GreenPlace

Boulogne-sur-Mer, France
41 000 inhabitants

Challenge

A brownfield of 6.5 hectares located around Boulogne sur mer station needs to be transformed. Many issues have to be taken into account: more greenspace in the city, better connection to the city centre, more housing, economic development.

Local heroes

The participation and response of the ULG have been very positive. Local stakeholders have been highly involved throughout the process and have shown strong interest and commitment to the projects.



Lessons learnt

In order to maintain the ULG members interested throughout the project, it has been useful to involve them in several ways:
- organise a site visit and invite them
- invite the person in charge of heritage to present the history of the site
- create a game of cards presenting different solutions for the site to involve people in the choice of solutions

Solution

An overall project for the Brecquerecque area

As part of the Greenplace project, a study firm was selected to work on the future of the Bréquerecque district on a larger scale. For several months, the City has been working with the firm to imagine the future of this area.

The work done through Greenplace is being reused, especially some of the project ideas highlighted by our ULG members :
- The industrial heritage of the former BIC CONTE factory is taken into account and part of its structure will remain.
- Make the area greener and create public space
- Connect the station to the city centre



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Bucharest, Romania
1.700.000 inhabitants

Challenge

Bucharest has many underused or abandoned industrial heritage sites and a severe lack of green, leisure, and public facilities in dense urban areas, with little land available for new development.

Local heroes

This initiative was made possible by the active involvement of the URBACT Local Group. The ULG members—representing public authorities, professionals, civil society, and local communities—were essential in shaping ideas, engaging citizens, and keeping the process alive. Their commitment ensured dialogue, co-creation, and continuity from exploration to future implementation.

Lessons learnt

Start with small, low-risk actions to open discussion around underused heritage sites.
Invest time in surveys and co-creation to build trust and a shared vision.
Engage a strong local group early to sustain the process.
Use testing actions to prepare the ground for future design competitions and investments.

Solution

Victoriei Tram Depot– Testing Public Reuse of an Industrial Heritage Site

In 2023, Bucharest initiated a testing action at the Victoriei Tram Depot to explore its future public reuse. Citizens and local stakeholders were engaged through surveys, co-creation workshops, and collective brainstorming on possible functions for the site. The process opened dialogue between the municipality, professionals, and the community on how the depot could serve public needs. In parallel, discussions were launched on organizing an architectural and urban design competition. This laid the groundwork for a shared vision and future transformation.



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Limerick, Ireland
102 287 inhabitants

Challenge

The Old City Walls of Irishtown have been forgotten and abandoned , leading to various degradations. While there is green growth it is not ncessarily beneficial to the wall nor for good usage for the local inhabitants. The area is prone to anti-social behaviour.

Local heroes

The local residents group in Johnsgate in Irishtown have been key supporters of the project. Helping to promote the actions among the local community and raising awareness of the project. The URBACT Local Group have also been instrumental in the delivery of the project.



Lessons learnt

To start of small and then build on your success with medium sized events before holding a larger event. The key is consecutive events and that it takes time.
Very important to have the right stakeholders involved at the right time.

Solution

Irishtown Heritage Festival

In August, as part of Irish Heritage Week , a Street Festival was organised on Old Clare Street. The street was closed off to traffic , and the community were invited to come out, meet their neighbours and learn to dance the traditional Irish dance The Walls of Limerick. An opportunity to explore how events could enhance the community's connection with the Old City Walls. Bringing people together with music and dance. It was also an opportunity to hear what residents would lke to see in their area, to show project designs and get feedback.



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Löbau, Germany
14 000 inhabitants

Challenge

The former Pasta factory in Löbau has been empty and unused since 2010. When we started URBACT the interest of people was low, nobody believed in the future of the factory. There were hardly any ideas for its future use and no public engagement to do anything about it.

Local heroes

For all efforts to revitalise the factory the close cooperation between the City of Löbau, the Haus Schminke Foundation and of course Löbau's inhabitants were key. Since last year we even have installed the "Pasta Club" for local stakeholders who want to take part and get engaged.



Local stakeholders at the "Pasta Club" in 2025

Lessons learnt

The thing we learned about public participation is that you need three basic things to get people to come:
- A reason to visi (like a tour of the place, an exhibition, an event etc.)
- Food and drinks (can also be turned into a reward for filling out questionnaires etc.)
- Something fun to do or experience (helps to make people remember the event in a positive way to make them come back next time)

Solution

Spotlight events and test uses

In 2023 and 2024 four "Spotlight events" took place to invite people to visit the factory grounds. While asked to write down their needs and visions for the factory, they were able to experience the buildings with their green surroundings, the courtyard and the potentials of the factory. To experience the interiors, eight weeks of "test uses" were organized in 2024 on the ground floor of the buildings. Everyone was encouraged to apply for a room to use for their ideas. In the end there were numerous offers from a temporary bar/café to sports classes for seniors, a radio station, art workshops and yoga sessions. In total about 1700 people visited the spotlight events and the test uses.



The "Rundfunkkombinat" ("Radio combine") Saxony at the factory.

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Nitra, Slovakia
50 000 inhabitants

Challenge

Nitra faces the urgent task of revitalizing the former military barracks, a vast but isolated brownfield disconnected from the city's life. The area struggles with long-term neglect and the complex pressure of balancing heritage protection with the need for a modern, accessible urban park.

Local heroes

This transformation is driven by the City of Nitra and the URBACT Local Group (ULG), bringing together the Bishopric of Nitra, the Institute of Archaeology, the Creative Center, and the "Zoborské včely" (Zobor Bees) association, volunteers and residents .





Lessons learnt

Here are few things to keep in mind for this action:
-organize regular small-scale actions, such as open-gate weekends and guided tours, which are very attractive to residents;
-support local stakeholders to open their activities to the public;
-provide space for non-profit organizations with a suitable focus that can operate here.

Solution

Open House Days

A story that began as individual actions by various entities within the site has, through the project and testing activities, transformed into regular events known as "Open House Days." During these events, local stakeholders join forces to provide visitors with a rich program, including guided tours focused on the area's historical development and architectural values, historical period workshops, the opening of archaeological warehouses, creative workshops in the Creative Center, and an educational program with the "Zoborské včely" (Zobor Bees) including the sale of bee products.
Every year, this event strengthens the relationships between stakeholders in the area while attracting residents and visitors to discover this hidden gem of the city.



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Onda, Spain
26.190 inhabitants

Challenge

Following the city's growth, old factories on the outskirts became obsolete and surrounded by residential urban land. There are problems with traffic and mobility existing accident blackspots in this area. And in adittion, some of the old factories contain harmful elements like asbestos, that must be eliminated.

Local heroes

The participation and response of the ULG have been very positive. Local stakeholders have been highly involved throughout the process and have shown strong interest and commitment to the project.s



Lessons learnt

One of the main highlights of our GreenPlace journey is that we now clearly understand the URBACT methodology and have a strong and active ULG.
Our main takeaway from GreenPlace is that urban transformation is not only about changing a physical space, but about building a shared process. Today, we have a co-created Integrated Action Plan that gives us a clear roadmap to transform the old ceramic site into a green lung and cultural hub.

Solution

Green lung and cultural hub for citizens

When we joined GreenPlace, our focus was clear.
Onda has a strong ceramic industrial tradition, and today a large part of the city is made up of old ceramic factories that are no longer in use. Many of these areas need environmental regeneration.
Our idea is to transform this whole area into a large green lung that will also connect this zone with the historic centre of Onda.
GreenPlace helped us see this transformation as a shared project, built together with local stakeholders.



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Quarto d'Altino, Italy
8024 inhabitants

Challenge

Transform an underused civic center and the public space into a driver of social cohesion, sustainable mobility and territorial innovation, reconnecting people, heritage and the environment, in an area of high historical, archaeological and environmental value.

Local heroes

This action would not have been possible without the strong involvement of local actors. A key role was played by the Municipality of Quarto d'Altino and, above all, by the URBACT ULG, the true "Local Hero" of Quarto, together with associations, sports groups, cultural operators and researchers who made a decisive contribution to testing actions, community engagement and the launch of the Altino reactivation process. Their collaboration helped to build trust, share re-sponsibilities and develop a common vision for the future of the Civic Centre.

Lessons learnt

- **Pilot actions are essential to activate places before full regeneration;**
- **Integrating physical regeneration with social and cultural activities is key in heritage-rich areas;**
- **Trust-building among local actors is a crucial investment;**
- **Cultural and environmental assets are powerful tools for community engagement;**
- **Flexible and adaptive governance is necessary for long-term revitalisation.**

Solution

Green & Smart Altinum Hub

The Green & Smart Altinum Hub is an integrated action aimed at regenerating the Altino Civic Centre and its surrounding areas as a multifunctional hub dedicated to culture, community life and sustainable tourism.
The action combines physical regeneration, soft mobility, cultural programming and participatory governance. Through testing actions, events and co-design activities, the Hub has started to reconnect the archaeological site, the canal system and the extensive cycling network with local communities, experimenting with new uses of space and shared management models. The Hub is conceived as a living place, progressively activated through collaboration, creativity and sustainability



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Wrocław, Poland
880 000 inhabitants

Challenge

A large post-industrial site in Wrocław, closed off and largely forgotten, lacked greenery and contributed to heat stress and poor-quality public space. Despite its potential, the area remained unused and disconnected from the local community.

Local heroes

This would not have been possible without the involvement of URBACT Local Group which consisted of several units of Wrocław Municipality as well as NGOs, volunteers and residents.



Lessons learnt

Here are a few things to keep in mind for this action:

- **Be open to various ideas**
- **Remember that where there's a will, there's a way**
- **Actively engage volunteers**
- **Use participatory tools**
- **Focus on building trust and community**

Solution

Workshops and Green Boiler House

In 2024, the GreenPlace team prepared the Popowice depot for transformation by engaging local stakeholders through a hackathon, workshops, and a site survey. They helped define community needs, green solutions, and functional zones, laying the groundwork for hands-on testing. Between March and September 2025, a neglected part of the depot was opened as a pilot green space. Residents and volunteers created flower beds, a rain and community garden, and simple wooden furniture, while a large mural transformed the site visually. These nature-based and creative actions tested the area's integration potential and encouraged residents to shape and care for the space together.



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Vila Nova de Poiares, Portugal
7 000 inhabitants

Challenge

A key green area between the town centre and the industrial zone is degraded, affected by wildfire impacts (2017) and flood risk, with invasive species, poor land management and erosion reducing ecological value and public use.

Local heroes

Municipality of Vila Nova de Poiares (environment, urban planning, civil protection, sports)
Urban Local Group (ULG): schools/universities, environmental & cultural associations, companies (industrial area), NGOs and citizens/volunteers



Solution

Green Park

We are regenerating a ~6-hectare green area between the town centre and the industrial zone, heavily affected by the 2017 wildfires and prone to flooding into a vibrant Green Park. The action combines nature-based water management (cleaning and restoring watercourses, creating retention/flow-control areas, strengthening riparian corridors) with ecological restoration (ongoing control of invasive species and replanting native vegetation). At the same time, we will create safe, continuous walking and cycling routes and small-scale leisure/education features (signage, recreational areas and landscape-friendly furniture) so the park becomes a daily-use space for residents and workers. The Green Park will function as an ecological buffer and a green corridor, improving biodiversity, reducing flood/erosion risk and reconnecting the city with nature.



Lessons learnt

Build the plan through co-creation (ULG meetings, workshops, site visits) to ensure ownership.

Combine nature-based solutions + mobility + public space in one integrated project.

Coordinate across departments and partners, and plan implementation in phases to match funding and capacity.

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