EUROPEAN GARDEN HERITAGE NETWORK

Action 4: Access - Baseline Review of Transport and Access Conditions

SCHLOSS DYCK

Northrhine-Westphalia Germany



Review commissioned by Stiftung Schloss Dyck

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INTERREG IIIB
NORTH WEST EUROPE

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Introduction

Background to project

The European Garden Heritage Network is an European funded INTERREG III-B project that is implemented by nine partners in five regions in France, the U.K. and Germany. One of the objectives of INTERREG IIIB is to the creative enhancement of cultural heritage. In response to INTERREG being an essential element of the regional development policies of the EU, EGHN has a strong focus on using those heritage assets - parks and gardens, but also other elements of cultural landscapes for sustainable development.

One of the key actions within the EGHN project is "Access" aiming at an improvement of accessibility to and within gardens. To explore current situations and state-of-the-art each anchor garden is producing a study of current access conditions. This is called the "Baseline Review of Access Conditions". This review is analysing the situation of Schloss Dyck, the German anchor garden of the project partnership.

The five baseline reviews will be subject to a joined evaluation and assessment. Furthermore the baseline reviews will be followed by an individual SWOT-analysis at each of the five anchor gardens to explore options for innovative measures, joint activities and the development of transferable models for other parks, gardens and regions to follow. Slow Traffic and sustainability will also be on the agenda of EGHN within the further implementation proess until August 2006.

Location of Anchor Garden and Study area

Schloss Dyck, the German anchor garden within the EGHN project, with its traditional English landscape garden, the new gardens on a former agricultural land and the castle with the exhibitions on contemporary art and garden architecture is one of the historic houses and gardens at the Lower Rhine in the southwest of Northrhine-Westphalia and is located 8 kilometres north-east of the centre of Jüchen, a small market town. Bigger cities near-by are Neuss (the capital of the Rhein-Kreis Neuss) - about 12km to the central station - and Düsseldorf (the capital of the State of Northrhine-Westphalia) - about 20 km to the central station (see Figures 1 and 2)

The landscape of the Lower Rhine is even and primarily used for agricultural purposes, with sugar beet, vegetables and ornamental plants predominating as cultivated crops. Apple orchards together with individual farms and groups of trees structure the landscape, and a large number of small settlements are grouped around the region's market towns. Good transport connections link up the area with the nearby large cities along the Rhine, which with their long histories, are both cultural and busy shopping centres. The Lower Rhine is also a region that is richly endowed with churches and convents.

In 1999 Marie Christine Countess Wolff Metternich transferred ownership of the park to a foundation. Thanks to the financial support provided by the state of North Rhine/Westphalia, the Rhine district of Neuss and the municipality of Jüchen, the foundation of the "Centre for Garden Design and Landscaping" means that an establishment tailor-made for its location has come into being

Since 2000, both the garden and the castle have been restored and enlarged, not least in preparation for the *Landesgartenschau 2002* (State Gardening Festival), which for the first time was spread out over seven historical parks and gardens. Following a detailed inventory, a park maintenance programme was worked out and

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implemented for the historical English park. On 25 hectares of adjoining agricultural land new themed gardens were created: hidden, artistically designed islands in a head-high sea of Miscanthus grass. Ten ashlars by the sculptor Rückriem provide a vibrant stimulus, and the almost 200-year-old chestnut tree lane gives the new gardens a natural and imposing frame. To mark the completion of the initial stage of the restoration of the castle grounds, the park art exhibitions "History", "Landscape" and "Grace" opened in the autumn of 2003, allowing visitors to learn about the history of the castle and landscape gardening in the 18th and 19th centuries, and also to experience modern art.

A marketing study commissioned by Schloss Dyck (Projects GmbH, September 2002) revealed that the catchment area of the site contains about 12 Mio. people living within a driving distance of up to one hour from the site (one way, by car). This includes major cities like Cologne, Düsseldorf, Neuss, Duisburg, Essen, Bochum, other cities of the Ruhr area, Aachen and also some districts of the Netherlands.

The area covered by this baseline study is smaller and will be concentrating on Schloss Dyck, its vicinity (local aspects) and the Rhein-Kreis Neuss (the responsible administrative county), but will also keep in mind relationships with the region mentioned above (regional aspects).

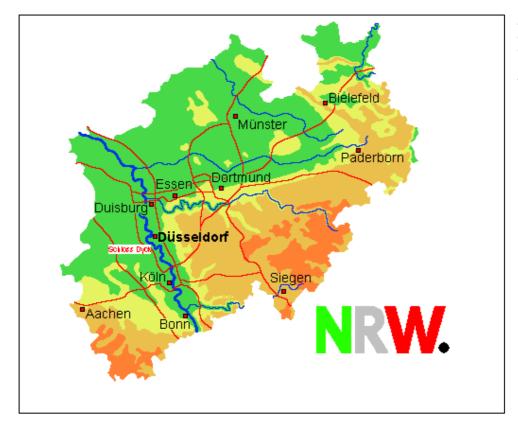


Figure 1: Location of Schloss Dyck within the State of Northrhine-Westphalia



Figure 2: Schloss Dyck and neighbouring area and cities

Current Access Points and Transport Provision to the Park

Current and Historic access points

The historic access to the castle and thus the garden was by two avenues focussing towards the main gate in an acute angle. One of those avenues is now ending at one of the roads and links the site with the new parking area. The other avenue crosses another road and is continued by an avenue of old walnut trees, said to be the longest in Germany.

Today the historic entrance is only open for staff and official visitors. The new visitor centre is on the site of the former nursery, parallel to the southern avenue and incorporating sections of the old walls.

The walnut tree avenue once linked Schloss Dyck and the convent St. Niklaus but is now fenced as a nature monument and due to its fragility that might cause accidents.

Walking

As a result of the remote, rural location of Schloss Dyck few people walk to the park. Of course some of the (frequent) visitor who live in one of the villages close by walk to the park. Furthermore some guests of the Dycker Weinhaus (a restaurant and hotel) located immediately on the border of the garden and some visitors of the convent St. Niklaus (which serves cake and beverages every day and is a traditional treat for families and groups in the summer) walk to the garden for a visit - leaving their car or bicycle in the parking area of the Weinhaus or the convent.

Furthermore the "Walking Route X3" (see Figure 3), one of the many walking routes which have been assigned at the Lower Rhine (as well as in Northrhine-Westphalia and Germany) and one of 13 walking routes which are flagged and maintained by at regional association has included Schloss Dyck as one attraction. Such walking routes are - whenever possible - created by using paths with limited access (e.g. for

agricultural purpose only) or off-road use, by using detached paths along the highways etc. Walks along such routes are often organised by associations and volunteers.

Cycling

Thanks to the topography of the Lower Rhine area - a flat agricultural landscape with almost no gradients (except some ramps related to bridges) and many attractive landscape elements and heritage sites - the area around Schloss Dyck is a favourite cycling region. Cycling has become a fashionable leisure activity about two decades ago and still is one of the major sporting activities for many citizens. While the sportive cyclist very often does longer trip on its own, many others organize cycling tours of shorter distances with friends and family. Such tours nearly always include one or more breaks at tearooms, restaurants or other facilities offering food and drinks - with an increasing interest in outside seating areas.

(to be continued at page 8)





Figure 3: Combined cycling and pedestrian paths -X3 flags the walking route



Figure 4: Combined cycling and pedestrian paths



Figure 5: Signage system for the cycling network

The leisure cyclist very often does not start the tour by bicycle at home. Very often the car is used to transport the bicycles to more attractive locations, avoiding inner-city stress and boring streets and allowing to follow one of the existing and very often thematic (and signposted) cycling routes. Since public transport, especially those trains included in the regional railway network (S-Bahn), offer better services and more spaces for the transport of accompanied bicycles - again especially at the weekends and off-peak periods - also public transport is used to overcome the first kilometres of a cycling tour.

Schloss Dyck is located at two major, thematic cycling routes (see below) and is integrated in the network of other local cycling routes. Very often specific bicycle paths do exist parallel to the street or lane, separated by either lines, framing elements or green stripes. Some of those paths are for mixed use with pedestrians. The most common surface is asphalt, some have water bound sand and gravel surface allowing comfortable rides too (see Figure 4)

Explicit signage for cycling routes has a longer tradition and very often such signage is guiding cyclists along narrow roads and agricultural pathways (that are not allow for the general car traffic) and showing the specific distance using those connections (which very often are shorter than using the major roads). The traditional, and very often confusing signage is for some years subject to a modernization and harmonization in Northrhine-Westphalia (see Figure 5)

This new signage system gives greater attention to thematic routes. Some of those routes have been created or improved during the last years some as part of regional development policies like the REGIONALE or as elements of tourism concepts (see Figure 6)

In the policy framework of the EUROGA 2002+ (REGIONALE 2002) the "EUROGA Cycling Route - Between Rhine and Maas" has been realized. 600 kilometres of improved cycling paths, signposted by a logo showing a yellow plus on blue background, guide cyclists - individual and groups - to the most important heritage sites and areas of natural beauty.

Schloss Dyck is also one site at the "Niederrhein-Route" (Lower Rhine Route), a network linking villages, historic sites, areas of natural beauty etc. by guiding cyclists with a special logo on more than 2.000 kilometres signposted routes.

Since 2003 there does also exist a specific website offering a sophisticated interactive route planning and mapping device for cyclists (see Figure 7). It gives a complete overview on thematic (and long distance) cycling routes but also allows to plan individual trips using the existing network of specific bicycle ways and roads from "door to door". The scale of the maps, which can also be printed out, can be modified (zoomed), allowing getting very detailed information. The system also shows places of interest (according to a selection made by the user) including "parks and gardens" and service points (like railway stations with special bicycle facilities or bicycle rental offices).

To further promote cycling as a leisure and tourism attraction an increasing number of guidebooks and maps is published by traditional companies as well as by cyclist initiatives, municipalities or by specific organisations in the context of regional development policies like the REGIONALE.

In addition to the leisure oriented cycling the use of bicycles is of traditional importance at the Lower Rhine. The bicycle was and is used for shorter trips to work,

to school, for shopping etc. - very similar to the Netherlands close by as a famous traditional bicycle country.



Figure 6: Signage including thematic routes

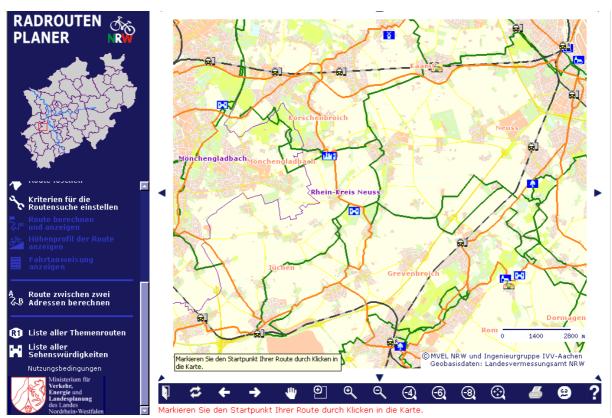


Figure 7: Interactive route planning website for cyclists (Schloss Dyck area selected)

Car

Schloss Dyck can easily be accessed by car. All major surrounding roads are in good condition. The major access roads (especially the connection to the motorway junction Grevenbroich Kapellen - see below) have are broad layout and allow a maximum speed of 100 km/h or 70 km/h at crossings. Slow traffic (cyclists, walkers) has separate paths along the road.

Access to the motorway network (see Figure 8) is either by

• Exit Grevenbroich-Kapellen (Exit 14) from the A46, on the L 361 and L 32 at a distance of about 4,5 kilometres

or

 Exit Grevenbroich (Exit 15) from the A 46, on the L 116 and K 25 at a distance of about 5,0 kilometres

(German roads are classified as A=Autobahn (Motorway), B=Bundesstrasse (National Street), L=Landesstrasse (State Street), K=Kreisstrasse (County Street) and local streets having individual names)

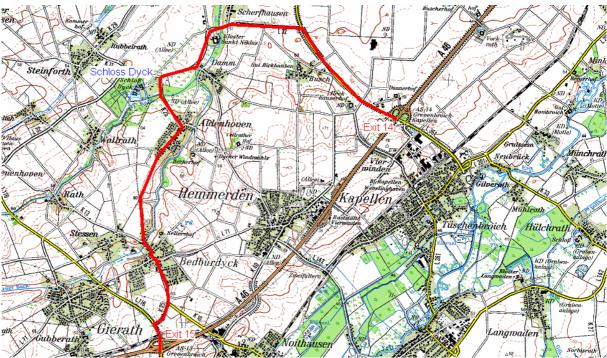


Figure 8: Access to the motorway network

The A 46 is an important east-west motorway giving access to many other motorways in the Düsseldorf-Mönchengladbach-Cologne area.

Signage from the exit 14 Grevenbroich-Kapellen to Schloss Dyck is sufficient (see Figure 9); from exit 15 improvements have recently been made. But there is still insufficient signage on the motorway: only one separate tourist attraction highway sign indicates the existence of Schloss Dyck and Museumsinsel Hombroich (a modern garden and museum close by) but without clear indications on when to leave the motorway and there is no mentioning on the exit signs (see Figure 10).



Figure 9: Signage from exit 14 to Schloss Dyck



Figure 10: Signage at the motorway

The K 25 (having a T-junction with the L 32 at Schloss Dyck) and local streets also link Schloss Dyck with its vicinity and local villages.

Bus

A first look at the local transport map gives a very optimistic impression: Schloss Dyck is served by five public bus lines stopping at two stops at the border of the site (see figure 11).

But going into details and looking at the period and the frequency of services gives a totally different and realistic picture: there is no or very limited service during the peak seasons of the garden: the weekends and afternoons (see figure 12)



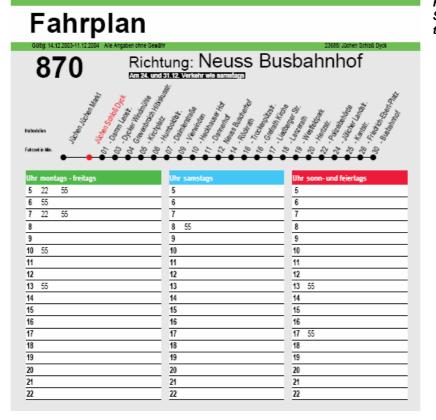


Figure 12: Section form one of the bus timetables

Existing bus services have a priority in serving school children and - to a lower extent - serving people on their way to work. They are connecting the small villages with some of the bigger centralised schools and offer some connections to train stations for their specific clientele too.

During the gardening festival in 2002 there has been a provisionally improvement of service times. The acceptance and use of these services by garden visitors was marginal and a prolongation would have asked for massive financial support.

Coach

Coaches can easily reach Schloss Dyck. The major roads from the motorways to the site are in good condition, have a sufficient diameter and no narrow bends or one-way sections. Nevertheless group tourism organised by tour operators using coaches is not a major factor for Schloss Dyck up to now. There have been more coaches during the Gardening Festival in 2002 and the management has now begun to improve promotional activities to address this target group (advertisements in relevant magazines, cooperation with local tourism agencies, tourism fairs)

Rail

There are two train stations close to Schloss Dyck, located at different lines and offering different connections:

- Jüchen (9,8 km by road) with the two major regional lines
 - o RB27 (RegionalBahn) to Cologne and Mönchengladbach
 - every 60 minutes from Monday to Friday from 05:00 until 20:00
 - no service during the night and during the week-end)
 - RE8 (RegionalExpress)
 - every sixty minutes all days from 06:00 until 02:00
- Kleinenbroich (9 km by major roads) with one major line
 - S 8 (S-Bahn) to Mönchengladbach, Neuss, Düsseldorf, Wuppertal and Hagen with many stops
 - every 20 minutes from Monday until Friday
 - every 30 minutes on Saturdays and Sundays during daytime
 - 30 minutes or one hour during the night).

All stations have P&R facilities and (sheltered) bicycle stands.

These lines offer good links to wider regional, national and international lines. Figure 13 has been taken from the VRR-map and shows the relevant Schloss Dyck section with Jüchen in the downside left corner.

As the train stations are remote from Schloss Dyck travellers would need additional transport to the garden by bus. This causes major problems - see the chapter "Bus".

For journeys within the regional transport network (including train and bus) three major tariffs between 1,85 Euro and 7,50 Euro for a single trip do apply, with a lot of reductions available.



Taxi

At Schloss Dyck, at the smaller railway stations and in the little villages there are no taxi ranks. People wanting to use a taxi have to phone a local/regional company. There is no special agreement with local companies, but they are familiar with the spot and will pick up people at a short note. Pre-booked rides (especially return-rides) can be less expansive than just in time services.



Figure 14: Main Parking



Figure 15: Parking 2 close to the entrance area and shops



Figure 16: Disabled parking (example on parking 2)

Current Internal Access Arrangements within the Park

Parking

Parking areas at Schloss Dyck have been designed to suit the demands during the State Gardening Festival in 2002. As the visitor figures during that event have been high above the average number of visitors (which is now about 75.000 and 80.000) there is a more than sufficient number of parking bays during the week and sufficient space at the weekend. Special events (like a garden festival or fair) may result in some problems but overflow parking is available too.

There are two major parking areas for cars and coaches:

- P1, with direct access from the main road and signposted offering space 570 cars
 plus 16 disabled parking bays and for 16 coaches. A footpath is guiding visitors to
 the entrance area using a section of the two avenues that form an essential
 element of the layout of the ground (see Figure 14)
- P2, which is closer to the main entrance with its shops, offering space for 137 cars plus 4 disabled parking bays. This was a restricted parking during the 2002 festival but is now open to the public. Customers of the fruit shop also use it with some restricted bays for short-term parking (see Figures 15 and 16)

For the cyclists there is a designated bicycle parking area close to the main entrance with the box-office, shops etc. To keep the main entrance area free of bicycles and to avoid a negative visual impact this area has been located in a corner of the place using the old walls and a new hedge as fencings. There are provisions for secure parking by fixing the bike with a lock to a railing (see Figure 17)

Public transport infrastructure/ awareness

Bus stops are clearly marked and have sufficient information on timetables and tariffs. There are no shelters. Taking into account the given limited bus services this infrastructure can be considered as sufficient. To be attractive for future garden visitors - following an improvement of the services - there should also be a shelter, seats and some information on train times at local stations (see Figure 18).

Access for people with disabilities

Thanks to the topography of the site (almost flat and even grounds, no major gradients) there have been no major obstacles to make the site fully accessible for wheelchairs and prams. Where steps have been inevitable or are an element of the design of the garden, ramps ensure access for wheelchairs and prams. The surface of the majority of path is smooth and even and either made of sandy materials or using big paving stones (see Figures 19 and 20)

The desks at the box-office are so low that people sitting in a wheelchair can easily use them.

Schloss Dyck is operating an automatic access control system to ensure that only holders of a valid ticket have access and to control the flow of persons between areas of free access (as the restaurant) and those areas, which require a paid ticket. While those gates allow the passage of one person per ticket there is always a by-pass for

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Figure 17: Bicycle parking



Figure 18: Bus stop



Figure 19: Standard path's layout

wheelchairs and prams (see Figure 21). The night exits are big enough to suit wheelchairs and prams too (see Figures 22)

Due to ongoing work the castle will be fully accessible from autumn 2004. Ramps and an internal elevator will give access to all floors of the exhibition, the restaurant and the public conveniences. Disabled toilets are available in the castle and in the visitor centre at the main entrance.

As the site is (or will be) fully accessible there is no need for a specific wheelchair access map or signs indicating a route for wheelchairs.

Additional aids for people with other disabilities (Braille guides, hear books etc.) or a specifically designed section in the garden (e.g. a smell or touch garden) are not available.

Signage

It is one of the objectives of State Gardening Festivals to attract garden lovers but also people who are not so familiar with (historic and modern) parks and gardens. Responding to the demand for guidance and interpretation of those new target groups the number of signs on such sites is much higher than in other parks and gardens. This is also true for the gardens at Schloss Dyck.

Signage in the garden included four major elements:

- Higher columns show a map of the garden allowing an overview and positioning within the garden (see Figure 23)
- Smaller columns show logos of near-by facilities (e.g. restaurants, toilets, first-aid) and direct visitors to specific sections of the garden (e.g. the parterre at the conservatory) (see Figures 24 and 27)
- Lower, table-like signs give some information and interpretation on the surrounding area (see Figures 25 and 26)
- Small boards give information on single shrubs and trees (see Figure 28)

Signs are located at major paths, crossing and junctions. The small boards are placed directly to the shrub or tree (see Figure 29)

In total there is a big number of signs. A negative impact of these signs on the heritage site could be limited thanks to their discreet design, colour and material.



Figure 20: Easy accessible paths



Figure 21: Ticket control system with by-pass



Figure 22: Night exit



Figure 23: Signage - Column with map



Figure 24: Signage - Column with info



Figure 25: Signage - Interpretation



Rundweg

Notices into Autorogene
Notices
Region

Fermania
Region

Fermania
Controller

Management
Controller

Mana

Figure 26: Signage - Interpretation

Figure 27: Signage - Column with info



Figure 28: Signage - Plant label



Figure 29: Signage

Existing Travel Patterns / Demands

Staff / Volunteers

About 40 people are working on the site of Schloss Dyck (in the administration of the foundation, gardeners, in the shops and restaurants etc.). Most of them use the car to come to work. Some of those who live closer by also use the bicycle - especially if the weather conditions are good. Some also come by train and use a bicycle or a scooter from the station to the garden. To members of staff are living on the site.

Concerning the volunteers (who act as room stewards or guides) a similar modal split can be observed. But as most of the volunteers live closer to the site the number of cyclists is in some extent higher.

Bus services to the site are of no importance as their specific timetables very rarely do fit with the working times of staff and volunteers.

Visitors

On average more than 75,000 visitors a year come to visit and to enjoy the park and castle. The great majority does come by car, followed by cyclists and coach tourists. Only very few of the car drivers do have a journey exceeding one hour for one trip.

The majority of the visitors do live in the Rhein-Kreis Neuss or in the cities of Neuss, Düsseldorf, Mönchengladbach and Krefeld. Other major origins are the Ruhr area and Cologne as well as neighbouring regions in the Netherlands.

Current Transport Related Problems, Issues and Limitations

Pedestrian / cycle access

Thanks to the topography of the area, existing networks for cyclists and walkers no major improvements are needed to make Schloss Dyck an attractive destination for these target groups.

Nevertheless improvements could be made for cyclist by offering additional facilities (e.g. a bike rental station) or by the creation of new or enhancement of existing cycling routes.

A priority within such a policy could be on an improved and more attractive connection (e.g. using smaller roads or distinct paths) between Schloss Dyck and the Museumsinsel Hombroich - another major tourism attraction near-by offering a very specific modern landscape park incorporating a set of pavilions to present ethnic art and contemporary European art.

The highway network

The highway network is of high standard and more than sufficient for the demands of Schloss Dyck and its visitors. Congestions on the motorway however are inevitable and may cause problems to some visitors. But on the weekends (peak visitor periods) such congestions are rare.

Signage however has great needs and potentials for improvements. Merely the routes from the two motorway exits are now sufficiently signed. Signage from roads,

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junctions and crossroads in the hinterland of Schloss Dyck is poor. It is therefore very difficult to attract spontaneous visitors.

Furthermore signage from Jüchen does not exist. This does cause major problems as the postal address given on many leaflets, posters, the website etc. and communicated in the newspapers and magazines is Jüchen. While many drivers will remember this as their target destination they will get lost or need to ask people on the street for the right direction. Not an easy task with about eight kilometres and some junctions to go.

Public transport

Schloss Dyck is located within the regional network of public transport - Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Ruhr - operated by 24 local transport companies and three railway companies (including the Deutsche Bahn). The network covers more than 5.000 km³ with more than 7,2 Mio. inhabitants and has a transport capacity of almost 300 Mio. transport kilometres per year. Most of the neighbouring cities like Düsseldorf, Neuss, Mönchengladbach, Krefeld as well as the more remote Ruhr area are included in the Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Ruhr. Cologne however, being part of another network, is not included but there are many lines connecting those two networks.

One of the great advantages of this network is that all public transport facilities can be used with one ticket. Furthermore only three major tariff zones do exist: A) local transport, B) transport to and from neighbouring cities, C) the entire network. For visitors to Schloss Dyck tariff C) might be most relevant. The price for a single ticket is 7,50 Euro, four tickets can be purchased for 24,40 Euro and a day ticket allowing an unlimited number of trips within a day for up to five persons is available for 18,45 Euro. The transport of a bicycle requires an additional ticket at the price of 1,75 Euro for each trip and each bicycle. For longer journeys and in particular for groups this system offers very competitive prices - even compared to the pure petrol costs by using the own car.

If the last kilometre(s) of public service to Schloss Dyck would be better, the garden could certainly have profits from being located within the Verkehrsverbund Rhein-Ruhr. Other parks and gardens (as the park of Schloss Benrath in a southern suburb of Düsseldorf) show that excellent transport links help to attract new target groups and thus more visitors.

But as a single destination a garden like Schloss Dyck does not generate enough users of public transport to allow services that are at the same time comfortable for visitors and cost-effective or even nearly cost-effective for the transport company. On the other hand concepts like a combined ticket (including the transport ticket at a reduced price) cannot be realized without appealing services.

Current Internal Accessibility Problems, Issues and Limitations

Access for people with disabilities

When the renovation of the castle will be finished in autumn 2004 the site (park and house) will be fully accessible for wheelchairs and prams. For people with other disabilities (e.g. the blind) special offers or aids are not available now. It is hoped that within the EGHN project ideas and concepts for innovative measures for those (potential) visitors will be developed. There might be the option for specifically trained

guides for blind people or for an educational program designed for children with specific disabilities or needs.

Parking

There are more than sufficient resources for parking. Parking is exclusively to visitors and there are no conflicting uses or demands for the parking. Parking will also be sufficient for an increasing number of visitors.

Sometimes conflicts result from bicycles that are parked on the paths or on the central place in front of the visitor centre and close to the shops. Some cyclist refuse to use the designated bicycle parking area in order to avoid some walking or saying that those bays do not fit with their specific bike.

Those bikes can obstruct easy access for pedestrians and wheelchair users.

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