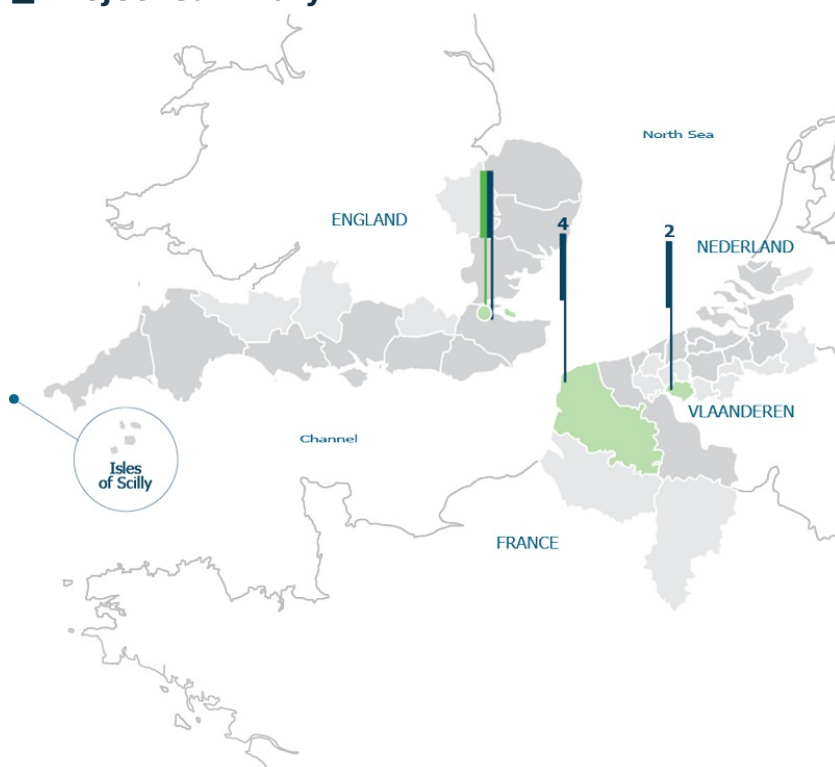


INSPIRER

Improving Neighbourhood Sustainability with Participatory and Innovative Responses to Environmental Regeneration



■ Project summary



The INSPIRER project aims to improve the quality of life of people living in neighbourhoods subject to social exclusion by means of new green space and recreation areas as well as measures to increase security and to favour biodiversity. The partnership is composed of different services and organisations from France, Flanders and the UK which have not yet worked together and hopes to transform existing neighbourhoods into sustainable ones which improve the quality of life of inhabitants. The activities will focus first on engaging residents with the long-term benefits of the regeneration of their neighbourhoods, then on communicating and educating on

improved waste management, and finally on raising awareness of energy consumption in social housing. A variety of investments will be made to improve energy and water efficiency in the targeted neighbourhoods, and tested through pilot schemes in the three partner countries.

■ Activities

What was the project trying to achieve?

The INSPIRER Project was launched in October 2010 in the Leon Blum neighbourhood of Boulogne. The INSPIRER (Improving Neighbourhood Sustainability with Participatory and Innovative Responses to Environmental Regeneration) project aim was to transform existing deprived areas into sustainable neighbourhoods. This transformation was done with a

relandscaping of targeted deprived areas involving the local residents in the process; then those residents took part in waste management awareness actions and finally the project also raised awareness to energy efficiency in social housing.

What were the activities implemented?

Activity 1 : - site visits to see innovative urban design and on good example of play areas and relandscaping in all countries - community consultation to design new play areas, public green spaces (workshops, events, local social art group, incredible edible campaign) : residents were consulted to make sure that those areas were matching their expectations in order to make them actors and responsible of their neighbourhood. Partners exchanged their good practices on residents mobilisation - community gardening workshops : Residents learnt new skills on gardening (natural technics) and planted, harvested and cooked the vegetables together. - building new play areas, public green spaces (fitness equipment), urban road design for a secured neighbourhood, landscaping. Landscaping including shrubs that enhance biodiversity, tree plantations, play areas, benches, bicycle racks, pathways linking the neighbourhood with main roads, lights set up on the pathways for security. - building shared/community gardens Sensitive gardens in England and Belgium that were educational, therapeutic and recreational for sensitive children. Community gardens were created around social neighbourhoods, schools and children centers. Those gardens were built towards the needs of each individuals and lots of gardening activities have been done in each. Families the most in needs could either come to do gardening activities within a group or taking care of their own plot. - clean up days : Residents were involved in cleaning their neighbourhood. Different methods were used as to hire a big skip to clean bigger waste or groups of people with black sacs and litter pickers. - art recycling workshops to make people aware that waste is a resource Activity 2 : - waste buried containers and awareness of residents to the use of those containers with door to door campaign - new system of weekly food waste collection in Medway area and campaign to residents. (-) composting and recycling workshops / events / training and recruiting champions. - site visits to centres that recycle or re-use waste or compost (Country Style, SWEEEP, household recycling center, IMOG, food bank..) - cooking workshops / events : to train residents to decrease their household waste, cook healthily with a maximum of fresh products, to bring all residents together and make link with gardens Activity 3 : - energy events : One event focused on adults to teach them simple ways of reducing domestic energy consumption. Lots of stands represented by different companies were here to show inhabitants the methods to adopt. Some low energy consumption tools were given to residents for them to use at home (shower timer, low water flush, tap water cutter, low energy light bulbs..etc.). Professionals were there to talk to inhabitants and talk through their annual energy consumption of energy in water, gas and electricity. One event focused on children to see how they understood life energy consumption. - procurement for the building of passive houses were done through a "concours conception réalisation" with 5 concrete houses and 5 wooden houses - building a communication startegy for tenants on eco-friendly attitude - site visit of the passive houses, neighbourhood on area community renovation with inhabitants and architect, in passive neighbourhood, passive hotel, and to energy renovated houses in England and Belgium - energy efficiency measures on the most disavantaged neighbourhood through different schemes/methods (cold buster, counselling on renovation, energy cutters, energy hunt, grant scheme on energy saving, Solid Wall Insulation) with new central heating system, replacement of old central electric system by a gas one, new efficient condensing boiler, bathroom

modernisation with efficient water butts, new loft insulation and windows

■ Results

What were the key results of the project?

Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?

What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?

■ Distinctiveness

What was the real added-value of doing this cross-border project?

Many of the project successes could only be achieved through cross border exchanges and sharing knowledge and experience. Examples of this are Medway's community gardens which were inspired by the project's French partners. Similarly, exchanges between French and Belgian partners, sharing expertise on recycling and composting was invaluable. Staff exchanges between Medway and Kortrijk highlighted how different the respective approaches were to community engagement. There are many other examples of beneficial cross border cooperation and are also highlighted in the Good Practice Guide and Film of the project. The cross border cooperation has enabled activities to be completed in one country having seen what was possible in another. Although goals may have been common, approaches were quite different and it was possible to learn so much from each other. Confidence was gained from seeing successes in other partner countries and the exchange of ideas was exciting and productive. Several minds are better than one!

Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?

INSPIRER and SWAP NOW were the main partners in the CONGREEN Together Cluster. DNA shared common aims and shared many partners as did SUCCES. Habitat du Littoral were part of the Safe Ice Cluster.

What are the key messages , key lessons learned you would like to share?

That a bottom up approach works. Residents must be the main stakeholders. Working with students and learning organisations is a good approach. Working with local authorities and major services is essential for the wellbeing of residents.

■ Project Information

Title	Improving Neighbourhood Sustainability with Participatory and Innovative Responses to Environmental Regeneration
Total project budget	€ 5 333 542
ERDF	€ 2 666 771
Priority & objective	Priority 2 e. Improve and enhance good practices in water, waste and resources management, and sustainable use of resources
Timeframe	2009-10-01 - 2014-09-30
Lead partner	Medway Council
Project Coordinator	Solène FERREIRA(sol.ene.ferreira@medway.gov.uk)

