

GROENLINKS

RIDDERKERK

LOCAL
GREEN
SOCIAL

For a green and
liveable Ridderkerk



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RIDDERKERK

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KEY POINTS

■ More affordable homes

GroenLinks Ridderkerks wants to build 1,000 new homes, using smart, tall buildings so there is still space for green areas

■ Lower energy costs for people with low income

Active support with insulation help, energy coaches, neighbourhood repair teams and free materials

■ Green remains green

No more paving over green areas: parks and the orchard in Rijsoord will be preserved and protected

■ Healthy air for everyone

We will improve air quality and get out of the top 3 municipalities with the worst air quality in the Netherlands

■ Safety in every neighbourhood

Focus on cyber safety and a safe place in every neighbourhood for emergencies

■ Free public transport for those who need it

People with minimum income and pensioners can travel for free by public transport

■ Equal treatment and safety on the streets

A strong approach to fight discrimination, street harassment and violence with space for feminism and equality

■ No toxic substances in our living environment

Ban on PFAS and steel slag in municipal projects

■ Fair and humane treatment of migrant workers and shelter residents

Solidarity and good facilities for migrant workers and residents of asylum seeker centres

■ Easy and fair waste collection

Free bulky waste collection twice a year

■ Lively town centres

Longer opening hours for shops and restaurants, also on Sundays

■ Safe and festive New Year's

A central fireworks of laser show as an alternative to consumer fireworks

■ Healthy schools for our children

Good indoor climate in all schools in Ridderkerk

INTRODUCTION

Everyone in the Netherlands should be able to live a good and free life, connected to each other and to the world around us. Such a life looks different for everyone, but some things are essential: a home where you feel safe, clean air and a healthy environment, people and services nearby you can rely on, and the space to be yourself. The Earth belongs to all of us, and how we take care of it decides how we live together now and in the future. These conditions do not happen by themselves. They need us to care for each other, take responsibility, and work together. If we give each other space to grow, many things are possible; from big changes to what happens close to home in our own municipality. In this election program for the 2026 Municipal Council elections, we show how.

An affordable home in a nice and safe neighbourhood

An affordable home is not a luxury, but a basic need for a good life. Yet too many

people (young people, starters, families, and older people) have to search too long for the right home. That must change. Building more affordable homes is our top priority. The municipality should guide the construction and work together with housing corporations to speed things up. At the same time, quality and liveability stay important. Beautiful, well-insulated homes in green and safe neighbourhoods form the basis for strong communities where people look out for each other and feel at home.

A green economy in a healthy municipality

Climate change is real, and its effects are increasingly felt: more heat, flooding, drought, polluted air, and nature under pressure. This affects all of us. That is why we focus on a clean municipality and a green economy. The municipality should lead the transition to clean energy, better public transport, safe bike routes, and greener surroundings. Everyone should be able to take part. Solar panels, home

insulation, and sustainable heating must be affordable for everyone. In this way, we take care of the Earth we share and create new opportunities for work and education.

We do it together

A good society starts with basic security: everyone must be able to pay rent and buy food. But a good life is more than that. Participation, learning, work, sports, and meeting each other make our society stronger. That is why we choose care and support with people at the centre, good education, and a municipality that is there when people are in trouble. Even in times of scarcity, we make fair choices and protect those who need it most. At the same time, we hold the national government responsible. Everyone has the right to good care, a community centre, and a library nearby. Only by working together, locally and nationally, can we create a municipality where no one is forgotten.

Chapter 1

AN AFFORDABLE HOME IN A NICE AND SAFE NEIGHBOURHOOD

A home is more than a house; it affects our happiness and well-being. GroenLinks works for affordable, sustainable homes in nice, safe, and green neighborhoods, so everyone has a place to truly feel at home. Housing is a right, not a luxury.

Our points:

New homes

- Green stays green. We build more homes by going up in height or redeveloping built-up areas;
- We will build 1,000 new homes in the next four years, with 30% social rental and 30% affordable for purchase;
- The sites of the former Trelleborg, Beverbol, and Gemini will be developed faster;
- New homes are affordable, high quality, climate-neutral, and circular, with attention to water, soil, heat, and biodiversity;
- We build for all groups: starters, young people, urgent seekers, students, families, and seniors, with attention to lifetime homes and shared living options like care homes, Tiny Houses, Flex-homes, or Knarrenhof;
- Homes are for living in: we enforce an owner-occupancy rule, anti-speculation measures, and keep land as public as possible;
- On the old part of Donkersloot industrial area we make room for homes and green space;
- Ridderkerk residents have a better chance of buying a new home;
- To avoid delays: construction must start within five years after a permit is given;
- Existing social rental homes will not be sold;
- During restructuring, existing tenants have the right to return;
- Nature-inclusive design is the standard for new homes;
- New homes provide extra space for shared electric cars.

Existing homes

- We add homes by building on top, extending, or creating (pre-)care homes;
- All social and mid-range rental homes are fairly allocated through the housing allocation system;
- We promote movement: help older people move from large homes within their own neighbourhood, with financial support if needed;
- Nature-inclusive design is the standard for renovations;
- Empty offices and buildings are actively bought and converted into homes;
- Rent may not increase more than the savings from lower energy costs after making homes sustainable.

A pleasant and mixed neighbourhood

- Ridderkerk shows solidarity with people fleeing war, violence, and persecution. There is room for genuine refugees, and they deserve humane, safe, and well-organized shelter;
- GroenLinks takes responsibility within the national dispersal law and is open to a temporary shelter location under clear conditions to replace the asylum ship, for example in the Oude Molen polder. This is only possible with a sound safety plan, sufficient financial support from the national government, and open communication with local residents. Shelter must be appropriate for the scale of Ridderkerk and the support within society. From the outset, we have focused on integration, so that people can participate in our society as quickly as possible;
- Every neighbourhood has enough facilities: general practitioners, cultural services, community centres, sports facilities, schools, and social services;
- We invest extra in social work, community centres, libraries, and neighbourhood shopping centres as the heart of the community;
- People with serious addiction or mental health problems who cause a lot of problems in neighbourhoods or apartment complexes will be accommodated in special housing like Skaeve Huse. This gives them the care they need and relieves pressure on the neighbourhoods.

Chapter 2

A GREEN ECONOMY IN A HEALTHY MUNICIPALITY

The climate is changing and our living environment is under pressure. GroenLinks focuses on sustainable energy, green neighbourhoods, and healthy nature, so everyone can live and work in a good environment. Together, we build a safe, green, and future-proof municipality.

Our points:

Green municipality

- In rural areas, green comes before paving;
- New construction and redevelopment always include green space, with extra attention to heat stress and flooding;
- Green areas, like along the A38, are made accessible for education and urban farming, where healthy and local food is grown and residents, young and old, learn about sustainable food production;
- The orchard in Rijsoord keeps its agricultural function, with active enforcement;
- We increase climate resilience with more water storage, wadi's, rainwater separation, and cooperation with water boards;
- We apply the "don't-mow-in-May" policy, where green strips in Ridderkerk, except unclear areas, are not mown in May to support biodiversity;

- We replace paved areas with green, starting with the most paved streets, and use grass concrete for parking spaces;
- Subsidies for green gardens and roofs continue and will be expanded where possible. Removing tiles is still encouraged;
- Each household will be offered a tree by the municipality;
- Tree pits (spaces under municipal trees) can be adopted by neighbourhood residents.

New energy

- The implementation of the Regional Energy Strategy is being accelerated. In line with national agreements, we are seeking to establish sustainable projects and effective partnership with our local energy cooperative 'De Groene Stroom', to achieve this. De Groene Stroom will, of course, be adequately supported in this effort. Our goal is to achieve local ownership as much as possible, but at least 50%;

- Together with network operators and residents, we carefully and quickly integrate necessary energy infrastructure, keeping it affordable and avoiding grid congestion; individual heat pumps only where needed;
- We speed up the transition to gas-free homes, with clear neighbourhood plans toward 2035, as long as it is affordable for everyone;
- Residents with low income receive active support with insulation help, energy coaches, neighbourhood repair teams, and free materials.

Liveable neighbourhoods and centres

- Very harmful substances like PFAS and steel slag are banned in municipal projects;
- Problems and health damage from wood burning are addressed with education and the use of a "burning guide";
- We tackle empty shops with pop-ups, social functions, and cooperation with entrepreneurs;

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- We expand the network of electric car charging points in a logical and future-proof way, together with solar panels and cable ducts.

Safe and healthy transport

- We strengthen public transport with an accessible water bus, neighbourhood buses within the RET network, and better support for volunteer drivers;
- Public transport stays free for pensioners and people on minimum income;
- We continue to work for a direct tram connection from Ridderkerk to Rotterdam Central;
- We encourage cycling with good bike parking, including a free supervised bike parking in the centre, and shared bikes at public transport hubs;
- Together with other municipalities, we lobby for lower speeds on the A15, A16, and Rotterdamseweg near homes;

- All bus stops in Ridderkerk are accessible for people with disabilities;
- Traffic safety is a priority with 30 km/h in residential areas, lower speeds where needed, and safe designs for cyclists and pedestrians;
- At large bus stops, like Sportlaan, shared bikes are available;
- Buses also run in less popular times, in the evenings and on weekends.

Green and sustainable business

- Restaurants and shops get longer opening hours, also on Sundays;
- We award municipal contracts to local businesses whenever possible and buy as much as possible in a circular way;
- We encourage companies to cooperate in energy hubs to reduce grid congestion and promote local energy production and storage;

- The shopping area is made greener and renovated;
- The more than 2,500 migrant workers are essential for business in Nieuw-Reijerwaard. They also deserve good housing;
- We promote social and cooperative entrepreneurship as an alternative to large platforms;
- Water fountains will be created at Koningsplein;
- In Nieuw-Reijerwaard, we focus on a well-regulated truck parking area with enough facilities.

Reuse of resources

- We support local thrift shops and repair cafés;
- In all policy areas, we focus on careful and circular use of resources;
- Bulky waste collection is free twice a year.

Chapter 3

WE DO IT TOGETHER

Living together makes a municipality strong. GroenLinks focuses on good facilities, involved residents, and help nearby, so everyone can take part. This way, we build a safe, inclusive, and social community where everyone feels at home.

Our points:

Being healthy

- We improve air, soil, and water quality with better measurements, active cleanup, and strict supervision of discharges;
- Vulnerable people should fully participate in society;
- Serious youth care belongs to the national government, not municipalities. Small-scale youth care should be close to home;
- We focus on prevention and a healthy living environment, so people stay healthy longer and care remains affordable;
- We reduce market forces in healthcare and focus on cooperation and neighbourhood-based care, with as few providers per neighbourhood as possible;
- Caregivers get better support and respite care;
- We take opportunities to address the huge shortage of care and welfare staff with local people, such as residents on benefits, newcomers, status holders, Ukrainian refugees, and seniors who can contribute;

- We prevent children in youth care from falling through the cracks when they turn 18 by connecting youth care better with social support (Wmo);
- Primary care and support are organized nearby and together, for example in health centres;
- We focus on one coordinator per family or client so no one gets lost in rules and offices;
- In Ridderkerk there are too few public toilets. As a result, 1 in 5 people avoid activities for fear of not finding one in time. GroenLinks wants a public toilet in every shopping center and in natural recreational areas.

Learning

- We invest in excellent indoor climate so children can learn in the best way;
- Ridderkerk gets a vocational (MBO) department and a public university again;
- A green schoolyard for every school;
- Schools can let children use urban farming;

- We encourage longer school days, school meals, culture, sports, and talent development;
- We address school dropout supportively, not only with enforcement;
- We fight low literacy via libraries in the neighbourhood and at schools, clear language, and language courses;
- Newcomers get good education and intensive language support;
- We bring secondary education for young people with (severe) multiple disabilities to Ridderkerk, for example, in collaboration with the Bram Foundation. Where possible, we expand this with daycare, so families don't have to move to surrounding municipalities.

Exercise

- Swimming lessons for all children in group 5 who do not yet have a swimming certificate;
- Money should never be a barrier: everyone must be able to play sports, from children to seniors;

- Sports clubs have good, modern, and sustainable facilities with enough space to grow;
- We use neighbourhood sports coaches to get more people moving, focusing on youth;
- We invest in low-threshold sports and exercise places in the neighbourhood, green and accessible;
- Sports for people with disabilities gets extra attention;
- We continue to help sports clubs, referees, and trainers deal with aggression and antisocial behaviour on and around the field;
- Ice rink on Koningsplein during the Christmas holidays.

Safe living

- The municipality is prepared for crises and disasters, including cyber safety and shelters;
- Safety starts with prevention, strong neighbourhoods, and cooperation between care, education, enforcement, and liveability: neighbourhood police and enforcement officers are visibly present;
- We balance privacy and safety when using preventive searches and cameras;
- The regional police station stays in Ridderkerk. We will do everything to keep it here.

Participation, trust and involvement

- Everyone should be able to be themselves in Ridderkerk; we support the LGBTQ+ community where needed;
- Ridderkerk has a rich and thriving community life. Volunteers are essential. We help clubs find new volunteers;
- We strengthen poverty reduction, for example through an extensive Ridderkerk Pass (connected to the Rotterdam Pass), opportunity coaches, school projects, and distribution points for basic products like menstrual items;
- The municipality works based on trust and human scale: mistakes are allowed, and we solve them together;
- Digital where possible, personal where needed. The municipality is reachable for everyone;
- We provide meeting places in every neighbourhood: inside and outside;
- Residents' initiatives and social organizations get space, trust, and support;
- Residents are actively involved in decisions and plans about their neighbourhood.

Art, culture and events

- Art and culture are for everyone: accessible, nearby, and diverse. We support the Art Route, Local History Room, and other initiatives;

- We charge a tourist tax of €1.50 per person per night and use the income directly to support local initiatives;
- Cultural education contributes to equal opportunities and receives extra support;
- More diverse events on Koningsplein and support for neighbourhood events;
- We invest extra in art and culture together with local artists;
- Residents get space and budget to organize their own activities.

Do you miss any points or have additions to this election program? Let us know at ridderkerk.groenlinks.nl

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