

This year we really wanted  
to roll up our sleeves



# A DAY'S WORK FOR A GOOD CAUSE

Companies and entrepreneurs increasingly recognise the value of CSR or Corporate Social Responsibility - of giving something back to society. For Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield this is part of Global Solidarity Day - a part of the company's philosophy since 2016.

TEXT YVETTE VAN REE

Globally, once a year, in the spirit of the slogan You Are Involved, Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield employees devote this day to giving something back to society. Each individual country determines how the day is actually spent. This year, the 75 employees in the Netherlands worked as volunteers in Almere.

## Efficiently organised

Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield owns the Citymall in Almere as well as three other locations in Dutch cities. The employees work in one of these cities, each year, to give something back to society. 'Last year we organised a market for the Jarige Job Stichting. It was a very successful project. This year we really wanted to roll up our sleeves and do a day's volunteer work in Almere', declared Kimberly Nooij and Elly Boeijink, the organisers from Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield. We contacted the VMCA (Vrijwilligers en Mantelzorg Centrale Almere) and they helped us to organise the day. Together with Stichting Present they organized volunteer jobs for us, at seven different locations. And they did this within a very short time. But it was really well organised!

information about their chosen organization or charity. It has left a deep impression. Linda and Martjan went to the Wensjes Foundation and are glad they were able to help. 'It's really impressive to see what's happening here. You know that there is poverty in the Netherlands, but on such a day you experience it in close-up. And it really gets to you. It's also nice to see how incredibly happy the organisations were with the work done in one day.' Linda continues, 'You realise that it takes relatively little effort to give something that is of great significance to others'.

## A healthy dose of perspective

Martjan is very impressed by the background story of the Wensjes Foundation and the willpower of initiator Els. A day like this ensures a healthy dose of perspective. You look at your own life with new eyes and you realise all the more how fortunate you are. The conversations with your colleagues are also very inspiring. You talk to each other in a different way. Less superficially. This also allows you to get in touch with each other in a different way and to hear about where others stand on these issues. And where our company stands. Says Kimberly,



## Everyone contributed ideas

The organisations for which the Unibail-Rodamco-Westfield employees went to work were very enthusiastic. Everyone contributed ideas about what to do - and even the paint was donated. The team was very enthusiastic about volunteering and the participants especially liked the fact that they could choose from seven projects. They could work at Inspiratie Inc., Stichting Wensjes, Parkhuys Almere, the Salvation Army's Jeugdnoodopvang, Kinderboerderij De Beestenbende, Kindertuinen Almere and Jeugdland Stad.

## It really gets to you

The team members arrived by bus in Almere and were dropped off at the projects where they were to work. At the start of the day they were all given

'A day like this affects you for a long time. You notice that colleagues still talk a lot about it, in the weeks that follow. And you also see a shared commitment. Another bond has also been created between colleagues, because they have done something good together and they now have this in common'. ●

Considering a day of volunteer work with your team, under the CSR flag? Sacha de Ruiter of the VMCA's Expertisecentrum Vrijwillige Inzet can tell you all about it and help you with the organisation. Phone 036 534 14 04, email [s.ruiter@vmca.nl](mailto:s.ruiter@vmca.nl) or go to [www.vmca.nl](http://www.vmca.nl)