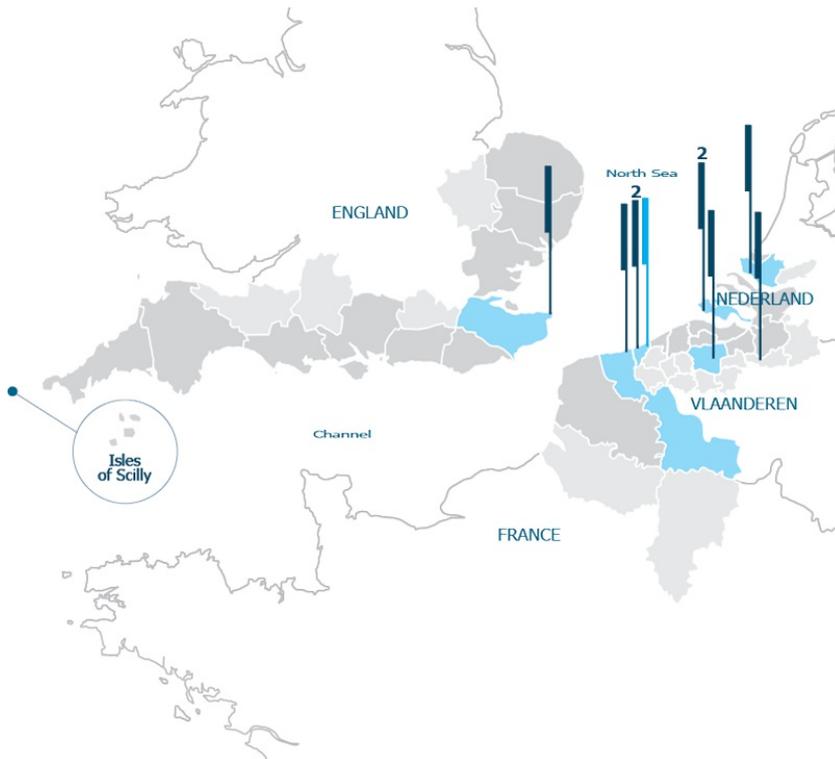


# YACHT VALLEY

## Development of innovative concepts of nautical service clusters: Yacht Valley



### ■ Project summary



Services such as maintenance, repairs, upgrades and the sale of boat accessories are economically and functionally a key part of the nautical sector. They are also of vital importance for employment and the local economy in the 2 Seas area. Facing a growing market demand, the Yacht Valley project aims to develop new nautical service centers to group these services in one location where several companies, offering different expertise and specialties, can provide the sector with services related to buying, maintaining and improving yachts. Potentially suitable areas for such service centres have been identified in Hellevoetsluis (NL), Ramsgate (UK),

Vlissingen (NL), Dunkerque (FR) and Nieuwpoort (BE), using sites with differing former uses. These sites will be redeveloped to allow for new activities and in some cases, the integration of existing companies. The involvement of Local Authorities, waterway managers, businesses and trade organisations ensures that there is true knowledge and expertise exchange and a wide range of services being offered. A guideline document, publishing all the results of the project activities, will serve as a transferrable model for partners outside the 2 Seas area to adopt.

### ■ Activities

#### What was the project trying to achieve?

The project aimed at the development and testing of innovative and sustainable nautical service centres, especially in obsolete locations near existing businesses, by carrying out joint and exploratory research, by making investments and by exchanging knowledge about that. The project wanted to give a boost to an economically sound and future-proof nautical service sector in the 2 Seas Area, including a proper spread of service facilities. The concept of a nautical service center is: one location where several companies with a different expertise and

specialty offer services in the field of buying, maintenance and improving (motor) yachts (comparable with a furniture strip). Besides the required services like a crane, environmental facilities, temporary storage and basic maintenance facilities a service center includes several additional facilities like a sail manufacturer, boat interiors, instruments and chandlery. In short the following 4 objectives were involved: 1. innovating and making business sectors future-oriented by doing research, knowledge exchange and pilots 2. developing, testing and adapting the concept of a nautical service center 3. sustainably reusing obsolete sites for new functions 4. move existing companies and to attract new service companies to complete water sports areas with adequate nautical service centers The targeted results of this project are: - insight into the facts and figures and into business models for the nautical service sector for governments and entrepreneurs - experience with the spatial lay-out of nautical service centers and the necessary facilities (basic concept, testing of concepts, ideal concept with derived alternatives) - insight into the possibilities to reuse ports and locations with another original use for a sustainable nautical service sector - 5 equipped or prepared sustainable nautical service areas

### What were the activities implemented?

Activity 1: increase the knowledge of the development and management of nautical service centres. Key activities implemented: - sub action 1: Master class, including a report with 'lessons learned' regarding the preparation of sites (Hiswa) - sub action 2: A fact and figures guideline for spatial planning and development of nautical service centres (Hiswa) - sub action 3: Research on business models for smaller nautical service companies (Nautiv) - sub action 4: Strategic vision: insights into the opportunities for development of the sector (Hiswa) - sub action 5: Guideline about the results, knowledge and experiences development in the Yacht Valley project (LP) Activity 2: create space and to prepare areas that will accommodate nautical service centres. Key activities implemented: - sub action 1: 3 pilots : Hellevoetsluis / Nieuwpoort / Vlissingen - sub action 2: research and planning for a full service nautical service facility in Ramsgate including some first investments - sub action 3: research into the restoration and reuse of a historic dry dock to be served as joint nautical workshop in Ramsgate - sub action 4: research of possibilities to convert old commercial harbor into new yacht service harbor Nieuwpoort Activity 3: realize joint, nautical facilities and public-private cooperation in order to manage these service clusters and facilities. Key activities implemented: - sub action 1: Master class about the required facilities (workshops, crans, storage facilities etc) for a well developed nautical service centre and the way this should be managed. - sub action 2: Realization of suitable workspace(s) for nautical companies with 2 pilots: one in Hellevoetsluis and one in Ramsgate - sub action 3: Realization of joint facilities with 2 pilots: one in Dunkirk and one in Nieuwpoort (working space, crane, storage room, slipway, moorings etc) - sub action 4: Study and Master Plan about how to make a site suitable for a nautical service centre nautical service centre in Ghent

## ■ Results

### What were the key results of the project?

Activity 1 - a master class and 5 expert meetings, incl. reports with recommendations and conclusions. - a fact and figures guideline including an overview of and insights into fact and

figures for spatial planning for nautical service (useful for every nautical harbor in the 2 Seas area) - a strategic vision with opportunities for development of the nautic sector in the future in the 2 Seas area - a guideline 'nautical service center' with best practices, experiences, gained knowledge etc from the Yacht Valley project Activity 2 - 3 try outs realized: in Hellevoetsluis, Nieuwpoort and Vlissingen areas are redeveloped and prepared to become nautical service areas: • Hellevoetsluis: Urban site plan, purchased land, attracting entrepreneurs • Nieuwpoort: a new service center built (60% occupied) , a master plan for the boat facilities area, 130 floating berths built (50% occupied), realization of the try out area in nieuwpoot • Vlissingen: soil research done, rebuilt roads, restoration and isolation of slopes research report about restoration and reuse of the historic dry dock in Ramsgate - an image quality plan of the harbor area in Nieuwpoort Activity 3 - Tested concepts of lay-out, facilities and management of nautical service centers - Realization of equipped work spaces for nautical service companies in Hellevoetsluis and Ramsgate - Realization of equipped areas with facilities and management structure for nautical service centre in Dunkirk and Nieuwpoort - Master plan Snepkaai: insight into the possibilities of redevelopment and joint use of facilities in Ghent - settlement of 15 new businesses and ca. 50 new jobs

### **Did all partners and territories benefit from the results?**

In this project (application) seven target groups were distinguished and they benefited in the following manner: 1. Knowledge institutes (PP9 en PP10) have increased their knowledge on nautical service centers by conducted research. 2. Local/regional authorities as Hellevoetsluis, Thanet, Nieuwpoort, Vlissingen and Ghent because of the redeveloped areas and sites. But also other authorities in the 2 Seas Area benefit because of the availability of the new facts and figures guideline and the strategic vision on this sector, because a lot of information in these documents are useful for them as well. 3. New and existing entrepreneurs in the nautical service sector have benefitted because they can move to the newly developed sites clustering high end nautical services. 4. The participating municipalities (LP, PP2, PP3, PP7, PP8) benefit because of an (future) increase in economic activity, employment and regional income. 5. The companies and marina's (PP4, PP5, PP6) near service the centers who could work on revitalization of sites 6. Technicians and other staff who work in and around the service clusters. 7. (motor) yacht owners and tourists benefit because complete and clustered services are offered now in the existing nautical service centers. Indirectly a much larger group of final beneficiaries benefits from the project: 1. Municipalities, port authorities, water managers and other authorities benefit because of the good examples from this project 2. Inhabitants and tourists of the municipalities where investments are made benefit because of the reused sites that had fallen into disuse. Hereby the quality of the public space has improved. 3. Professional training institutes benefit because a clustered proposition of service companies is offered with the possibility for internships and apprenticeship places The benefits for the territories are the same as for the local/regional authorities mentioned above.

### **What were the effects / outcomes for the territories involved?**

The following effects and outcomes in terms of the well being and progress of people are achieved in the entire 2 seas region: - Entrepreneurs and workers benefit from the project because the project contributes to a future proof nautical service sector. New insights and nautical service centers are developed in order to preserve and boost the nautical sector that is responsible for a considerable economic impact in the 2 seas region. (7.700 jobs in the UK,

11.400 jobs in the NL) - Also the consumers of nautical services in the 2 seas region benefit from the project, because they can make use of clustered high end nautical services in the region where they enjoy yachting. - Inhabitants of the municipalities where investments have been done, benefit because of a sustainable improvement of the open space, because obsolete sites are in use again.

### ■ Distinctiveness

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

Since seas and ships do not have real borders, related problems and opportunities in the nautical service industry neither do so. Hence developing new concepts and clusters of nautical service businesses is not a simple exercise, because it is a completely new development for which good examples are hard to find. The towns involved hardly have any knowledge of this sector, the possibilities for spatial incorporation, and potential qualified staff. In this manner many problems and unknown factors that come together and that required a joint approach in the form of research, concept development, exchange of knowledge, try-outs and evaluations. During the project partners indeed figured out that they were facing similar problems all over the 2 seas region. Therefore joint studies as well as consulting each other on practical experiences (in expert meetings) was relevant and very useful for all partners. In most cases (of the five nautical service clusters) it has led to adaptations and improvements of the original plans and to the partners (as Ghent and Nieuwpoort) with study activities it led to strong plans for the future.

#### **Have any synergies been developed with other projects or networks?**

The only developed synergy is the relation between this project and the Su-Ports project. Both projects aim to boost innovation and sustainable growth of harbors and of the nautical service sector.

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

First of all the most important lesson for all partners is the great value of cross-border cooperation, because all partners have benefit from the exchange of ideas and knowledge. By cooperating with non obvious partners abroad the perspective and knowledge is widened more than expected. Yet, this doesn't mean some obstacles can appear. Therefore some more specific lessons are stated below. 1. Do not only focus on the cooperation with the formal project partners during the preparation and the execution of the project, but also involve all other stakeholders early. 2. With respect to the planning, do calculate some delays as a result of unforeseen events during the course of the project. 3. Make sure you have a well equipped program management to prevent unnecessary administrative burden. 4. Invest from the beginning in the relationship between the partners. For the simple reason partners area spread over a large area close ties do not develop spontaneously.

## ■ Project Information

<b>Title</b>	Development of innovative concepts of nautical service clusters: Yacht Valley
<b>Total project budget</b>	€ 7 979 780
<b>ERDF</b>	€ 3 825 094
<b>Priority &amp; objective</b>	Priority 1 a. Support the development of joint economic activities, including the maritime economy
<b>Timeframe</b>	2009-08-01 - 2014-09-30
<b>Lead partner</b>	Stad Nieuwpoort
<b>Project Coordinator</b>	Eric VERDONCK(eric.verdonck@nieuwpoort.be)

