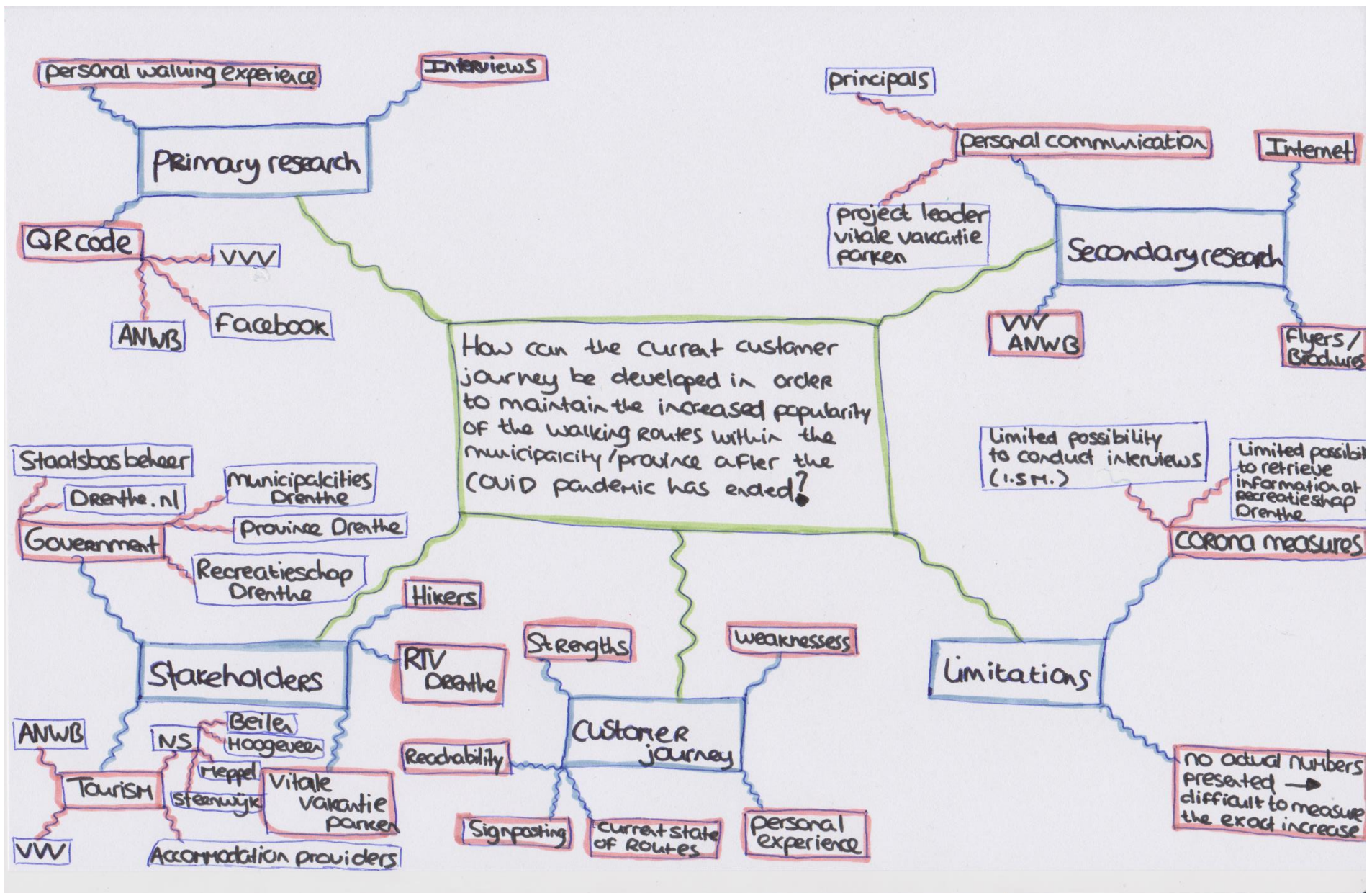
The resources that are needed are qualitative research, in terms of questionnaires and interviews, as well as secondary resources such as the internet, flyers and brochures. Furthermore, also the principal and/or the supervisor can provide information.
- *Present responsible actors (you, principal, supervisor) for each of the mentioned resources*

Qualitative and secondary resources have us as a responsible actor, as we can use these resources to receive information.
Principle is responsible for providing us with internal information. Also, they are responsible for criticizing our research.
Supervisor is responsible for guiding us through the research process and assess our research report, and assist us when necessary.
- *Inform on where and when the research will be done*

Due to the corona crisis, research will most likely be done online, and preferably on the spot whenever possible.
- *Inform principal and supervisor on how to reach the team*

The principal and supervisor can reach us via teams, e-mail and telephone.
- *Discuss possible risks that may influence the end result:*

Knowledge → This might influence the end result as we do not have such a great knowledge on the environment of Westerveld as Recreatieschap Drenthe has.
Planning → If a planning is not conducted very well, the end result might be influenced in terms of lack of time. This may result in an unreliable research.
Number of respondents too little → It may happen that the group is unable to reach the required number of participants. A low participation rate can make the research unreliable.



Appendix 1.2. Project Planning

Below, a Gantt chart is displayed. In this Gantt chart, it can be seen in which week what will be done. During this module, several activities will take place, such as interviewing, creating a customer journey, and walk the walking routes. During the upcoming six weeks, it should be possible to conduct all the activities, that eventually result in the end research.

Task	W2	W3	W4	W5	W6	W7	W8	W9
Review and collect existing literature								
Create inventory								
Create list of all stakeholders that will be interviewed								
Arrange stakeholder interviews								
Interview stakeholders								
Select walking routes for personal observation								
Walk routes and collect data (create Customer Journey Maps)								
Analyse stakeholder interviews and create Customer Journey Map								
Merge all maps into 1 (final map)								
Analyse final Customer Journey Map								
Create recommendations for development								
Finalize research								
Deliver results								

Budget

There is no budget needed in order to conduct the research. To be specific, the secondary research can be conducted by using physical books, online websites and the accessibility to online books and other useful documents in the online NHL Stenden library. When visiting municipality of Westerveld to walk the walking routes, the researchers will need to use public transport as they do not have a car at their disposal. As students are able to use public transport for free during weekdays by using their OV card, this will not come with any additional costs.

Task division

General tasks	Group member responsible
Representative conference team	Lisa
Chairperson meetings	Linda
Contact person supervisor & principals	Manon
Project brief	All
Arrange interviews	All
Conduct interviews	All
Customer Journey	All

Tasks proposal	Group member responsible
Introduction	Linda
Literature review	-
o Target groups	Lisa
o Motivation	Lisa
o Valuation	Lisa
o Experience	Lisa
o Customer Journey	Manon
Methodology	-

○ Conceptual model	Manon
○ Research matrix	All
○ Research method	Lisa / Manon
○ Population	Linda
○ Sampling	Linda
○ Planning of primary activities	Manon

Appendix 2. Original figures literature review

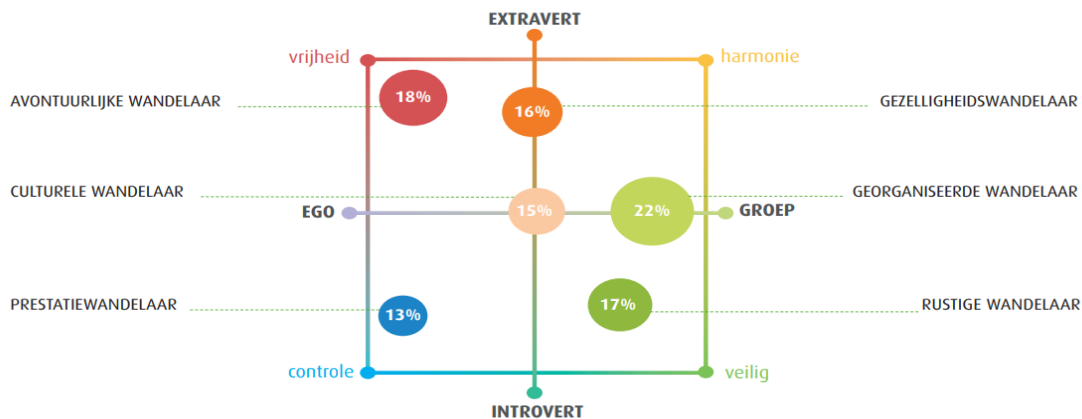


Figure 1: BSR Model Different Types of Hikers. From Infoblad Kerncijfers Wandelen 2020, by Wandelnet, 2020a. Retrieved on November 23, 2020, from <https://www.recreatieschapdrenthe.nl/kennisbank/wandelen>

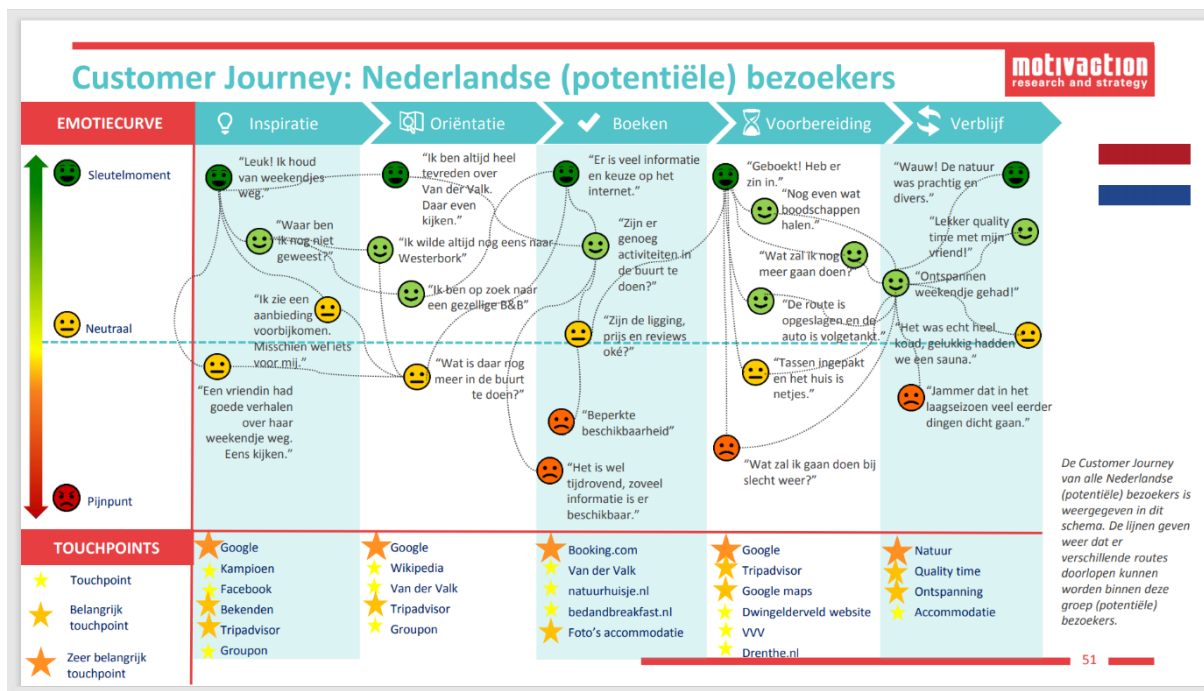


Figure 2: Customer Journey (potential) overnight visitors south-west Drenthe. From Customer Journey onderzoek: (Potentiële) Verblijfsbezoekers, by Hensen, H. and Dreyer, M., 2018. Retrieved on November 26, 2020, from https://www.gemeentewesterveld.nl/Ondernemers/Recreatie_en_toerisme/Cijfers_en_rapporten

Appendix 3. Research matrix

Topic: Walking Routes in Westerveld, Drenthe

Problem Statement: How can the quality of the walking routes in Westerveld be improved to develop the visitor numbers of other provinces?

Topic in Literature Review	Concepts	Explanation and relevance of <u>each</u> concept	Research Question	Information needed	Research Method	Interview questions/ observation
Walking in the Netherlands	Experience	Customer experience is [a] customers' holistic perception of their experience with [a] business or brand (Hotjar.com, 2020).	What do customers currently experience while participating in the walking routes?	It is aimed to investigate how hikers currently experience the walking routes.	Personal observation	<p>How did you feel after hiking a walking route?</p> <p>Are you satisfied with the walking route(s)?</p> <p>How would you rate your experience of the walking route(s)?</p> <p>Would you walk this walking route again? Motivate your answer.</p>
Motivation for walking	Motivation	Motivation is described as a process in which the internal or external needs, function as an action or driver that contribute to the achievement of satisfying and fulfilling an individual's needs (Wright, 2006).	What motivates current visitors to take part in the walking routes of the municipality of Westerveld?	It is aimed to investigate what exactly motivates people to make use of the walking routes.	Personal observation	<p>Into what extend did you visit due to the COVID pandemic?</p> <p>Would you visit again after society has returned to its normal behaviour?</p> <p>What aspects motivate you to visit the walking routes?</p> <p>With whom do you want to participate in the walking routes?</p> <p>Based on what premises do you select a walking route?</p>

Valuation of walking routes	Value	An "interactive relativistic preference experience" (Holbrook, 1999, p.5).	What do people currently value about the walking routes within the municipality of Westerveld?	What values the visiting customer and what is important for them in terms of good walking routes.	Personal observation	<p>What do you value most about the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> - Signposting - Quality of paths - Length of the route - Combination of scenery, historical land natural aspects - Accessibility facilities <p>What do you value to be more developed in the future?</p>
Customer journey	Weakness	A disadvantage or fault.	what are the weaknesses of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?	What the weaknesses of the walking routes are, this concerns for example the signposting, length, condition of the paths etc.	Qualitative	-
Customer journey	Strengths	A quality or state of being strong.	what are the strengths of the walking routes in the municipality of Westerveld?	What the strengths of the walking routes are, this concerns for example the signposting, length, condition of the paths etc.	Qualitative	-

Appendix 4. Interview transcripts

Transcript interview 1

Interviewer: Lisa van Slooten

Interviewee: Mrs. G. Ebbeling

Stakeholder: Gemeente Westerveld

Date: Friday 18th December 2020

Location: Microsoft Teams

**Mevrouw Ebbeling heeft zichzelf in het begin kort geïntroduceerd, de opname is echter gestart bij de eerste originele interview vraag.*

Interviewer: Hartelijk dank voor de korte introductie, dit geeft ons al een beter beeld van wat u precies doet voor de organisatie. Ik zou graag gelijk beginnen met de eerste vraag. Kunt u kort omschrijven wat de werkzaamheden zijn van de Gemeente Westerveld met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de Gemeente Westerveld?

Geïnterviewde: Nou vanuit mijn beleidswerk zegmaar, hebben wij het wandelnetwerk, daar hebben wij een opdracht voor gegeven aan het Recreatieschap Drenthe. Dus in feite is dat de uitvoerende partij. Zij hebben een route bureau en zij ontwikkelen het wandelroute netwerk net zoals het fietsknooppunten netwerk, dat hebben zij ook helemaal gerealiseerd in onze gemeente. En wij betalen daarvoor. Dus wij geven eigenlijk opdracht aan hun om dat voor ons uit te voeren. Daarnaast had de gemeente zelf ook nog een aantal wandelroutes, die worden nu eigenlijk opgenomen in het netwerk. Dus in feite worden ze er daar uitgehaald waardoor we straks een goed sluitend netwerk hebben zodat we als gemeente daar verder geen onderhoudskosten meer aan hebben. Dus we hebben één partij waar we mee samenwerken en dat is het Recreatieschap, en die voeren voor ons uit. Die hebben dan via Facebook oproepen gedaan om vrijwilligers te werven die die wandelpaden onderhouden. Want het is mooi dat er een netwerk is, maar het moet ook onderhouden worden. Als de bordjes weg zijn, dan moeten er nieuwe bordjes bijgeplaatst worden; die taak ligt dus vooral bij hun. Dus als je zegt, ja wat doen wij dan, wij helpen mee in de voorbereiding. Zorgen dat de grond eigenaren goed aangesloten zijn, want we hebben natuurlijk met verschillende terrein beherende organisaties te maken. De drie groten zijn bijvoorbeeld Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten en het Drentse Landschap. Maar daarnaast hebben we ook nog heel veel particuliere grondeigenaren, dat zijn met name de bosgebieden en de tussengelegen gebieden zijn eigenlijk allemaal van de gemeente. Maar we hebben ook bijvoorbeeld routes die langs sloten gaan, dat moet je met het Waterschap contact opnemen. Dat doe ik gelukkig allemaal niet, dat doet Iwan van het routebureau dus die is daar heel druk mee. En wij proberen met oproepen vrijwilligers te vinden die meedenken om een zo aantrekkelijk mogelijk routenetwerk te krijgen. Dat zijn vaak boeren of inwoners die het leuk vinden en daar in mee willen helpen. Eindelijk pakken we het samen op. En wat ik dan gedaan heb is bijvoorbeeld een voorstel schrijven voor het college en de raad om hier geld voor uit te trekken. En het gaat best om veel geld want we hebben vorig jaar, of twee jaar terug, hebben we een ton aangevraagd voor Havelte en Frederiksoord en voor dit jaar voor Dwingeloo en omgeving. Ook weer een ton dus in totaal al twee ton. En we hopen nu zegmaar, met het geld dat er nu is, dat we dan ook de derde fase kunnen aanleggen en dus niet weer naar de raad te hoeven. Maar dat is nog even afwachten. Maar dat doe ik dan, zo'n voorstel schrijven en bij de raad aangeven wat het belang is van zo'n netwerk.

Interviewer: Ja, precies. Nou vroeg ik mij af, omdat u aangaf dat u heel erg diep samenwerkt inderdaad met het Recreatieschap Drenthe en zij eigenlijk de uitvoerende factoren op zich nemen. Wie is dan de eindverantwoordelijke, wie bezit dan eigenlijk die routes? Want jullie betalen er dan voor als Gemeente Westerveld, maar zij voeren het dan uit.

Geïnterviewde: Ja, dat ligt wat gecompliceerd. Want als de route er ligt zegmaar, dan zijn de bordjes van de gemeente om het meteen maar even zo te zeggen. Maar de grond blijft gewoon eigendom van de partijen waarvan de grond is. Dat verandert niet. Zij geven toestemming dat wij over hun grond mogen zegmaar. Zo is eigenlijk de afspraak.

Interviewer: Oké, super. Dat is duidelijk. Dank u wel.

Geïnterviewde: Dus als er wat gebeurt, stel er valt een boom op zegmaar, dan is de eigenaar van dat grondgebied, bijvoorbeeld Staatsbosbeheer, die moet er dan voor zorgen dat die boom weggehaald wordt om ervoor te zorgen dat de route goed begaanbaar blijft.

Interviewer: Oké, dus stel er is een probleem met de bordjes, dan moet de gemeente dit oppakken?

Geïnterviewde: Ja, het wordt dan gemeld aan het route bureau zodat de bordjes weer geplaatst worden. Dus in feite blijven de eigendommen daar waar het is. Ze geven alleen toestemming dat we over hun grond mogen en dat we daar bordjes mogen plaatsen. Maar verder blijven zij gewoon eigenaar van hun eigen grond.

Interviewer: Hartelijk dank voor de duidelijk uitleg. Kunt u uitdrukken, wellicht in cijfers, in hoeverre de vraag naar wandelroutes in de Gemeente Westerveld is gestegen sinds de corona pandemie?

Geïnterviewde: Ik kan het niet met cijfers onderbouwen. Daar gaan we nog onderzoek naar doen, daar hebben we net opdracht voor gegeven. Maar wat ik van de Tourists info kantoren, dat zijn dus de TIP kantoren, de voormalige VVV kantoren hoor, is dat er enorm veel vraag is. En wij hebben wandelkaartjes, die heeft het Recreatieschap laten drukken en daaruit kunnen we afleiden dat er gewoon veel vraag is naar routes. Dat is het wandelnetwerk alleen, maar in de dorpen liggen natuurlijk ook al heel veel routes, dus de Dorpsommetjes en dat soort zaken. Hoe frequent die gebruikt worden zegmaar, dat weet ik eerlijk gezegd niet. Wij hebben daar geen feiten van, geen echte cijfers. Dat zouden we wel graag willen monitoren, en eigenlijk moeten we ook naar een soort systeem toe, een digitalisering, hoe je dat het beste zouden kunnen doen. Maar dat hebben we op dit moment nog niet. We maken wel gebruik van de landelijke cijfers van Wandelnet. Die doen heel veel onderzoek naar wandelen en dat is niet alleen gericht op korte afstand, maar ook vooral op lange afstandsroutes zoals het Drenthe pad, het Pieter pad en dat soort paden. En we hebben sinds kort een wandelplatform opgericht in Drenthe, dat bestaat nog niet zo lang. En daar willen we dus ook meer informatie krijgen, dat is ook de reden dat wij jullie de opdracht hebben gegeven van breng in beeld wat er is, zodat we de informatie ook beter kunnen ontsluiten op internet, bijvoorbeeld op Drenthe.nl. Want op Drenthe.nl kun je de routes ook downloaden en aan het aantal klikken kun je zien hoeveel er op wordt gekeken en hoe vaak het wordt een route gedownload. Dat biedt ook weer informatie. Daar zijn we nu vol op mee aan de gang maar eerlijkheid gebied mij te zeggen dat we dat nog niet goed in beeld hebben.

Interviewer: Kunt u ook aangeven waar op gelet wordt als nieuwe wandelroutes worden gecreëerd? Zijn er bepaalde aandachtspunten of bepaalde factoren?

Geïnterviewde: Wij vinden het belangrijk dat een wandelnetwerk in ieder geval start bij een horecabedrijf, dat er een parkeervoorziening is en dat deze ook goed bereikbaar is. Dat moeten we nog beter in beeld brengen. We hebben dat bij een aantal wel goed voor elkaar, maar nog lang niet overal. En dat het natuurlijk onderweg aantrekkelijk is. Ja en wat is aantrekkelijk, dat is voor de een de natuur, die vind de natuur heel mooi, en een ander die zegt ik vind het veel leuker om door een dorp te wandelen. Dus ja je probeert een zo gevarieerd mogelijk netwerk aan te leggen, waarbij je onderweg ook langs bezienswaardigheden wilt komen, bijvoorbeeld grafheuvels, hunebedden, bijzonderheden in het landschap waar je mensen op kan attenderen. Dat zijn voornamelijk de basis kenmerken van een leuke wandelroute. En bijvoorbeeld het Drenthe pad, dat is wel leuk, die hebben volgens mij ook een soort Facebook pagina waar je reacties en vaak reviews leest van wandelaars. Hoe ze dit hebben beleefd, wat ze hebben ervaren en ze posten leuke foto's. Dat is wel heel leuk om te zien, hoe mensen het

waarderen. En ja, daar zou je ook nog veel meer gebruik van kunnen maken, door dat ook actiever bijvoorbeeld op een Drenthe.nl site aan te geven waardoor mensen enthousiast worden voor bepaalde route en denken dit is de moeite waard of dat is een leuke wandelroute want ik vond dat en dat leuk. Op die manier is er nog wel een hoop in te verbeteren qua promotie en marketing. Je hebt natuurlijk het wandelnetwerk, maar we hebben bijvoorbeeld ook routes van Weldadig Oord. Een korte route is de Sterrenbos route bijvoorbeeld en een wat langere route is de over het Turf van Vrouwenveld, dat is een route van 13 kilometer die met blauwe bordjes heel goed is aangeduid. Ik heb deze route laatst zelf ook gelopen, en dat vond ik een fantastisch mooie route omdat het heel gevarieerd is. Maar goed, dat is voor iedereen verschillend. En je hebt natuurlijk ook verschillende wandelaars, wandelaars die een kort ommetje willen doen, dat zijn de Dorpsommetjes bij ons in Dwingeloo bijvoorbeeld. De Mars route, daar loop je ongeveer een uur maar dan kom je wel langs hele leuke dingen en dat wordt wel gewaardeerd. Je doet het niet alleen voor de toerist, je doet het ook voor je eigen inwoners die even vanuit hun gezondheidsperspectief dagelijks een rondje willen wandelen. Dan is het ook leuk dat je daar wat variatie in kunt aanbrengen. Dus ja, er gebeurt al veel maar de informatie kan nog wel beter ontsloten worden. En misschien hebben jullie daar leuke tips voor, en aanbevelingen hoe je dat nog beter zou kunnen doen.

Interviewer: We hebben toevallig dat Mars ommetje in Dwingeloo, die hebben we 2 weken geleden gedaan.

Geïnterviewde: Hoe vond je die?

Interviewer: Vond ik leuk! Vooral ook omdat je er een combinatie was van dorp en ook wat natuur. Dat je van alles wat hebt zegmaar.

Geïnterviewde: Ja, en je loopt nu alleen de bordjes dus eigenlijk heb je helemaal geen informatie van wat er onderweg is. En dat is wel leuk voorbeeld in Frederiksoord, daar hebben wij een route gemaakt met een app, de space time layers app. Ik weet niet of je die ook al eens gezien hebt, maar het is een monumenten route. Je kunt de app dus op je telefoon downloaden en dan heb je allemaal lagen, kaart lagen. Als je die dan downloadt dan krijg je dus ook de informatie over de monumenten waar je langsloopt met filmpjes, met foto's over het er toen uitzag en een stukje informatie. Dus dat is echt meer voor de mensen die wat meer verdieping zoeken. Die app is ontwikkeld door een leraar uit Groningen, met zo'n plus klas, een hoogbegaafden leerlingen klas zegmaar. Zij hebben die app ontwikkeld, en die kun je dus op meerdere locaties in Nederland, misschien ook in Leeuwarden en Pesse, gebruiken. Die app die doet het dus pas op het moment dat je daar bent. Dus je kunt niet nu op je telefoon kijken van goh, die monumenten route, nee, die werkt pas als je op de plek bent en je hebt de route gedownload, dan kan hem actief gaan wandelen. En dat zijn weer nieuwe technieken die toch ook weer bij een bepaalde groep in de smaak vallen. En andere groepen zeggen, laat mij maar gewoon lekker een kleurtje wandelen, ik wil mijn hoofd gewoon even leegmaken, nou dat is dan ook prima. Je moet zorgen dat je voor ieder wat wils hebt. Zo hebben wij voor jeugd, om de jeugd meer kennis te laten maken met de natuur is in Spier een Nature Game ontwikkeld. Dan kun je een tablet ophalen en dan kan je het verhaal van de Kibbelkoets meemaken, ik weet niet of je dat kent. Dat is ook heel leuk. Kinderen vinden het meestal saai, wandelen. Maar zo, op die manier maak je het voor hun spannend want ze kunnen zelf met die tablet, de natuur in dan kunnen ze de route volgen en onderweg gebeurt er van alles. Zo heb je voor ieder wat wils.

Interviewer: Ja dat is heel leuk. Ik heb hem zelf ook gedaan met mijn moeder, die vond hem ook heel leuk. Ik werk zelf bij Van der Valk hotel Spier, en daar geven wij de tablets uit. Dus je hoort vaak ervaringen van mensen, de een vind het heel leuk en de ander wat minder maar dat verschilt natuurlijk per persoon. Maar dat is altijd wel leuk om ervaringen te horen.

Geïnterviewde: Oké! Dus je bent er bekend mee. Zo hebben wij bijvoorbeeld voor de kleine kinderen op het Holtingerveld, hebben we een Mammoet route. Dan kunnen ze zich verkleden en het Mammoet

spoor volgen en onderweg heb je allemaal opdrachten. Zo is er ook een Kabouter route voor de nog kleinere kinderen. Je ziet toch wel dat dat wandelen dan ook voor die doelgroep aantrekkelijk gemaakt gaat worden.

Interviewer: Leuk! U gaf net aan dat u via Facebook bijvoorbeeld ook bekijkt wat nu de beleving is van mensen als ze een bepaalde wandelroute hebben gelopen, dat ze dan ook bijvoorbeeld foto's plaatsen. Zijn er nog andere kanalen die jullie in de gaten houden om te kijken wat mensen van de routes vinden?

Geïnterviewde: Ik doe dat dus niet, ik ben echt de beleidsmedewerker. Maar vanuit de toeristisch regisseurs zegmaar, die posten wel zaken op Twitter en ook wel op Instagram denk ik. Maar dat weet ik eigenlijk niet zeker, ik weet niet of daar al heel veel gebruik van gemaakt wordt. Je ziet toch wel de doelgroep wandelaars, de grootste doelgroep is toch wel 30+ denk ik. En jongeren hebben vaak toch wel een wat andere beleving, jullie zitten zelf ook in die doelgroep. Ja, ga je voor je lol wandelen? Ik deed dat niet toen ik 19 was, of 20. Dus weet je, ja dan was je toch met andere dingen bezig. Pas als je wat ouder wordt dan ga je dat meer waarderen en ga je er meer gebruik van maken. Dat is zoals ik er tegen aankijk. En natuurlijk, mijn dochter loopt ook wel eens een rondje mee maar die zou niet uit zichzelf gaan bedenken van goh ik ga een rondje wandelen. Ja, ik zeg ook maar gewoon zoals het is. En kijk, die doelgroep die zit veel op Instagram en op Snapchat en allemaal dat soort dingen. Ja, dat doet de doelgroep wandelaars denk ik niet zo snel. Maar goed, dat weet ik niet, dat zouden jullie misschien wel kunnen aangeven. Ik kan mij er niet iets bij voorstellen, ja misschien als het een hele spannende speurtocht is ofzo dat je denkt van oh leuk, maar, ja dat weet ik niet. De kanalen waarvan wij gebruik maken zijn nieuwsbrieven, Facebook en dat soort zaken, vooral. Websites.

Interviewer: Zijn er bijvoorbeeld ook websites waar mensen veel reviews achter kunnen laten? Laatst keek ik al wel op een website, ik kan hem zo niet meer voor de geest halen, maar zoals Drenthe.nl ect. die hebben dan niet een mogelijkheid om daar een review of iets in die richting achter te laten. Houden jullie dat in de gaten, of komen jullie dat wel eens tegen?

Geïnterviewde: Nou, we hebben dat laatst wel besproken. Van goh, er zijn zulke leuke ervaringen over bijvoorbeeld het Drenthe pad, misschien is het wel leuk dat jullie die reviews bijvoorbeeld ook in beeld brengen. Het is nog niet opgepakt, het is nog vers van de pers hoor, dat hebben we eigenlijk net een beetje ingebracht omdat ik zag dat er best heel positieve reviews op staan, en als het heel positief is, dan is het ook wel leuk om dat te delen. Dat stimuleert anderen misschien om te zeggen oh wat leuk, ik ga dat Drenthe pad ook een wandelen. Maar dat gebeurt nu nog niet. En wat dat betreft heb je wel gelijk, het is nu heel erg versnippert, de informatie. Dus je zou dat misschien wat meer moeten stroomlijnen via Drenthe.nl.

Interviewer: Ja, precies. Daar liepen wij in ons onderzoek ook al een beetje tegenaan, dus wij vroegen ons al af hoe dat nu gebeurt. Maar dit antwoord helpt ons op weg.

Geïnterviewde: Ja, en je ziet gewoon dat elke gemeente die is vooral bezig met zijn eigen netwerk ect., wat er is. Je hebt natuurlijk ook die lange afstand wandelroutes, die zijn gemeente grens overstijgend, die gaan van de ene gemeente naar de andere gemeente. En zoals het Pieter pad, dat heb ik toen ook gezegd, dat is echt een landelijk bekend pad. Heel veel mensen die willen dat gelopen hebben, dat staat op een bucketlist. Maar het Drenthe pad is helemaal niet populair, terwijl dat een fantastisch mooi pad is waar je onderweg stops kan maken en waar je bijvoorbeeld ook overnachtingen bijvoorbeeld bij kunt boeken. Dat is waar ik mij vooral voor inzet, wij willen graag de bestedingen en de overnachtingen in ons gebied stimuleren. Dus als je dat Drenthe pad wat populairder in de markt gaat zetten, dan denk ik dat dat meer spin off gaat hebben voor je bezoekersaantallen. Een punt daarbij is wel, je loopt altijd van A naar B, dus je hebt een tracé, je start in ik noem maar wat, in Diever, en je loopt naar Vledder. En dan ben je daar, en dan moet je weer terug. Want de mensen zetten hun auto bij het startpunt, en sommigen rijden zelfs met 2 auto's en dan zetten ze de andere auto alvast daar. Dat is natuurlijk ontzettend naar, dus eigenlijk zouden we dat veel beter kunnen doen met openbaar vervoer of met andere vormen van

vervoer, hoe je weer terug kan komen. Dat zijn van die dingen, dat moet nog beter ontsloten worden. Dat is nu nog niet goed voor elkaar. Openbaar vervoer en plattelandsgebieden dat is natuurlijk een drama, want die bus die rijdt maar één keer in het uur, soms als je geluk hebt twee keer in het uur. Nou daar kun je ook naar kijken, van goh wat is nu een handige route, hoe laat kan ik met de bus van ik noem maar wat, van Meppel naar Diever, waar stap ik dan uit en hoe kom ik dan op die route en vervolgens ben ik dan in Vledder, en hoe kom ik dan met de bus weer terug naar Diever of naar het startpunt waar ik vandaan ben gekomen. Nou, dat soort dingen. Tegenwoordig kun je met 9292 heel snel Googelen, van hoe laat komt de bus ect., dat soort dingen moeten wij denk ik veel beter aangeven waardoor je de mensen ook wat ontzorgd waardoor het voor hun ook wat makkelijker wordt gemaakt. En dat het niet een heel gedoe is voordat je eens een keer op pad kunt. Ik denk dat daar nog wel winst is te halen. Met name die lange afstandswandelroutes, dit zijn dan de mensen die het voor een dagje doen, maar het mooiste is natuurlijk dat ze er een overnachting bij boeken. Zo van, ik ga een tracé doen, ik heb een weekend en ik ga, ik noem maar wat, vrijdag beginnen van Diever naar Vledder en dan wil ik daar overnachten, en dan ga ik van Vledder ga ik naar het volgende punt. En dan met een overnachting, en dan ga ik het een paar weken later nog eens een keer een stukje doen. Want dat zie je dat veel mensen dat doen, ook met het Pieter pad. Op die manier wil je graag dat het bezoek ook aan Drenthe wat gaat toenemen, dus daar kun je denk ik nog wel wat aan verbeteren met arrangementen ect. met ondernemers.

Interviewer: Kunt u ook al een verschil zien in de bezoekersaantallen, om maar bij de bezoekersaantallen te blijven. Ook sinds dat de corona situatie is begonnen?

Geïnterviewde: We hebben de afgelopen zomer gezien dat Drenthe heel erg populair was. Mede ook vanwege de corona omdat de besmettingen in het Noorden gelukkig behoorlijk achterliepen met de Randstad, dus je zag een enorme trek naar de plattelandsgebieden waar de ruimte is. De mensen zaten op de camping en de ruimte, ja dat bied perspectief. Dus qua boekingen denk ik, in de zomer hebben we het heel goed gedaan. Het voorjaar is natuurlijk deels weggevallen omdat toen de corona Lock down er was, en je ook zag met de sanitaire voorzieningen, die mochten niet gebruikt worden. Dus alleen de campings met privé sanitair die werden goed geboekt. En hetzelfde hebben we natuurlijk nu ook weer, hotels mogen wel open en gelukkig nu ook wel weer ontbijt afgifte loket en diner via een afgifte loket organiseren. Dus je ziet wel dat mensen wel wat arrangementen hebben geboekt rondom de feestdagen, ook omdat hier in Drenthe de ruimte is en mensen meer het vertrouwen hebben en zich redelijk safe voelen. En dat zie je natuurlijk ook in de bungalows, de bungalow bezetting is denk ik ook aardig goed. Maar we hebben natuurlijk ook annuleren gehad naar aanleiding van de persconferentie van maandag, dat er ook wel heel veel geannuleerd is. Dat is natuurlijk heel zuur. Wat het dag toerisme betreft, kan ik ook zeggen dat we een enorm goede zomer hebben gehad. Het was echt smoor druk in de dorpen. Sommige bewoners die vonden dat wel vervelend, al die toeristen. Die zeiden al, in de supermarkten is het veelte druk, en dit en dat, maar goed het is hier druk. En wij verwachten nu, door de strengere maatregelen, dat het de komende kerstvakantie ook druk gaat worden in de natuurgebieden. Daar zijn we ook al op voorbereid. We hebben op de websites van de nationale parken, daar komt een kaart van extra parkeervoorzieningen zodat we de bezoekers ook wat kunnen spreiden en niet alleen naar de geijkte gebieden gaan, maar ook naar de andere, de wat meer onbekende bestemmingen. Dus ja daar zijn we al druk mee bezig, wat dat betreft zijn we er nu beter op voorbereid dan de vorige Lock down.

Interviewer: Dank u wel. Kunt u ook aangeven wat de sterke punten zijn met betrekking tot de routes in de Gemeente Westerveld, wat dan gedeeld wordt door wandelaars? Dus wat vinden ze goed, of dan wel sterk aan de routes?

Geïnterviewde: De rust, de ruimte en dat je geen enkele bebouwing ziet. Dus de mensen lopen en zien eigenlijk geen woningen niks, je ervaart gewoon de rust en de stilte, de ruimte. Dat is wat de mensen het meest waarderen aan de wandelroutes, en de diversiteit van het landschap. Op sommige plekken loop je wat meer langs een akker of esranden, en de andere keer loop je midden door het bos. Dus die

diversiteit van het landschap is denk ik wat mensen het meest waarderen. En de leuke authentieke dorpjes, met de mooie boerderijen en de verzorgde erven.

Interviewer: En zijn er dan de mindere punten die ze aankaarten wat betreft de routes?

Geïnterviewde: Ik weet niet of de mensen het aankaarten, maar in bepaalde gebieden hebben we ook runderen loslopen zoals die, heb je misschien ook al wel eens gezien, die Schotse hooglanders en de Spaanse koeien en dat soort dingen. Wat ik ook wel eens hoor van mensen is dat ze het leuk zouden vinden wanneer ze ook wat meer edelherten zouden tegenkomen. Het is nu relatief saai, je komt niet echt veel beesten tegen. Ja vogels, heel veel roofvogels wel. Bijvoorbeeld bij de duinen in Zandvoort en Bloemendaal en zo heb je heel veel edelherten, dat heb je hier natuurlijk niet. Maar ik hoor niet heel veel klachten. Soms hoor je wel eens klachten dat er op het wandelpad teveel bomen of rotzooi ligt, maar niet echt noemenswaardig of zo dat er echte klachten zijn. En elk seizoen heeft weer zijn eigen specifieke kwaliteiten. Je hebt natuurlijk het voorjaar met alles wat in bloei staat, en de zomer, in de herfst heb je weer de kleuren van de bomen en de paddenstoelen. En ja in de winter hoop je dat er sneeuw is, dan ziet de wereld er ook weer ineens heel anders uit. De seizoenen die maken het ook dat het heel afwisselend is natuurlijk elke keer weer.

Interviewer: Dat is in elk geval fijn, dat er niet veel negativiteit over de routes is.

Geïnterviewde: Als je dat echt wat specifiek zou willen weten dan zou je kunnen informeren bij de TIP kantoren. Wij krijgen bijvoorbeeld over de fietspaden meer klachten dan over de wandelpaden. De fietspaden worden hier nog wel eens als te smal ervaren, vooral met de e-bike dus daar zijn we ook nog wel mee bezig. Maar de wandelpaden krijgen we over het algemeen toch wel veel complimenten over, dat het ook goed bewegwijzert is, vooral ook nu met dat knooppunten netwerk, je kunt je eigen route samenstellen je kunt zover gaan als je zelf wilt. Dus het biedt wel meer mogelijkheden.

Interviewer: Dit vanaf mijn kant voor nu de laatste vraag. Wat is de aanleiding voor het aanpassen van bestaande routes en waar wordt dan op gelet?

Geïnterviewde: Nou de aanleiding is met name besparing onderhoud, dus dat is dat wandelknooppunten netwerk. Door die bestaande routes daarin zoveel mogelijk in op te nemen, bespaar je op het onderhoud omdat je minder routes hoeft bij te houden. En wat ik wel vind is dat we toch op bepaalde routes, willen we toch die thema's, wat ik net noemde die route van dat Vrouwenveld of die Mammoet spoor, dus die bepaalde thema's die willen we wel in stand laten. Dus dat we toch wel, hoe zeg je dat, op bepaalde gebieden thematische routes hebben want dat vinden mensen leuk, met name die wat meer naar de inzicht zoeken, die doelgroep ook wat ik vertelde over die space-time app met die layers. Dat moet je wel erbij hebben zeg maar. Alleen een netwerk is niet genoeg. Je moet ook thema's aanbieden, dat vinden mensen leuk, wat meer verdieping. Stukje geschiedenis, dat vinden ze ook leuk.

Interviewer: Dat waren voor nu de vragen. We hebben heel veel informatie van u mogen ontvangen, dank daarvoor. Daar kunnen we zeker wat mee.

Geïnterviewde: En als er wat is, als je nog iets te binnen schiet, mail mij maar dan kan ik het ook via de mail beantwoorden.

Interviewer: Ja, dat is ook heel fijn. Ik heb trouwens nog één klein dingetje, u had het net over de space-time layers app. Dat vind ik wel heel leuk, dat dat zo geïntegreerd wordt in de wandelroutes. Weet u toevallig ook of er binnenkort meer plannen mee zijn, dat er meer routes worden opgenomen in deze app?

Geïnterviewde: Ja, er zijn al een aantal routes opgenomen, in de dorpen want dat wordt vooral door de historische verenigingen gedaan. Maar ik merk wel dat, Stichting Weldadig Oord heeft ook een puzzelroute in space-time layers voor kinderen gemaakt die je vanaf het museum kunt starten. Dus ja, daar wordt wel steeds meer mee geëxperimenteerd. Maar je moet wel vrijwilligers hebben die het leuk

vinden om daar mee aan de slag te gaan. Wij gaan dat niet vanuit de gemeente doen, daar heb ik als punt 1 de tijd niet voor, dus wij gaan dat als gemeente niet zelf doen maar stimuleren wel partijen om er mee aan de slag te gaan. We hebben ook wel trainingen erin gegeven, en ze kunnen ook voor vragen altijd wel bij ons terecht. En dit is misschien ook wel even leuk, we hadden het net natuurlijk over die thema's, we zijn in Zuidwest Drenthe ook bezig met die Drenthe hikes. Ik weet niet of jullie daar al wel eens wat over hebben gehoord. Nee? Dat is dan ook nog wel even leuk om te weten, in Zuidwest Drenthe zijn we bezig met Drenthe hikes, zo is er in Ruinen een 'Footstep' route ontwikkeld en die gaat langs allerlei bedrijven, boeren, om juist meer de streek producten onder de aandacht te brengen. Die start ook vanuit Hotel Luning, tenminste als we straks weer na corona open mogen, want die route die is nog niet gestart omdat alles nu dichtzit. En die route, dan kun je langs bijvoorbeeld de molen, daar kan je dan meel halen, en zo ga je allerlei punten bij langs. Je gaat echt bij de boeren langs en dan krijg je het verhaal van de streek mee, en in Dwingeloo wordt zo'n route ontwikkeld en dan in de nacht. Dat wordt dan een nachtwandelroute, want bij ons is het een van de duisterste gebieden en dan kun je vanuit de horeca in het dorp die route gaan wandelen en kom je weer langs horeca bedrijven maar dan is het thema meer de duisternis en de sterren.

Interviewer: Zo, dat is leuk. Weer eens wat anders!

Geïnterviewde: Ja, dus dat is nu vol op in ontwikkeling, en daar worden nu ook dit soort moderne technieken in gebruikt die je ook op je telefoon kunt downloaden. De telefoon wordt in de toekomst nog veel belangrijker.

Interviewer: Oké, super. Hartelijk dank!

Geïnterviewde: Ja. Nou, succes nog even met de opdracht en wij zien elkaar straks nog hé.

Interviewer: Hartelijk dank, tot straks! Tot ziens.

Transcript interview 2

Stakeholder: Het Drentse Landschap

Interviewee: Ms. H. Schipper

Date: 04-01-2021

Location: Interview was conducted via email

Geachte mevrouw Schipper,

Wij willen u bedanken voor uw medewerking aan ons onderzoek. Om voor u meer duidelijkheid te creëren zouden wij graag voorafgaand een korte toelichting geven. Met dit onderzoek willen wij de klantreis van de wandelaar in de gemeente Westerveld in kaart brengen en analyseren. Gebaseerd op ons onderzoek kunnen belanghebbenden eventuele veranderingen doorvoeren om de klantreis te perfectioneren en de bezoekersaantallen te vergroten. Onze focus ligt met dit onderzoek op wandelaars die uit andere provincies komen.

Mocht u de vraag niet specifiek voor de gemeente Westerveld kunnen beantwoorden, dan mag u uw antwoord ook baseren op de gehele provincie Drenthe.

1. Kunt u kort omschrijven wat de werkzaamheden zijn van het Drentse Landschap met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in gemeente Westerveld?
Het Drentse Landschap onderhoudt de wandelroutes in haar eigen natuurgebieden zoals Het Doldersummerveld, landgoed Rheebruggen, landgoed Vledderhof, Uffelter binnenveld e.a. Dit betreft zowel de paden als de markeringen. De meeste routes staan tevens online en worden ook daar onderhouden (routebeschrijvingen e.d.)
Daarnaast hebben we een aantal Knapzakroutes (niet gemarkeerd) die niet alleen door onze eigen natuurgebieden gaan maar ook door gebieden van collega organisaties en gemeenten. Deze routes worden door ons actueel gehouden, wijzigingen in de papieren versie én de online versies worden aangepast en geactualiseerd indien nodig.
2. In hoeverre is de vraag naar wandelroutes in Westerveld gestegen sinds het begin van de corona pandemie? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?
We hebben geen cijfers voor alleen Westerveld maar zagen een enorme stijging. Van de routes op papier uitgebracht hebben wij geen cijfers. Elk kwartaal verschijnt er in ons blad een route. Deze worden veel gelopen, weten we, maar cijfers ontbreken. Ook van de gedrukte Knapzakroutes hebben we geen cijfers. We weten dat de routes zeer geliefd zijn, vaak meerdere keren gelopen worden zowel individueel als met wandelgroepen.
Van onze website Eindje om in Drenthe.nl hebben we wel cijfers: In 2019 waren de piekmaanden april, augustus én oktober met net onder de 4.000 downloads/gebruikers. In 2020 waren de piekmaanden juni, juli en november met elk ruim over de 10.000 downloads/gebruikers. Juli was de topmaand met 12.201 gebruikers.
3. Waar wordt op gelet tijdens het creëren van nieuwe routes?
Voor zowel wandel- als fietsroutes kijken we in de eerste plaats of het nodig is. Bijvoorbeeld een nieuw natuurgebied of nieuw verworven erfgoed kan maken dat er een nieuwe route komt. Zo kunnen wij informatie over gebied of locatie delen met onze achterban en andere belangstellenden.
4. Wat is de aanleiding voor het aanpassen van bestaande routes?
Route is niet meer actueel, verouderde informatie, actualiseren van routes. Routes door onze natuurgebieden worden niet snel aangepast omdat de gebieden dit vaak niet toelaten. Bij uitbreidingen (nieuwe aankoop) van natuurgebieden kan het zijn dat routes vergroot worden. Ook als er bijzonder erfgoed in de buurt is, kan het maken dat de route aangepast wordt zodat wandelaars/fietsers hier ook kennis mee kunnen maken.

-
5. Welke sterke punten worden het meest met jullie gedeeld door wandelaars met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?
Mooie routes, variatie in aanbod m.b.t. mogelijkheden (online, offline, GPX e.d.) Mooie aanvullende informatie over het gebied.
 6. Welke verbeterpunten worden het meest bij jullie aangekaart door wandelaars en/of belanghebbenden met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?
Persoonlijke wensen zoals: andere beschrijvingen, meer tekst voor route beschrijvingen (b.v. Links af in plaats van L.A.). Weinig tot geen inhoudelijke kritiek op onze routes.
 7. Via welke kanalen (social media/website/etc.) kunnen wandelaars hun ervaringen en bovenstaande sterke en verbeterpunten met jullie communiceren?
Via alle kanalen (alle socials), website, mailen of telefonisch.
 - Hoe actief worden deze kanalen geobserveerd?
Dagelijks. Daarbij is ons kantoor dagen in de week open, en op die dagen worden alle telefoontjes en mailtjes aan elkaar doorgegeven.
 - Wat wordt er met deze gedeelde informatie gedaan?
Alle opmerkingen worden uiterst serieus genomen en besproken/doorgegeven aan de desbetreffende collega's. Mensen krijgen ook altijd antwoord. Vaak zelfs al na een paar uur.
 8. In hoeverre is er sinds de corona pandemie een verschil te merken in de bezoekersaantallen van wandelaars die niet woonachtig zijn in de provincie Drenthe? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?
De afgelopen zomer stonden Amsterdam, Den Haag, Utrecht én Groningen in de top 10, dat was voor het eerst.

Nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Transcript interview 3

Stakeholder: Marketing Drenthe

Interviewee: Ms. Cornax

Date: 16-01-2021

Location: Interview was conducted via email

Geachte mevrouw Cornax,

Wij willen u bedanken voor uw medewerking aan ons onderzoek. Om voor u meer duidelijkheid te creëren zouden wij graag voorafgaand een korte toelichting geven. Met dit onderzoek willen wij de klantreis van de wandelaar in de gemeente Westerveld in kaart brengen en analyseren. Gebaseerd op ons onderzoek kunnen belanghebbenden eventuele veranderingen doorvoeren om de klantreis te perfectioneren en de bezoekersaantallen te vergroten. Onze focus ligt met dit onderzoek op wandelaars die uit andere provincies komen.

Mocht u de vraag niet specifiek voor de gemeente Westerveld kunnen beantwoorden, dan mag u uw antwoord ook baseren op de gehele provincie Drenthe.

Onze visie is:

Samen met bezoekers, bedrijven en bewoners brengen wij de Drentse beleving van binnenuit tot leven. We zijn een onmisbare schakel in de marketing van Drenthe. Door onze kennis van vraag en aanbod en ons creërend vermogen zijn we inspiratiebron en adviseur voor ondernemers en overheid. Zo raakt iedereen in de ban van Drenthe.

Onze missie is:

Wij zijn fan van Drenthe en geloven in de kracht van inspiratie. Met en vóór partners in de vrijetijdseconomie voeren we de marketing van Drenthe uit. Dit draagt bij aan een duurzame ontwikkeling van onze sector met balans tussen bezoekers, bedrijven, bewoners en bestemming Drenthe.

1. Kunt u kort omschrijven wat de werkzaamheden zijn van Marketing Drenthe met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in gemeente Westerveld?

Zoals je kan halen uit onze missie en visie richten we ons als Marketing Drenthe op de marketing van Drenthe. Wij kunnen adviseren bij planvorming/ontwikkeling (denk aan informatie over doelgroepen, Drentse kernwaarden etc.) en wij kunnen routes ontsluiten via drenthe.nl plus onder de aandacht brengen via onze online en social kanalen. Dit doen wij voor heel Drenthe.

2. In hoeverre is de vraag naar wandelroutes in Westerveld gestegen sinds het begin van de corona pandemie? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?

De vraag naar wandelroutes is afgelopen jaar extreem gestegen. Het is lastig echt goed in cijfers uit te drukken. Jullie zouden Staatsbosbeheer en Natuurmonumenten kunnen vragen of zij aantallen wandelaars hebben gemonitord. De parkeerplaatsen stonden in ieder geval op veel dagen dit jaar vol. Wij kunnen vooral inzage geven in het zoekgedrag op drenthe.nl maar let op er zijn ook vele mensen die zoeken via andere kanalen zoals bijvoorbeeld via Staatsbosbeheer, Natuurmonumenten en Drents Landschap. Wat wel duidelijk zal zijn uit de cijfers op onze site is dat de vraag naar wandelen het afgelopen jaar enorm is gestegen. Let op onze cijfers zijn op Drents niveau, we hebben geen cijfers specifiek voor Westerveld. In algemene zin zien we van half maart tot eind dec 2020 dat het zoekgedrag op [Drenthe.nl](https://drenthe.nl) naar wandelen (www.drenthe.nl/fietsen-wandelen/wandelen) is verdrievoudigd vergeleken met diezelfde periode in 2019. Als we kijken naar de zoekvraag naar wandelroutes dan zien we dit jaar zelfs een stijging van bijna 700% ten opzichte van vorig jaar, dus bijna het achttvoudige ten opzichte van het jaar ervoor. Als we dan heel specifiek inzoomen op een leuke kindervriendelijke wandelroute zoals Ijsewips in Westerveld dan zien we daar ook een stijging in downloads van 355% dus bijna 4,5 keer zoveel downloads.

3. Waar wordt op gelet tijdens het creëren van nieuwe routes?

De nieuwe routes maken Recreatieschap Drenthe en de gemeente Westerveld. Wij adviseren om bij de ontwikkeling van de routes te kijken naar de identiteit van je gebied, de vraag/doelgroep en praktische zaken:

- Aan te sluiten bij het (merk)verhaal dat je wil vertellen in jouw regio en aan te sluiten bij de merkwwaarden van jouw regio. Voor het regionaal Landschap Zuid-West Drenthe is dit merkhuis en merkverhaal gemaakt:



Het verhaal van Regionaal Landschap Zuid- West Drenthe



Waar kun je écht tot jezelf komen in een wereld die je bijna niet meer kent? Waar in Nederland heb je nog écht de ruimte? Waar kun je nog kijken naar een ongestoorde horizon? In Zuid-West Drenthe, Oerprovincie van Nederland, bevindt zich zo'n gebied. Een gebied waar ruimte, duisternis en schone lucht nog ongewoon gewoon zijn.

Het gebied bestaat uit een unieke verzameling robuuste natuurgebieden. Nergens anders in Nederland vind je zoveel natuurlijke diversiteit zo dicht bij elkaar. Toch gaat ook op geen enkele andere plek in Nederland de interactie tussen mens en natuur zo ver terug. Met water als bondgenoot van de mens bijvoorbeeld om veen af te voeren.

Struin door het Drents-Friese Wold, met eindeloze bossen en vennen afgewisseld door stuifzand. Verdwaal in het oerlandschap van het Holtingerveld, gevormd door ijs en oorlog. Ontdek het Dwingelderveld, het grootste natte heidegebied van Europa, en maak een praatje met de schaapherder en zijn kudde. Dwaal verder, door het Fochteloërveen, een van de laatste hoogveengebieden in Nederland. Of juist door de Weerribben – Wieden, het grootste laagveenmoeras van Europa met zijn typische labyrint van meren, plassen en slootjes ontstaan door de veenwinning.

Tussen deze iconische landschappen liggen de karakteristieke brinkdorpen die de ondernemende spil vormen voor de vele dingen die je kunt doen in deze streek. Laat je intrigeren door de verhalen en cultuurhistorie, bijvoorbeeld over de Koloniën van Weldadigheid, een stukje haast onbekende Nederlandse geschiedenis waar in 1818 de basis van onze verzorgingsstaat is gelegd. Geniet ongedwongen van de authentieke evenementen zoals de Shakespeare activiteiten in Diever of de Paarden Endurance wedstrijd in Dwingeloo. En laat je verwennen in de gemoedelijke recreatie en horecagelegenheden.

Kortom, je kunt in dit gebied echt ontspannen. Je kunt fietsen en wandelen, (ver)dwalen en struinen, ontdekken en beleven. Echt genieten van de ruimte. Om te aarden en helemaal tot jezelf te komen. Welkom in Regionaal Landschap Zuid-West Drenthe.

Het verhaal van Regionaal Landschap Zuid- West Drenthe



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-
- De wensen van de verschillende leefstijlen. Zie ook www.leefstijlvinder.nl.
 - Rekening te houden met de basis wensen van wandelaars (handig startpunt, lengte route, afwisseling, zoveel mogelijk onverharde paden, horeca onderweg etc). De expert in Drenthe in ontwikkeling wandelroutes is Recreatieschap Drenthe en landelijk is wandelnet de organisatie.

4. Wat is de aanleiding voor het aanpassen van bestaande routes?

Deze vraag is voor het Recreatieschap Drenthe en gemeente Westerveld.

5. Welke sterke punten worden het meest met jullie gedeeld door wandelaars met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?

Belangrijkst wandelmotieven zijn om buiten te zijn en om te ontspannen. Sterke punten Drenthe algemeen: rust, ruimte, natuur, je komt niemand tegen, weidsheid. Deze eigenschappen werden tijdens corona extra belangrijk.

6. Welke verbeterpunten worden het meest bij jullie aangekaart door wandelaars en/of belanghebbenden met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?

Deze zaken worden doorgegeven bij het meldpunt van het Recreatieschap Drenthe.

7. Via welke kanalen (social media/website/etc.) kunnen wandelaars hun ervaringen en bovenstaande sterke en verbeterpunten met jullie communiceren?

Zoals aangegeven wordt het meldpunt van het Recreatieschap gebruikt voor klachten. Landelijk gezien staat Recreatieschap Drenthe aan de top met het snel oplossen en aanpassen van zaken zoals het ontbreken van een routebordje op de routes die zij beheren. Via de social media kanalen die wij beheren zien we vaak vooral veel positieve reactie op hoe mooi Drenthe is. Een enkele keer komt er een vraag binnen voor een leuk tip in de omgeving. Deze kanalen worden 7 dagen per week in de gaten gehouden. Indien er een verbeterpunt doorgegeven wordt dan geven wij die onmiddellijk door aan de organisatie die daarvoor verantwoordelijk is.

- Hoe actief worden deze kanalen geobserveerd?

- Wat wordt er met deze gedeelde informatie gedaan?

8. In hoeverre is er sinds de corona pandemie een verschil te merken in de bezoekersaantallen van wandelaars die niet woonachtig zijn in de provincie Drenthe? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?

Wandelen wordt vooral veel gedaan als uitje door de eigen inwoners of de inwoners uit de buurprovincies. Ook vakantiegangers wandelen veel. Door wandelaars uit eigen provincies en grensregio is het hele jaar een stijging te zien. De aantallen vakantiegangers is sterk afhankelijk van de maatregelen met lage aantallen vakantiegangers in de lockdown en vele vakantiegangers afgelopen zomer.

Nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Transcript interview 4

Stakeholder: Stichting Weldadig Oord

Interviewee: Mr. Prikken

Date: 17-01-2021

Location: Interview was conducted via email

Geachte heer Prikken,

Wij willen u bedanken voor uw medewerking aan ons onderzoek. Om voor u meer duidelijkheid te creëren zouden wij graag voorafgaand een korte toelichting geven. Met dit onderzoek willen wij de klantreis van de wandelaar in de gemeente Westerveld in kaart brengen en analyseren. Gebaseerd op ons onderzoek kunnen belanghebbenden eventuele veranderingen doorvoeren om de klantreis te perfectioneren en de bezoekersaantallen te vergroten. Onze focus ligt met dit onderzoek op wandelaars die uit andere provincies komen.

Mocht u de vraag niet specifiek voor de gemeente Westerveld kunnen beantwoorden, dan mag u uw antwoord ook baseren op de gehele provincie Drenthe.

1. Kunt u kort omschrijven wat de werkzaamheden zijn van Weldadig Oord met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in gemeente Westerveld?
**Grondslag voor Weldadig Oord is het verhaal van de Koloniën van Weldadigheid (mogelijk Werelderfgoed, juli beslissing). We richten ons o.a. op activiteiten in ons gebied vanuit dit thema. Dus ook wandelingen met een verhaal. Makken hier brochures van, digitaal op onze site.
2. In hoeverre is de vraag naar wandelroutes in Westerveld gestegen sinds het begin van de corona pandemie? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?
**Aan de ene kant veel belangstelling, aan de andere kant minder bezoekers. Inwoners uit de omgeving en eigen dorpen zie je veel meer wandelen, ook langs onze beborde routes. Voor deze laatste groep geef ik een 8.
3. Waar wordt op gelet tijdens het creëren van nieuwe routes?
**Routes moeten een thema hebben en de toeristische ondernemers langs de route moeten er iets aan hebben. Met hen samenwerken, arrangementen bedenken opdat hun omzet zal stijgen.
4. Wat is de aanleiding voor het aanpassen van bestaande routes?
**Feedback van wandelaars, we krijgen incidenteel een mail met een bevinding c.q. ontdekte fout, of verdwenen routebordjes. Of een extra inhoudelijke aanvulling op het thema, meer inhoud tijdens de wandeling, daar gaan we voor
5. Welke sterke punten worden het meest met jullie gedeeld door wandelaars met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?
**de mooie omgeving, de rust tijdens de route beleving, de mooie brochure in de hand of op de app, het verhaal bij deze route.
6. Welke verbeterpunten worden het meest bij jullie aangekaart door wandelaars en/of belanghebbenden met betrekking tot de wandelroutes in de gemeente Westerveld?
**Belanghebbenden (de plaatselijke ondernemers) willen vooral meer bezoekers, dus elke detail om dit te beïnvloeden wordt aangedragen. Samen met gemeente willen we het meerdaagse verblijf vergroten, is meer toerisme belastingen. Kwalitatieve wandelroutes maken onderdeel uit van dit streven.

-
7. Via welke kanalen (social media/website/etc.) kunnen wandelaars hun ervaringen en bovenstaande sterke en verbeterpunten met jullie communiceren?

**Via het vermelde mailadres info@weldadigoord.nl. Ik krijg dit als secretaris binnen en zorg dat het bij de juiste betrokkenen komt.

- Hoe actief worden deze kanalen geobserveerd?

**elke dag.

- Wat wordt er met deze gedeelde informatie gedaan?

**delen en afstemmen met de beheerders van de route, vermelden in bestuursvergadering.








8. In hoeverre is er sinds de corona pandemie een verschil te merken in de bezoekersaantallen van wandelaars die niet woonachtig zijn in de provincie Drenthe? Kunt u dit uitdrukken in cijfers?

** een 9. Er zijn veel bezoekers die geïnteresseerd zijn in het verhaal van de Koloniën van Weldadigheid. Er is veel P.R., op t.v., in landelijke kranten en toeristische vakbladen. Kortom, er wordt veel tijd besteed aan marketing en communicatie en dat is m.i. van goed niveau.

Ondernemers in ons gebied zijn erg tevreden met de ontwikkelingen. De omzet is flink gestegen en dus ook meer werkgelegenheid.

Nogmaals hartelijk dank voor uw medewerking!

Appendix 5. Inventory Walking routes in Westerveld, Drenthe

startpunt/adres + postcode	kleur/bordje	afbeelding	naam route	km.	parkeervoorziening + adres	eigenaar route + contact gegevens	Horeca	honden, wel of niet toegestaan	Roelstoelvriendelijk
Zorgvlied									
Zorgvlied, Dorpsstraat	Oranje	?	Bos en Ven wandeling	9	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Plaatselijk belang Zorgvlied	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	?	?
Zorgvlied, Dorpsstraat	Geel	?	Bosloop	3	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Plaatselijk belang Zorgvlied	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	?	?
Zorgvlied, Dorpsstraat	Blauw	?	Weidezicht	7	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Plaatselijk belang Zorgvlied	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	?	?
Zorgvlied, Dorpsstraat	Rood		Lange poel	7	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Plaatselijk belang Zorgvlied	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Ja	Nee
Zorgvlied, Dorpsstraat	Blauw		Turf langs het vrouwenveld	13	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	Stichting Weldadig Oord	Hotel Villa Nova, Dorpsstraat 38, 8437 PB Zorgvlied	?	Nee
Wateren									
Infopaneel op P-plaats, Waterseveld, Wateren	Rood		Wandelroute Ganzenpoel	4,9	Infopaneel op P-plaats, Waterseveld, Wateren	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee
Hoogersmilde									
P-plaats Sportlaan, Sportlaan 1, 9423 PV Hoogersmilde	Wit		Wandelroute Olde Smildeger	8	P-plaats Sportlaan, Sportlaan 1, 9423 PV Hoogersmilde	Staatsbosbeheer	Camping de Horrebieter, J. Brugginkweg 2, 9423 TC Hoogersmilde	Ja	Nee
P-plaats Sportlaan, Sportlaan 1, 9423 PV Hoogersmilde	Geel		Boswachterspad Olde Smilde	16	P-plaats Sportlaan, Sportlaan 1, 9423 PV Hoogersmilde	Staatsbosbeheer	Camping de Horrebieter, J. Brugginkweg 2, 9423 TC Hoogersmilde	Ja	Nee
P-plaats Hoogersmilde, Bosweg 27, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Donker blauw		Wandelroute Noordelijke Veld	3	P-plaats Hoogersmilde, Bosweg 27, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Staatsbosbeheer	Restaurant de Nieuwe Bentepol, Bosweg 10, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Ja	Nee
P-plaats Hoogersmilde, Bosweg 27, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Rood		Wandelroute Belevingspad H	3	P-plaats Hoogersmilde, Bosweg 27, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Staatsbosbeheer	Restaurant de Nieuwe Bentepol, Bosweg 10, 9423 TA Hoogersmilde	Ja	Nee

Frederiksoord									
Museum de Proefkolonie, Majoor van Swietenlaan 1, Frederiksoord	Zwart/Geel		Monumentenroute	13	Het Huygenshuys, Majoor van Swietenlaan 14, 8382 CG Frederik	Stichting Weldadig Oord	Logement en Gasterij Frederiksoord, Majoor van Swietenlaan 20, 8382CG Fre	?	?
Museum de Proefkolonie, Majoor van Swietenlaan 1, Frederiksoord	Groen		Sterrenboswandroute	3	Het Huygenshuys, Majoor van Swietenlaan 14, 8382 CG Frederik	Stichting Weldadig Oord	Logement en Gasterij Frederiksoord, Majoor van Swietenlaan 20, 8382CG Fre	Ja	Nee
Doldersum									
Parkeerplaats Huenderhoeve, Huenderweg 1, 8386 XB, Doldersum	?	?	Doldersum - Doldersumerve	7	Parkeerplaats Huenderhoeve, Huenderweg 1, 8386 XB, Doldersum	Het Drentse Landschap	Grenzeloos en Zo Restaurant B&B Arrangementen, Boylerstraat 12, 8386 XE	?	Nee
Diever									
P-plaats Hoekenbrink, Bosweg, 7981 LE, Die	Rood		Wandelroute Hoekenbrink	4,2	P-plaats Hoekenbrink, Bosweg, 7981 LE, Diever	Staatsbosbeheer	Villa BlauwHemel boutique hotel & unum restaurant, Hezenes 6, 7981LC Die	Ja	Nee
Natuurkampeerterrein Diever, Bosweg 8, Oude	Donker blauw		Wandelroute Vennen	5	Natuurkampeerterrein Diever, Bosweg 8, Oude Willem	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee
Informatiepaneel, Brink, Diever	Donker blauw		Wandelroute Kraaiheide	4	Camping Diever, Haarweg 2, 7981LW Diever	Staatsbosbeheer	Villa BlauwHemel boutique hotel & unum restaurant, Hezenes 6, 7981LC Die	Ja	Nee
Informatiepaneel, Brink, Diever	Rood	?	Wandelroute Hunebed	6	Camping Diever, Haarweg 2, 7981LW Diever	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee
Boscamping Appelscha, Oude Willem 3, 8426 SM	Geel, vierkant		Wandelroute Oude Willem	6	Boscamping Appelscha, Oude Willem 3, 8426 SM	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee
Dwingeloo									
P-plaats Oude Hoogeveensedijk, Oude hoogeveen:	Wit, vierkant		Wandelroute Telescoop	4	P-plaats Oude Hoogeveensedijk, Oude hoogeveensedijk, 7991PD Lhee	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee
P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Geel, vierkant		Wandelroute Lheederzand	5	P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Nee	Nee
P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Rood, vierkant		Wandelroute Lheederzand	3	P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Nee	Nee
P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Donker blauw		Wandelroute Koelevaartsveen	6,5	P-plaats, Spieregerweg, Dwingeloo	Staatsbosbeheer	?	Ja	Nee

Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Rood, vierkant		Wandelroute Kibbelhoek	6,2	Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Staatsbosbeheer	Van der Valk Spier-Dwingeloo, Oude Postweg 8, 9417 TG Spier	Nee	Nee
Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Wit, vierkant		Wandelroute Boswandeling S	5,5	Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Staatsbosbeheer	Van der Valk Spier-Dwingeloo, Oude Postweg 8, 9417 TG Spier	Nee	Nee
Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Donker blauw		Wandelroute Familiepad Dwin	2,3	Natuurpoort Spier, Oude Postweg 12, 9417 TG Spier	Staatsbosbeheer	Van der Valk Spier-Dwingeloo, Oude Postweg 8, 9417 TG Spier	Ja	Ja
P-plaats achter de kerk; Kerkpad, 7991CS, Dwingeloo	?	?	Wandelroute Dwingeloo - Olde	9	P-plaats achter de kerk; Kerkpad, 7991CS, Dwingeloo	Het Drentse Landschap	Grand Café Hotel de Brink, Brink 30, 7991CH, Dwingeloo	Ja	?
Vledder									
P-plaats Kerkpad (achter de kerk), 8381BM VI	?	?	Wandelroute Vledderhof	8,5	P-plaats Kerkpad (achter de kerk), 8381BM Vledder	Het Drentse Landschap	Vledder Plaza, Dorpsstraat 34, 8381AN Vledder	Ja	Nee
Havelte centrum									
Geen routes gevonden									
Havelte Holtingerpoort									
Van Helomaweg 14, 7971PX, Havelte	Groen	?	Wandelroute Holtingerveld	8,49	Van Helomaweg 14, 7971PX, Havelte	Natuurmonumenten	Brasserie Oer, van Helomaweg 18, 7971PX, Havelte	?	?
Uffelte dorp									
bord van Het Drentse Landschap op Markege	Paarse koppen	?	Uffelter Binnenveld	3,5	?	Het Drentse Landschap	?	Nee	Nee
Startpunt in Uffelte de Tweede Uffelterbrug ov	Paarse koppen	?	Landgoed Rheebruggen	4	?	Het Drentse Landschap	?	Nee	Nee
Uffelte weg achter de es									
Camping de Blauwe Haan,7975 PZ, Uffelte	Blauw / Bruin		Wandelbeleefpad het Turfva	5	Camping de Blauwe Haan,7975 PZ, Uffelte	Mevrouw Pigeaud	De Huiskamer bij camping de Blauwe Haan, Weg achter de es 11 7975 PZ Uffelte	Ja	Nee
Dorpsommetjes (plaatselijk belang)									
Brink 5, 7991CC, Dwingeloo	Plaatje, vierkant		Dwingeler Ommetje Mars	4,9	Verzorgingstehuis de Weyert, Weverslaan 1A, 7991BN Dwingeloo	Stichting de Dwingeler ommetje	De Zaagkoel, Brink 36, 7991CJ Dwingeloo	Ja	Nee
Eemster 14, 7991PP, Eemster	Plaatje, vierkant		Dwingeler Ommetje Uranus	5,2	?	Stichting de Dwingeler ommetje	De Zaagkoel, Brink 36, 7991CJ Dwingeloo	Ja	?
P-plaats richting Astron, hoogeveensedijk, 7991 Dwingeloo	Plaatje, vierkant		Dwingeler Ommetje Leda	4,2	P-plaats richting Astron, hoogeveensedijk, 7991 Dwingeloo	Stichting de Dwingeler ommetje	De Bospub, Bosrand 18, 7991PA Dwingeloo	Ja	?

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