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**"Building on water, rather than battling against it – that is the future, as evidenced by our project 'Floating Houses IJburg'."**

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We need better water storage due to climate change and the related sea level increase. Building on water, rather than battling against it – that is the future, as evidenced by our project "Floating Houses IJburg". The citizens of Waterbuurt-West live in extraordinary houses in a unique residential environment, and they enjoy it. 158 homes are situated waterside here and 55 of them are free-floating detached houses. "Here, we experience the ultimate freedom that water provides. We have a luxurious, free-floating house to ourselves and Amsterdam's city centre is

only 15 minutes away". Waterbuurt-West is a part of Amsterdam's IJburg development zone, which stretches across a series of artificial islands in the IJmeer lake. Residents of Waterbuurt who own a boat (and a lot of them do) can quickly and easily reach the historic canals in the city centre, or the open sea. A lock separates the water on which the houses float from the IJmeer and provides a calm, inner basin with clean water.

A minimum of effort for the maintenance of buildings and no emission of pollutants into the water – these factors played a key role in the selection of building materials. Each home consists of a wooden structure on top of a concrete base; this ensures a low centre of gravity. The bases are cast as single units to help avoid the formation of maintenance-prone seams. Although most of the base lies underneath the water's surface, it still provides living space. This is typically used for the childrens' rooms. It comes as no surprise that children choose loft beds, as it means they can enjoy a view of the water right from their beds.

The homes are fixed to the seabed, because legal restrictions require a technical differentiation between floating houses and houseboats. Two diagonally arranged mooring poles provide stability to each home, and a sliding connection allows them to be moved upwards when the water level changes.



Photo: Floris Lok Images, Amsterdam, NL; Waterwoningen, Amsterdam, NL