

# IEDEREEN AAN BOORD

Dear neighbors, partners, Rotterdammers and others involved,

Where to start? I am lost for words. How can I say something I actually do not want to say?

Yet we must take a moment to stand still, even though we would rather sail forward. We have had to decide to close the doors of the Wheelhouse as of May 1st, 2026. In this message I want to tell you why.

## **What we have built**

But not before we realize what we have built together. The past years were a journey, an amazing adventure with numerous beautiful moments, too many to catch in these sentences. We have experienced so much together - greened, built, thought, dreamt. From the energy transition to storm ahead, from emergency packages and façade gardens to idea maps and sailing reports. Together we planted thousands of flower bulbs and flipped as many tiles. We shared our story with the rest of the world and we have shown how we fulfill our dreams - regardless of the language we speak. Each and every one using their own talent, on the way to a self-sufficient island community. And we did not sail alone. We collaborated with so many great parties, on the island as well as in the city. With students - from young elementary school and after-school care sailors, up to students and university researchers.

## **What happened**

While we worked on resilience of the island, we also ended up in storms. We navigated them, made adjustments, and stayed the course. However, the water has risen above our heads. Due to an unexpected and staggering event, a gap has been created that we cannot close financially. Our fuel has finished.

## **Impact**

This means that the Wheelhouse Will close its doors from May 1st onwards. The ship is returning to its dock. The activities as we know them will stop, or take on a different shape - we will come back on that later.

But for now this means that something which many held dear, will disappear: the warm living room, the place you could just walk into, the routines, the safe haven, the point of contact, the inspiration, and the connection.

I fully realize that this stirs up a lot of emotions and can hurt. That this is more than just stopping an organization and emptying this location.

## **Gratefulness**

Without you, this would never have existed. All the cups of coffee, cakes, stories, stuff, visits, working and thinking alongside us, the moments on the square, the clean-ups - all exchange, in whatever shape or form.

This was and still is ours to cherish. Nobody can rob us from these experiences.

Thank you to all neighbors. To everyone from within and outside of the island. To the students, the cooperation partners, the pilots. We have met so many beautiful people. It makes it all the more painful that we cannot move forward the philosophy of Joe Cillen and Henk Oosterling, as well as the plans on our sailing route, at full speed. As we would have loved to.

## **And now**

We will not simply dock our ship. This deserves a farewell. A joint moment to wrap up, look back, and take something of what we have built together.

On April 17th, between 13:00 - 17:00, the crew of Iedereenaanboord will wave goodbye. Feel free to bring a piece of cake and take a small board from the neighborhood bench home with you.

We are not sure what the future will hold and how the ship will leave the dock. Either in parts, or in full. But it will always keep on flowing. The energy, the ideas, the connections: they are still alive. If you want to start or continue something: let us know. We are happy to pass it on.

Whatever happens: we will always be neighbors aboard. And every small push towards a more sustainable future counts.

Personally, this means that I need to take some time off to recover. It has been intense, and I feel it.

## **Your reactions**

In case you wish to share something with us, that is possible.

Feel free to leave a message in the Wheelhouse, send us an e-mail, or come by on April 17 to wave goodbye together.

Thank you. For everything.

Warm regards,

Ellen van Bodegom and Team Wheelhouse & Board of the Iedereenaanboord Foundation:  
Yasmin Stip, Erwin Wesseling, Hans Bouman, Laurens Bosman, Sanne Keizer, Shravan  
Kanhai, Esmée IJsseldijk, Marsha de Koning Man, Frank Wetzels, and Dideke Ros