

LES GRANDS VOISINS

Initial intentions,
real impact and beautiful spontaneous
moments,
spin-off and future prospects

2015-2020

Fabrique de biens communs
Ancien hôpital Saint-Vincent-de-Paul
72-82 avenue Denfert-Rochereau, Paris 14^e

Project closing file – September 2020



In 2015, we announced that we are “boldly and generously opening up a temporarily vacant space.”

At the time, we chose a name, Les Grands Voisins, where “Grands” stands for our ambition to share the values of hospitality and generosity, while “Voisins” represents its status as a place for exchanges and socialising, a time capsule to gauge, in reality, the degree to which the public meets and the extent of day-to-day solidarity.

Five years later, on the eve of the site’s closure, we gauged the reality of its impact, regretting certain things while appreciating the impact of the moments we experienced, especially the wonderful surprises. We can also explore the extent of the collective efforts. The experience has been good, possibly imperfect, but absolutely unforgettable. It is now up to each of us to seize what we have understood, learnt, shared, lived through and liked here. History will continue to be written and perpetuated elsewhere in the future.

Therefore, it is over to you!

In a few pages, we want to take stock of our experiences over the last five years, from the points of view and perspectives of the three coordinators and site managers, while giving others the momentum and urge to get involved and to try to assist with identifying new ways of cohabiting in towns and cities.

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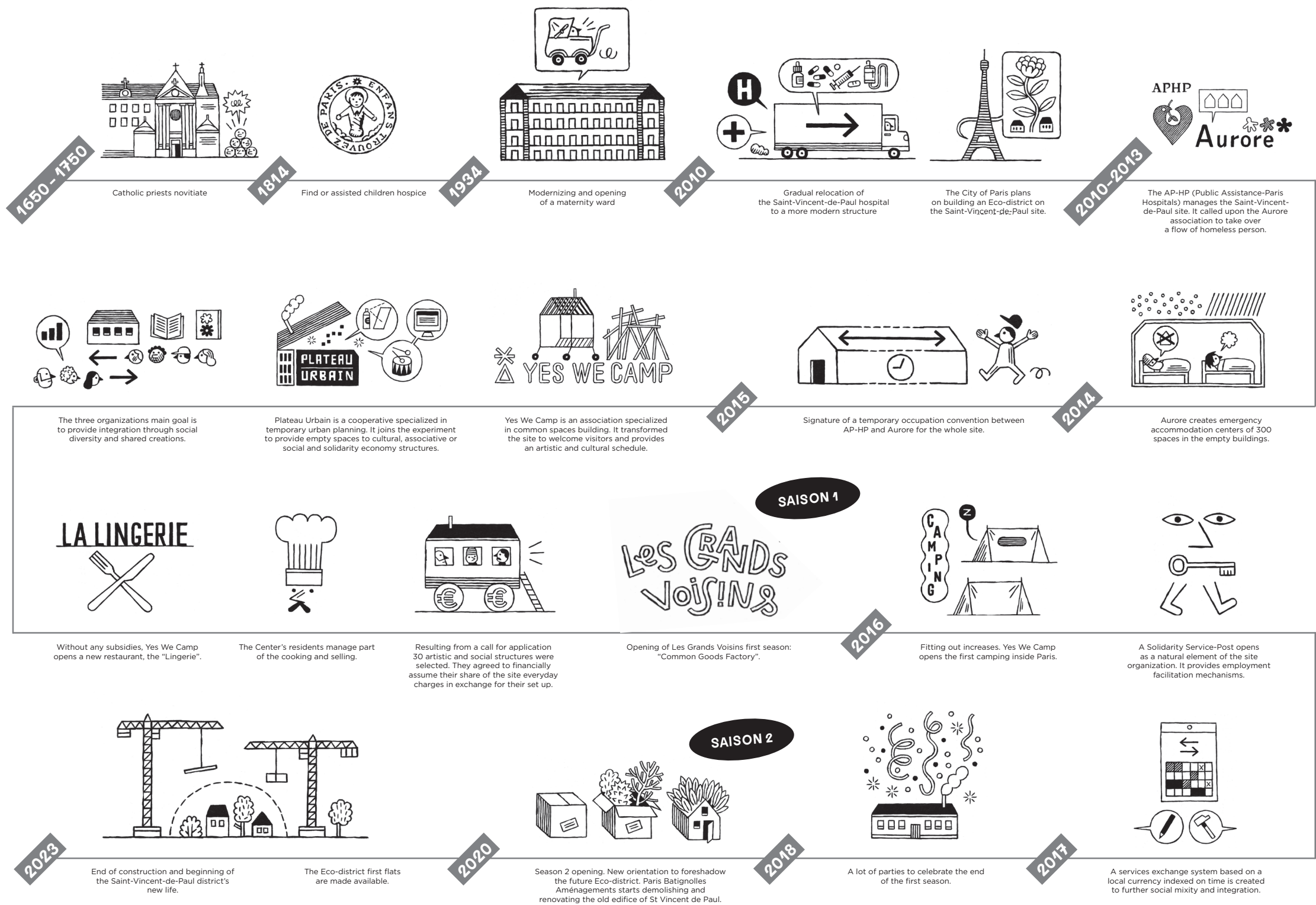
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History of the saint vincent-de-paul site
Illustrated by Jochen Gerner



Coordinators of the project



Aurore Association

Formed in 1871, Aurore seeks to host and assist socially and economically vulnerable people and those at risk of exclusion. The association's business focuses on three key missions: accommodating, caring, and positioning people in job opportunities. In 2019, 2,040 professionals and 843 volunteers assisted more than 50,000 people.

At the heart of the project: since 2014, the association has been the coordinator-in- chief of the whole site; it ensures general project co-ordination and has assumed technical and financial responsibility. It manages the day-to-day hosting and accommodation centres and helps those people being hosted with obtaining their independence, by offering job-positioning solutions.

Plateau Urbain Co-operative

Formed in July 2013, Plateau Urbain is a co-operative that seeks to breathe life back into vacant blocks to enable the pursuit and continuity of associational, cultural, joint or young enterprise projects. It focuses on developing new kinds and types of uses for buildings, thereby making the most of long unused urban sites— the transition phase that precedes building refurbishment.

At the heart of the project: the co-operative helps with general co-ordination, coordinating the selection and management of the premise's occupants and supporting their relations. Additionally, it also contributes towards the technical coordination of the site.



Yes We Camp Association

Since 2013, Yes We Camp has explored possibilities to build, inhabit and use shared spaces by proposing innovative, functional and inclusive facilities. Today, the permanent team includes about fifty people who share the same desire of contributing to a modern world.

At the heart of the project: the association assists with general coordination and is in charge of opening the site up to the public, including: artistic management, public communication, local partnerships, cultural programming, visual identity, the setting up of facilities in communal spaces, etc.



1 – Five years of collective experience

1.1. Scope of the experience and associated challenges

Les Grands Voisins is a unique experience, subject to the conditions associated with the ever-changing usage of temporarily vacant spaces, in order to meet fundamental needs: **housing, hospitality, sharing the living space and time, being human**. The former Saint Vincent-de-Paul Hospital, located in the 14th arrondissement of Paris, is one of Europe's largest temporary occupancy buildings for mixed, varied and public uses, occupies a 3.4-hectare plot. From 2015 to 2020, several million people lived, worked and shared this space, weaving other ways of living in the city together and offering new ways for solidarity and creativity.

The experience provides some kind of response to the issues present in a modern metropolis: how do we host and house the most deprived and provide them with a place to live in? How do we find affordable sites for them to launch their own business when the market itself makes this unaffordable? What new types of gathering, production and creation places can there be that would encourage voluntary and amateur involvement of citizen in a city that is ruled by experts and specialists? How to adapt our lifestyles and transform our towns and cities, while at the same time meeting ecological challenges?

1.2. Context, setup & partners

In December 2012, Cécile Duffot, the housing minister, called for a “solidarity shock” by asking several owners to mobilise and open up their empty buildings. In response to the appeal, **Assistance Publique – Hôpitaux de Paris** provided the abandoned Saint Vincent-de-Paul maternity unit premises to its long-established partner, the **Aurore association**, and did so absolutely free of charge where they installed the first two emergency accommodation centres.

In 2014, the City of Paris, soon to be owner of the site, suggested that the Aurore association takes on all of the 3.4 hectare site, and seek for transforming the area into a mixed district consisting predominantly of dwellings, coupled with a political desire to use the spaces for as many people as possible.

Under the urging of the 14th arrondissement's civic offices, the **Aurore association** sought to diversify the occupancy of the buildings to encompass the social undertaking of various activities and nourish its existence. **The Plateau Urbain** co-operative assisted with the formalisation of an economic model that would fund the costs of managing the site, providing spaces for associations, small enterprise, artisans and artists in exchange for a contribution to the costs. The **Yes We Camp** association joined in the undertaking and conducting works to set up facilities and proposing the cultural programme, which would involve Parisians and the local community. Together, they would help to orientate the overall vision of the site: going from a disused hospital to an inhabited district.

From 2015 on, the common objectives were formulated: to encourage social mixity, favour the creation of urban commons, and propose new kinds of urban resilience. In October, the experience further acquired a name: Les Grands Voisins. An initial “prototype” phase, which would last until December, would enable the testing of several types of public cohabitation: residents of accommodation centres, occupants of business premises, “from Wednesday to Sunday” visitors and the protestors during the COP21 period.

Between 2016 and 2018, during Season 1, up to 250 association and entrepreneurial structures worked on Les Grands Voisins: nearly 1,000 people were accommodated there with up to 5,000 visitors hosted per day.

Season 2 saw the arrival of new owners, **Paris & Métropole Aménagement**, the people responsible for the operational launch of the works to refurbish the Saint Vincent-de-Paul district. They joined forces with the Season 1's operators to devise a communal project for cohabitation of the site and determine the overall Les Grands Voisins experience. The project was transformed and extended until October 2020, while the experiences on site will be used to prefigure certain uses of the future district.

← La Cafèt' Mobile: helping to create links on the site.



2 - Ten attempts turned into action

Les Grands Voisins transformed ten attempts of societal contribution into action and reality. Here is a summary of its five years, illustrated in figures and pictures.

1 > Making use of abandoned or long-unoccupied spaces

3.4 empty hectares in the city of Paris made usable

again: since 2012, the hospital's departments have been emptied out and remained wrapped in silence. The 19 buildings were to remain closed, unoccupied and guarded.

But seeing the efforts needed to discuss the mêlée of the political desires of various involved stakeholders and the time taken to design the future district, the spaces of this plot were temporarily offered to serve the needs of vulnerable people who needed a roof over their head, for professionals in search of a workplace, and for the locals and city visitors seeking to become involved in communal projects and simply enjoy a drink, chill out, exchange and have fun.

←The residents of accommodation centre in action, Season 1.



2 > Moving in and cohabiting

Nearly 2,000 people live and/or work on-site, including over 1,000 people in emergency accommodation.

The site hosted several types of accommodation for vulnerable people and created conditions for social mixing, with a space open to the public, alongside mutualised services with activity centres, and housing for a few of the management teams.

For each of these aforementioned groups, the site became either their home or second home.

In the first five years, many communal spaces emerged and were affordable to a very varied public, thus toppling barriers between sectors and social worlds and leading to more human interaction. While the mix is not decreed, the experience has fostered favorable conditions for living together. This type of intermediate space offered a chance to escape the brutality of the street where fighting over the use of public spaces prevails, and enabled residents, occupants and locals to cohabit, and thereby meet and encounter some completely new faces.

↑ The residents of accommodation centre in action, Season 1.



3 > Making space for socially and economically vulnerable people in the city centre

With several accommodation centres and numerous employment support mechanisms located on site, the concept of a place dedicated to the most vulnerable part of the society remains a structuring element of the project as the site is inhabited by real people.

Up to 600 people per night were accommodated in the first season.

Around 46,500 people were welcomed at the day centre for asylum seekers and refugees in the first two years of opening. The centre is open Monday to Friday during the day and helps to guide people towards the Reception and Situation Review Centres (CAES) or the conventional day centres and support mechanisms. The space also provides room to rest, bathe, eat and talk to one's family.

Some 150 vulnerable people are being recruited as part of the Dispositif Premières Heures de la Conciergerie Solidaire. Over 40% of these people have moved directly from the support mechanism into a job. The multitude of activities and the public's involvement creates great conditions for job positioning, with about twenty schemes or working positions having been developed.

↑ The Conciergerie Solidaire team on a sidewalk maintenance mission.



4 > Opening up the workplaces to emerging practices

A detailed survey of the nature of site use programme yields the following distribution: 37% of structures are devoted to work dealing with the arts, shows and recreational activities; 22% are devoted to service activities, 13% concern social action, 8% education, 11% the arts and crafts and industrial sector, 6% commerce and catering, and 3% are devoted to activities focusing on agriculture and the environment.

Workplaces are being offered to these structures at €250/m2/year including taxes, only considering the net surface area of the premises, in other words, one quarter of the usual rental prices in the 14th arrondissement. This encourages a return of production to the heart of towns and cities, maintaining artisanal, artistic and agricultural expertise embedded in a concept of re-use and respect for the environment. Over a hundred workshops, shops and workplaces were occupied by project coordinators having difficulty with affording a place through the conventional market.

Sales of €50 million were estimated across all of these activities in 2017 with just as much created in non-monetary benefits. Les Grands Voisins has served as a springboard for young structures in the test and initial phases, or for structures a little more mature in the consolidation of a viable economic model phase.

↑ Abacaxi, a leatherworker who uses vegetable-tanned and/or upcycled leather in her shop-workshop.



5 > Providing a space for cultural and artistic experiences free of charge

Over 300 cultural, educational and artistic events were offered free of charge to over 600,000 visitors per year.

Being multi-discipline and accessible to all, the programme ensures experimentation and creation, combining cultural events (concerts, festivals, exhibitions, shows, etc.), the usual welfare activities, classes in artistic practices and interventions, work in the crafts, and outdoor spaces. Some wonderful times that have livened up the experience would be: Syrien n'est fait, Migrant'scène, Carnivals, Choc Thermique, 48 Heures de l'Agriculture Urbain, La Petite Course CRIT, etc.

The Les Grands Voisins scheme has always remained open to new proposals in order to remain dynamic, rich and dense. Every month, the planning meetings were open to any interested parties..

↑ Carnival Sauvage at Les Grands Voisins in February, 2020.



6 > Encouraging interaction between different professional sectors and disciplines

Dozens of professional sectors represented:

The sectors of town planning, architecture, re-use, environment, catering, food, culture, recreational activities, arts and crafts, art, information, communication and education share and mutualize the spaces. Numerous players are involved in the experience: the people accommodated on-site, the associations, contractors, and district residents all enable numerous community projects. The general emulation of the place, the mutualisation of communal spaces and meeting places, plus the multitude of business profiles and sectors was the key element to promoting a pleasant and comfortable workplace.

The structures were established in such a way that they cooperate with and work alongside others on the site. These interactions lead to a multitude of human adventures, spontaneous encounters, exchanges of a variety of different expertise and skills, and are making for a true ecosystem.

↑ Adrien Collet, a string instruments maker and member of the Kacekcode band that was born out of the meeting between musicians living in emergency shelters and occupants of the site.



7 > Providing structure for citizen involvement

Over 5,000 voluntary workers have been involved over 5 years:

This experience was made possible thanks to the involvement of the numerous volunteers who sought to learn and develop their and others' expertise. The spaces, equipment and professional skills on-site assisted those volunteers with their mission, with those missions being varied and adaptable in order to meet everyone's needs and desires: help at the day centre for asylum seekers, bar service, catering, French classes, construction in the workshop, etc. In fact, many initiatives combine social work and specific training.

Additionally, the site hosted and supported a great number of community events.

↑ Volunteer cooking the food during the lockdown period in the kitchen of the common restaurant l'Oratoire and distributing around 2500 meals per day.



8 > Making things work with what you have, in the time available

Two years to five years: the re-signing of the agreement and a succession of three owners:

The time devoted to the experience was always in flux and the Les Grands Voisins project was ever-changing in its nature, harnessing reactivity, inventiveness and frugality in order to meet the desires of the community of inhabitants and locals, the needs of the district and its current ambitions, and social emergencies. After two full years focusing on the entire old hospital site, co-operation with future district planners has led to a reduction in usable spaces while also leading to the invention of new formats and uses for the 2018-2020 season.

Other changes took place in order to cope with the COVID-19 crisis by organising food aid campaign. Around **2,500 meals/day were prepared or distributed to socially and economically vulnerable people over the two months of the lockdown**, some of it until the end of summer 2020. Les Grands Voisins is pursuing plans for solidarity and inventing new uses for the available spaces: as well as catering in restaurants provided, a workshop producing masks and manufacturing 3D printing valves for the manufacturing of respirators is being set up.

↑ Restaurant Les Comptoirs, The experience of complete co-operation between kitchen professionals and a team of non-professionals in integration, Season 1



9 > Building a model for the economy and efficient management

€2 million in annual management costs with a communal budget funded by the three steering organisations.

The change in the budget over the years has led to cash reserves being shared between the three steering structures while also pooling the financial risks. This was used to constitute a team of about twenty employees, representing a mixture of different professional profiles that would help to ensure the flexible and productive day-to-day management of the place.

The community stayed to be motivated by shaping a cultural and social agenda, dedicating time for the community meetings and such activities as shared breakfasts and meals.

Site management was divided into general board and different work groups on different subjects, in which all those concerned can participate: setting up spaces, social work, cultural scheduling, etc. The Conseil des Voisins, to which everyone is invited, was organised every two months to have exchanges on the project's latest changes and any other information. Furthermore, the three steering organisations attended weekly meetings so that they could remain reactive to the issues of the day-to-day management.

↑ Conseil des Voisins at the amphitheatre of Lelong building, Season 1.

10 > Passing on the experience and inspiring others

Dozens of similar experiences seen in finance:

The experience soon proved to not only be of interest to its users, but also to society as a whole, because of the positive impact generated. About fifty stakeholders attended one of our meetings with the desire to pursue this kind of projects in towns and cities with 700 to 8.6 million inhabitants in France, Belgium, Germany, and the USA. In addition, hundreds of requests were and still are being received for visits and/or participation in conferences on the part of public and private players (Ted X, MIT, Urban Maestro, Open Design Afrika Festival, Ashola Talks, Pavillon de l'Arsenal, etc.).

A number of distinctions have been awarded in recognition of this experience and undertaking, such as the International Biennale Architettura 2018 exhibition in Venice “Lieux infinis”, the Social and Solidarity Economy trophies awarded by the City of Paris and Palmarès des Jeunes Urbanistes.

→ Signage design and objects for Les Grands Voisins presented at the “10 lieux infibis” exhibition at the Biennale Architettura 2018 in Venice.



3 – local impact, clustering and prospects

Bridges with the new Saint Vincent-de-Paul district

Even before our meeting, we shared similar ambitions: to respond to the challenges of living in the capital for underprivileged people, to build a city where they could live under future climatic conditions, and to cultivate a diversity of uses and practices.

At the beginning of the second season (2018-2020) of Les Grands Voisins, Paris & Métropole Aménagement (P&MA), the City of Paris and the civic offices in the 14th arrondissement had many reciprocal influences on one another, especially through the regular moments of exchange christened the “transition”, which nourished the debate and enabled the sharing of experiences.

Part of the urban development scheme was adapted following the common theme that was drawn from the Les Grands Voisins experience and the ambitions for the future urban project : serving as property that helps to kick-off local businesses with favourable rent integrating an emergency accommodation centre and a boarding house in the development scheme, demonstrating the attractiveness of shops, focus on the importance of communal areas, the ambition to keep the experimental spirit at every stage of the project.

Of course, the district's ecological ambitions are at the top of the agenda, which will address some real challenges like: how to manage rainwater “at-source” and cultivate 4,000 m² of new green areas, re-use over 50% of the existing buildings and re-use the existing materials, and how to valorize the nitrogen and phosphorus from the urine, as already tested during Les Grands Voisins. Over and above delivering public spaces, ways of managing and living in the district are being questioned. The experience with temporary labour is inspiring P&MA to really consider how to set it up for this future ecodistrict: interactive dynamics (for example, with a panel selection of future tenants by landlords), the employment of a district manager and business platforms, the emergence of communal meeting places like La Lingerie, the L'Oratoire restaurant, and even the Pouponnière.

→ Point of view: festive weekend around the construction site organised with PM&A.



Where will the members of the community go?

Accommodation centre residents

The centres will move to other places and the people who have been hosted will receive guidance pointing them towards the right solutions. Before they arrive at the Les Grands Voisins site, some accommodation services have already moved several times. “Temporary” often refers to a group of places, which cater for the most vulnerable, people who are unable to find longer-term homes and workplaces, especially in the absence of general political backing. Following our exchanges with Paris & Métropole Aménagement and the City of Paris, we are proud to announce that the future district will integrate the construction of an Emergency Accommodation Centre (EAC) with about a 100 places and a boarding house with 25 places.

Users of the Day Centre for asylum seekers and refugees

The Day Centre will guide those being hosted through the different processes, dealing with the administration, and support in accessing the healthcare system and/or find somewhere to live, providing somewhere to rest, wash themselves, and charge their mobile phone to speak to their family abroad. A building located on Quai d’Austerlitz continues the welcome about 140 people per day and offers a day centre for families.

Occupants of offices, shops and workshops

All professionals had the possibility to rent places at a moderately priced rate under a fixed-term tenancy agreement. Some have been able to expand economically, becoming more structured and aimed at longer-term plans in the classic market. Others who were subject to testing activities seek to be placed in other temporary occupancy sites, shared office spaces or the artists’ workshops of Paris’ civic offices.

Some co-working structures continue to conduct their property search collectively in order to give them more weight and collective bargaining in their processes. Others, tempted by the Les Grands Voisins adventure, pursue with new temporary occupancy projects.

All professional structures are assisted with the property search for workshops so that everyone can put forward their objectives and their needs and thereby explore different options.

→ La Ressourcerie Créative, in Les Grands Voisins since the beginning of the project, is moving just a stone’s throw away in the 14th arrondissement.





Similar projects in France and Europe?

Les Grands Voisins has demonstrated that temporary social and cultural occupancy and the transformation of society may be synonymous with attractiveness, progress, innovation and success.

The desire to pursue new projects together in Paris, the nearby suburbs or in France as a whole is clearly present. The co-operation between Aurore, Plateau Urbain, and Yes We Camp did not simply stop at the first test. Other experimental projects, varying in their scope yet similar in some aspects, are under way:

The European network STUN (Social Transitory Urbanism Network), launched by the initiative of Communa, brings together the communities of Yes We Camp, Free Riga, Alte Mu, Paradocks, Meanwhile Space and the Institute for (X). The ambition of the network, which seeks to be as open as possible, is to create a space for the exchanging the experiences between active players in the field of the temporary occupancy and to push for recognizing this experience as a tool for social transformation on a European scale.

Since 2018, the academic certificate “Espaces communs” has focused on further exploring thoughts for the “Lieux infinis” exhibition. It seeks to encourage clustering around shared places, with the players involved in the transformation hailing from various backgrounds and contexts (profiles, disciplines, sectors, professional maturity, etc.), all sharing the desire to be at the heart of the movement underpinning the opening up of this type of space, developing them and helping to define any thoughts on the subject while bringing them to fruition.

We would like to encourage communities, owners and decision-makers to promote the emergence and pursuit of similar projects on our shores. As such, we are trying to mobilise and motivate players in civil society to become more involved.

← Camping Forum: meeting of about a hundred civil actors from the City of Tomorrow to explore the urban commons and their high value.

Les Cinq Toits, Paris 16^e

Aurore under an agreement with Paris Habitat, Plateau Urbain and Yes We Camp.

Coco Velten, Marseille

Yes We Camp under an agreement with Préfecture PACA, Groupe SOS and Plateau Urbain

La PADAF, Antony

Plateau Urbain under an agreement with LA CIPAV and Aurora.

Maison Marceau, Paris 8^e

Plateau Urbain under an agreement with LA CIPAV and Aurore.

Le Bastion de Bercy, Paris 12^e

Aurora under an agreement with the civic offices until 2024, and Plateau Urbain.

Les Ateliers Jean Moulin, Finistère

The new imaging, with Plateau Urbain, Brittany Regional Council, the town of Plouhinec and the communities of the towns of Cap-Cizun and Pointe du Raz.

Le Refuge, Paris 13^e

Les Oeuvres de la Mie de Pain, assisted by Plateau Urbain.

Saisons Zéro, Roubaix

Collectif Zerm en convention avec Ville de Roubaix, Yes We Camp. The Zerm co-operative, under an agreement with the town of Roubaix and Yes We Camp.

Other, similar experiences are being developed elsewhere: Hôtel Pasteur in Rennes, Le Tri Postal and La Serre in Brussels, L'Autre Soie in Lyons, Pépinière & Co. in Montreal, La Halle Papin in Pantin...

Societal perspectives

Les Grands Voisins is a way to demonstrate that it is possible to create responses to global crises through the creation of local, spontaneous solutions, creative, pragmatic islets, and lived-in and lively territories. Outlets cannot always be materialised within five years as experienced at the former Saint Vincent-de Paul hospital. Although mobilised, moved and contributed towards progress both here and elsewhere, efforts must be continued and the transition that we must all lead is immense. So, to all those who have the power to get involved, here, to scale and in perspective, are some of the challenges :

— Over 4 million m² of office buildings are empty in Ile-de-France:

There is space available and the temporary occupancy is gradually taking place. The signing of a temporary occupancy charter by about fifteen public and private partners on 26th August 2019 for Les Grands Voisins is one example of this type of action. The challenge now is to prioritise the forms of general interest in view of the difficulties which numerous people encounter trying to find affordable living or working space in towns and cities. With every new situation, we must ask ourselves: can we allow ourselves to use additional time and space to meet the challenges of solidarity and ecology?

— There are some 140,000 people with no fixed abode in France:

That figure is taken from the last INSEE survey in 2012; however, it is far short of reality according to a few flash surveys conducted in Paris.

Emergency accommodation is essential for people who find themselves in a difficult situation. Their location in the city centre and connection to the environment are factors, which can and will structure their return to stability. Temporary accommodation is a useful solution albeit always a precarious one. Now, however, they are the only spaces possible, especially because of a reduction in the resources allocated. The establishment of fixed accommodation centres alongside the construction of social and communal housing in the city centre demand, more than ever, vision and political courage.

— The average property price in Paris is more than €10,000/m²

Les Grands Voisins is in charge of day-to-day site maintenance, management, and upkeep, provided free of charge by the owner. There is no rent, in terms of any contribution to or refund of the speculative value of the property. Keeping spaces off the market enables new things to appear, making things work with what is already there, to allow innovation for inventing and adopting new ways of living in towns and cities, together with our combined efforts. What if we proposed 20% of premises at the original cost price, per territory?

— Thousands of cases of discrimination are reported every year:

Owing to the presence of businesses, accommodation centres and social services and public access, there are numerous people hailing from highly different worlds who cross each other's paths daily at Les Grands Voisins. The fact that they cohabit the same place and are considered a "Voisin" is a factor, which determines their quality of social support, degree of self-esteem and the elimination of any prejudices.

The pooling of knowledge, resources and moments that have been experienced helps propel this undertaking, as well as allowing us to appreciate differences by seeking personal enrichment. Beyond public spaces, how do we construct and maintain modern types of communal spaces in towns and cities? The challenge seems to transcend mere cohabitation with the new relationships that have been and are being forged..

— Developments in the last few years have taken on new forms:

Every year, Les Grands Voisins changes according to current affairs, demonstrating itself to be a real force for reactivity; for example, playing its part providing emergency accommodation in the context of the aftermath of the 2015 Bataclan shootings (engaged, militant events, the COP21 campsite, ...) and participating in different deployments during the lockdown and the ensuing COVID-19 crisis (food distribution, mask workshops, etc.). We are the 99%, the Gilets Jaunes, Extinction Rebellion—civil society is seeking to change words into action, into social and climatic justice. Simplifying the relationship with politics, involvement processes and the hosting of all initiatives are just some of the challenges associated with seeking to make spaces capable and available to those who would like to get involved.

→ The "Voisins" creating their portraits, produced by Catherine Griss, a photographer that lives on site.





Conclusion

The greatest risk to society would be to miss the opportunity to have tried.

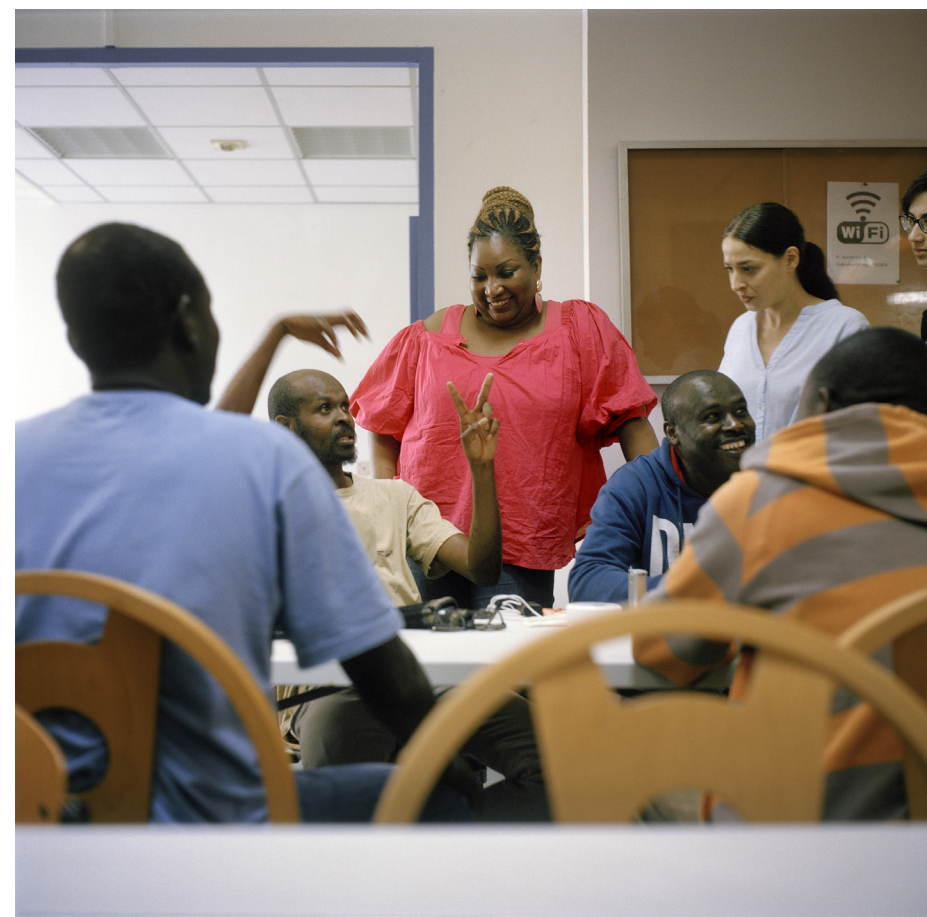
We sense the looming pitfalls of developing “airport-cities,” with an increasing numbers of techniques, experts, screens, checks, a heightening attitude of “every man for himself” and the underlying mechanics of seeking zero risk. They produce not only additional costs in the long term, but also a disembodiment of practices, social fragmentation, permanent defiance, and a generalised sense of powerlessness.

So, as we have envisaged and realised here, there is a degree of urgency in ensuring that elsewhere, these groups, these ways of doing things and these places, self-managed, hybridized, emerging, unseizable, spontaneous, imperfect, and no doubt unforeseeable, are catered for, encouraged over time and supported by public bodies. Let us use the “available” spaces to make them emerge. We have a lot to gain if only we try to establish spaces of mutual trust, taking on the risks together, and try new, more sustainable, communal ways of living in the world.

Built inclusively, borne by civil society, these “infinite places” will reveal our collective ability to organize ourselves differently. They are powerful motors for the emerging social, cultural and ecological transition as, very often, they try to operate through joy, sharing, poetry and beauty.



The Pinard building, which hosted the associations Aurora and Coallia during the Season 1.



Reception day in the Rapine building.



La Lingerie on the market day.



Hall of the Oratory's communal restaurant, where chefs and new cooks from integration programme meet.



Construction of furniture during the public workshops of the Vendredi Chantier.



A moment in the Pierre Petit accommodation centre.



Vertical Dance on the Lelong building.



The Traucco hut at the campsite, 2017.

Credits

Pages 2, 6, 8, 16, 17, 19, 20, 25, 26, 33 ↓, 34, 35
— Yes We Camp
Page 10 — Antoine Dogan
Pages 11, 33 ↑ — Association Aurore
Page 12 — Pierre Duquoc
Pages 13, 15 — Pablo Porlan Hans Lucas
Page 14 — Adrien Collet
Page 22 — Retouramont
Page 29 — Catherine Griss
Page 30 — Loubliana, Pépins Production
Page 32 ↑ — Clément Guillaume
Page 32 ↓ — Jelena Stajic

Layout

Yes We Camp, septembre 2020.

Fonts

La BTP is a typeface built by Jeremy Perrodeau and Guillaume Grall for issue 195 of the magazine Étapes « Quelque part entre graphisme et architecture... », en August 2011.

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Successive owners

Assistance Publique des Hôpitaux de Paris
Établissement Public Foncier d’Île-de-France
Paris & Métropole Aménagement
And soon, around 2,000 inhabitants of the future district.

3.4 empty hectares in inner city Paris made usable again for **5 years**.

2,000 people live and/or work on site.

1,000 people in emergency accommodation on site.

46,500 people hosted by the day centre for asylum seekers and refugees.

€250/m2/year including taxes for net surface area for workshops/offices in the heart of Paris.

Dozens of professional sectors represented.

300 cultural, educational and artistic events offered **annually** offered free of charge to over **600,000 visitors**.

More than **5,000** voluntary workers involved over **5 years**.

€2 million in annual management spread across a common budget shared by the **3 steering organisations**.

Dozens of similar experiences in France influenced by the project.

www.lesgrandsvoisins.org
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