

GrowGreen report: Engaging citizens in nature-based solutions



Produced by the IUCN European Regional Office with contributions from the GrowGreen partners: Manchester, Wroclaw, Valencia, Paisaje Transversal

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1. Introduction

Carrying out successful citizen engagement processes to transform cities and help them become more resilient through the use of nature-based solutions (NBS) is one of the challenges faced by the GrowGreen project. Engaging citizens requires not only informing them about the importance of NBS for improving their quality of life, but also generating enthusiasm and involvement, to benefit from their ideas in the transformation process and future management practices.

This report supports GrowGreen cities and others in devising and implementing effective citizen engagement for NBS. It has two primary focuses, firstly to engage citizens around local NBS projects, and secondly to engage citizens in the development and implementation of a city-wide strategy for NBS. The training package draws on the expertise of GrowGreen partners' in terms of; external resources on citizen engagement, lessons learnt from the GrowGreen cities to date, and the experiences of other cities around Europe and beyond. Furthermore, the training package provides guidance on engaging citizens, an overview of engagement actions taken in GrowGreen cities, providing an in-depth review of the lessons learnt from those processes. Lastly, it provides additional resources for further exploration of this topic.

2. Approaches and methods for citizen engagement

General approach

A cross-city citizen engagement programme has been developed in GrowGreen 'Front-runner' and 'Follower' cities to enable citizens to understand and contribute towards the delivery of NBS projects in their communities. Differentiated approaches towards a common goal have been put in place in GrowGreen cities. In some cities, citizen engagement around NBS had already been established, and the projects continued the previous methodologies. However, in other cities, methodologies were still to be put in place, and the GrowGreen programme particularly supported these cities to actively involve local stakeholders in the demonstration projects. The lessons learnt from the programme are being incorporated into the Green Cities Framework, and through the Green Cities Training Programme will support citizen engagement in other cities.

Engaging citizens in the process of planning for and developing NBS in their city is important for different reasons. For example, including citizens in the decisions that affect them can help to build trust and promote active citizenship, and if the process is transparent, it is likely that citizens perceive decision making to be fair. Engaging citizens can allow their needs, creative ideas and local knowledge to be taken into account, enabling NBS to be adapted to local conditions and priorities, improving their effectiveness. Involving citizens in the design and



development of NBS also helps to create support for the continued actions related to maintaining and promoting them. Lastly, engaging citizens in participatory processes can help to identify common ground and reduce conflict amongst them.

However, for these benefits to be realised, citizen engagement must be carefully planned and executed. The process must be transparent, fair, and equal, and include all citizens, particularly those that may be otherwise marginalised, and must allow minority opinions to be raised. The process should start early and occur throughout the decision-making process according to well-defined objectives and should use methods, and language appropriate for the context and stage in the decision-making process.

Methods

These methodologies can be used to structure citizen engagement activities in any city. They have supported the real processes of citizen participation that have accompanied the GrowGreen pilot projects.

Listen and Transform

The 'Listen and Transform' method develops an integrated vision and ensures collaboration with citizens through a cyclical process adaptable to the objectives of each project. The simple idea consists of repeating the cycle as many times as necessary: collect information and opinions (listen) to design and execute the projects (transform), and then evaluate the result to redesign the changes. Therefore, 'Listen and Transform' has been an ideal methodology for the GrowGreen project in which a collaborative process with several objectives has been implemented. The two phases of the cyclical process are as follows:

- Listen to the environment (urban network and stakeholders' network) through information collection and analysis tools, both qualitative and quantitative. This phase makes us recognise the needs and potential of each site and neighbourhood, and create the context to share information, generate collective knowledge and interest in the community and stakeholders.
- Transform the environment in a collaborative manner, by defining strategies, actions, and projects that improve the quality of life of the inhabitants and encourage cooperation and co-responsibility in the projects.

Doing Cities with People

- The Dissemination, Citizenry, and Participation (DCP) methodology builds citizen involvement for both the development and implementation of the NBS projects. The method requires that in every phase of the project several actions must be delivered related to each of the three components. This will ensure a transparent, qualified, and collaborative process, the three features that a citizen engagement process should check. The three components can be described as follows:



- Dissemination talks about transparency and visibility, locally and globally, and of the proposals. This guarantees public commitment by maintaining an open conversation about the project. This can involve the use of multiple media channels to reach every citizen and using clear language to provide transparent information.
- The Citizenry component refers to strengthening community identity, incorporating opportunities for education and information sharing. The actions delivered should be created by and for the community to empower them and make it more autonomous. Several activities that promote learning about urban concepts can be developed in this component, so that the community understands the subject of participation, and can feel part of the process.
- Participation represents the participatory processes itself, where active and engaged stakeholders take part in the collaborative planning of the design, development, and management of NBS projects.

These three components must be fulfilled but can overlap and support each other. Together they serve to; direct actions and lead workshops; generate ideas for communities; disseminate information; develop solutions and interventions to improve the urban landscape; improve the well-being of citizens through the NBS. Furthermore, this methodology aligns with the values of ecology, social justice, and sustainability through holistic, inclusive, and responsible projects.

3. Citizen engagement in GrowGreen cities

This document presents case study examples of citizen engagement activities used by, Manchester, Valencia, Wroclaw, Modena, Brest, and Zadar as they develop NBS strategies and projects. Table 1 provides an overview of the case studies, with an overview of the degree of public participation.

Table 1. Case studies of citizen engagement in GrowGreen (source: GrowGreen 2nd periodic report)

Type (project vs strategy)	Degree of public participation	Geographic scale	Project title	External Links	Tackled challenges
Project	Collaborate	Neighbourhood (Local)- scale	[1] Manchester - West Gorton Community Park	GrowGreen deliverable 6.6	Experienced contractors in the NBS field.
Project	Collaborate	Neighbourhood (Local)- scale	[2] Valencia- Green Roofs	GrowGreen deliverable 6.6	COVID 19 delays. Experienced contractors in the NBS field.
Project	Involve	Neighbourhood (Local)- scale	[3] Wroclaw- Resilient Cities	GrowGreen deliverable 6.6	Experienced contractors in the NBS field. Engaging Citizens
Strategy	Inform/Consu	City-scale	[4] Zadar- Green	GrowGreen	COVID 19



Type (project vs strategy)	Degree of public participation	Geographic scale	Project title	External Links	Tackled challenges
	It		Cadastre	deliverable 6.6 Nasadi d.o.o. and professional company Axiom d.o.o.	delays.
Strategy	Inform	City-scale	[5] Brest	GrowGreen deliverable 6.6	COVID 19 delays.
Strategy	Consult	City-scale	[6] Modena- The adjustment and Enhancement of the Drainage System	GrowGreen deliverable 6.6	COVID 19 delays.

The case studies are categorised by the type of citizen engagement approach used in Table 2.

Table 2. Overview of case studies from GrowGreen by the type of approach used.

Type of approach	Case Study
Access to services/knowledge	[2];[3]
Art	[2]
Face-to-face gatherings/meetings/forums	[1];[2];[3][4];[6]
Games/competition	[1];[2]
Hands-on approach	[5]
Hiring an expert in local engagement	[1]; [3]
Informative brochures/explanatory panels/videos	[2]; [3];[5]
Perceptive maps	[2]
Social events, dinners, aperitifs	[1];[2]
Social media/online platforms	[1];[2];[3];[4]
Surveys (in multiple languages)/interviews	[1];[6]
Tours of the area (Including online via video)	[1];[2]; [3]
Workshops	[2];[3]
Workshops targeted to specific groups	[2];[3]

[1] Manchester West Gorton Community Park

As part of GrowGreen, a new community park with several NBS features for managing rainwater has been installed in West Gorton, Manchester. The community park also aimed to increase the amount of green space in the area, improve biodiversity, while co-benefiting social inclusion, physical and mental health benefits. There have been several events held in Manchester to engage the public with the new park in West Gorton. Local charity Groundwork has worked with several groups in the community, including the local primary school, the staff



at the local medical centre, senior citizens in their community centre, and many others to get them involved in the new park project.

The citizen engagement activities for the West Gorton Community Park range from simple access to information, to consultation and decision-making. These activities were organised into three distinct phases: 1) Baseline community engagement, 2) Concept design community engagement and 3) Sketch design community engagement.

Phase 1: Baseline Community Engagement focused on assessing how locals use and live in green spaces, their valuable aspects, potential improvements, how residents travel around the area, and their level of knowledge regarding climate change. Phase 1 also established residents' priorities and preferred solutions. The report from this phase was passed to the project's landscape architects who produced an analysis of present green spaces, barriers, and opportunities. In detail, the following activities were held:

- Youth engagement sessions (facilitated by youth clubs) introduced GrowGreen to the youth and collected information on the use and barriers to the use of open spaces. The sessions aimed to raise awareness and educate; for example a computer game was used where players had to respond to natural disasters, helping them understand the concept of NBS. Young citizens also informed the social media strategy by advising on the use of platforms such as Instagram, Facebook, and Twitter. They also helped to draft the artwork to be used in branding.
- Door knocking-questionnaires, with drop off points for the return of the surveys located at a school, medical centre, and youth centre
- Drop-in sessions, held at lunchtime outside the school, the medical centre, and the grocery store, to distribute flyers and more surveys. This also constituted an opportunity for residents to ask questions and get engaged.
- School workshops, to introduce students to the project and establish cooperation. Children participated in an environmental quiz to raise their awareness of NBS and climate change, and they worked to develop the branding further. The pupils were sent home with flyers and surveys.
- Family Treasure Hunt (for Easter) was a crucial involvement opportunity that linked to the events for the youth and schools, promoting locals' engagement on a broad spectrum of participation, from the design of the project to practical activities. Environmental information was provided during the event, acting as dissemination as well as an engagement tool.

Phase 2: Concept Design Community Engagement aimed to raise awareness of the project and promote feedback on concept design. The goal of the following activities was to present to the community the results of Phase 1, together with initial ideas and designs. The feedback was used to fine-tune the design of the projects.

- Youth engagement sessions: the first workshop created content for the previously identified social media outlets; the second workshop collected feedback on which



features of green spaces were considered valuable, based on the ideas of landscape architects. The data were analysed to determine the group's priorities.

- Questionnaires were distributed to gather opinions on unused green space.
- Virtual "Seeing is Believing" Tour, with the goal of inspiring and engaging residents about the project. The tour consisted of a PowerPoint presentation showing a visual representation of the issues the city is facing (i.e. flood risk, heat stress, biodiversity loss, bad air quality, health and well-being, ground contamination), together with a Q&A session held with a London community that experienced similar issues and projects. The participants then evaluated the projects using an "evaluation tree", adding comments and providing a space for discussion.
- Concept Design Consultation Drop-in Session, aiming at disseminating concept design and collecting feedback on it.
- Over 50s group – Concept Design Feedback: the concept design was presented to this group to broaden the spectrum of engaged demographics.
- West Gorton Steering Group – Concept Design Feedback: to collect feedback from such group.

Phase 3: Sketch Design Community Engagement, focused on gathering feedback on the sketch design and present it back to the project team.

- Questionnaire dissemination via mail and on-street engagement, to gather opinions on the enclosed sketch design.
- Environmental Bingo and other games, to educate residents, businesses, and stakeholders in general on the principles of environmental resilience.
- Sketch Design Consultation Drop-in Event using a Mobile Consultation Unit: a further opportunity for citizens to provide feedback, using a traffic-light system to clearly categorise residents' comments.
- West Gorton Buzzing Community Planting Day was an event organized by the youth and open to the entire community. Outcomes include the creation of a banner, planters, mini-gardens for residents to take home, a mural, and a plaque to promote the project in the neighbourhood.

Following the finalisation of the park's design and its construction, further engagement events were held to introduce the community to the park and its NBS features. These included:

- **Park naming competition:** Members from the local community were asked to come up with a new name for the park. The winning submission was from a local resident and the new park is now officially called 'The West Gorton Community Park'.
- **Groundwork engagement events:** Groundwork organised a community event with a number of family-friendly activities such as face painting, a bug finding trail, a cupcake sale, and a build your own 'NBS nature hat'. The event aimed to inform the public about the project, including the NBS themes in the design of the new park, 'An park that drinks water', and that this is the first of its kind in the city.



- **Spring bulb planting:** A spring bulb planting event allowing the community to get hands-on with an area being landscaped as part of the GrowGreen project.
- **Opening event:** Festivities were postponed due to COVID-19. However, a civic opening event was held instead with resident representatives, local politicians, and senior managers from Manchester City Council in attendance.
- **Friends of West Gorton Community Park:** This will be established at a later date due to COVID-19 restrictions.
- **Introductory video:** An introductory [video of the park](#) was created by the GrowGreen team in Manchester. The video gives a general introduction to the park and the NBS features and shows the construction of the park in progress.

In addition to the West Gorton Park, Manchester aims to develop a [local river valley strategy](#) as part of its plans to refresh its existing blue and green infrastructure strategy. Three 'River Valley Action Plans' are being developed, with citizens engaged in several ways:

- **City-wide programme of citizen engagement:** Several face-to-face engagement activities were planned for summer 2020, but these were postponed due to COVID-19 limitations on social distancing.
- **Survey and video:** The Wildlife Trust for Lancashire, Manchester, and North Merseyside has partnered with Manchester City Council to create a [short survey](#), which had around 2000 responses. The results will help to shape the new 10-year vision for biodiversity in Manchester. Respondents will be invited to get involved with this project in more detail when lockdown restrictions lessen.
- **EU UIA project IGNITION:** The [IGNITION project](#) has also undertaken a citizen survey, and carried out workshops into attitudes and knowledge about NBS. A school programme is being developed for pupils to be involved in all stages of planning for local ground improvements.

[2] Valencia- Vertical ecosystem (Green wall) and other nature-based solutions

A participatory process for citizens in the Benicalap neighbourhood of Valencia has been designed to engage them in the development of a series of NBS demonstration projects to manage heat and rainwater. The process is structured around the 'Listening and Transforming' methodology that was developed by Paisaje Transversal (PAT).

The listening phase aims to promote participation using communication and awareness-raising tools. It also focuses on identifying room for improvement in the presence of nature in the area and selecting a group of people with an interest in developing such ideas further. It, therefore, helps recognise the needs and potential of each site and neighbourhood, create the dynamics to share information, and generate collective knowledge and interest for the communities and stakeholders.

The transformation phase responds to the proposals formulated during the previous phase. The transformations take place alongside communication actions to publicise the initiative, making the proposals and concrete measures visible. It therefore defines strategies, actions



and projects that improve the quality of life of people living in the area and encourage cooperation and co-responsibility in the projects, as well as promoting a greater commitment to the development of the area.

During the tracking phase, the continuity of the collaboration between stakeholders is ensured through follow-up activities. This phase also aims to strengthen the co-management dynamics and disseminate results to the general public. The 'Transform' phase involves

Listening phase

In order to disseminate knowledge, the municipality reached out to residents through informative brochures and websites, explanatory panels, and public presentations. To gather data regarding stakeholders' and citizens' views on the matter, interviews with stakeholders, questionnaires (both online and on-site), and perceptive maps were filled out. Perceptive maps are a tool to identify people's perceptions of a subject. Such maps are produced by participants and represent the route each participant follows and its purpose. The participant also indicates the spots they like, use the most, and least, and the reasons for it. The participant doesn't have to be the one drawing, as they can simply indicate areas and routes on the map.

Subsequently, a series of workshops were organised, with the first one aimed at increasing participation. During the event, the status of green areas and their use, along with the neighbourhood climatic behaviour, were assessed in order to make a first project proposal. The call was completely open, and all the citizens previously interviewed were invited. Two additional types of workshops were held to include specific groups, namely the elderly and women. The workshops for the elderly focused on collecting their memories and ideas on the local green spaces, as well as identify the spaces where their activities take place and what are the accessibility barriers of other sites. Moreover, the municipality received their feedback on the existing public space alongside opportunities for improvement. The venues of the workshops were adapted to the spaces normally used by the focus group, namely the Elder Centre and a public area where they usually gather to play dominoes.

The last series of workshops focused on women and their vision of the neighbourhood, which is often underrepresented. The event aimed at finding the most and least valued public space related to daily life and care, and at finding criteria that the NBS should follow to be of use for women. The event started with an introduction to the gender perspective and then proceeded to brainstorm to identify the abovementioned criteria for the blue and green corridors, which will be one of the main NBS installed in the neighbourhood.

Transformation phase

The transformation phase seeks to understand citizens' requests for the development of the pilot projects, and to continue the collaborative process, generating spaces where people can get to know and relate to the implementation of the projects.



Participatory actions have been developed for the validation and return of the results, and to link citizens to the transformations. They are based on the tool ‘Doing Cities with People’, which organises activities into three categories: dissemination, citizenship, and participatory project (Table 3).

Table 3. Citizen engagement activities during the Transform phase in Valencia

Dissemination
Information brochures on the pilot projects
Explanatory panels for pilot projects in equipment
Web and HR support for projects
Ephemeral intervention in public space
Citizenry
Public event in public space to share results
Participatory Project
Pilot Projects Validation Workshop.
Collaborative Green Initiatives Workshop
Meetings with agents to follow up the pilot projects

Activities are described below:

Pilot Projects Validation Workshop: The neighbourhood validation workshop exhibited information panels that demonstrated how the wishes of the citizens had been integrated into the demonstration projects. Participants were invited to examine the information about the demonstration projects and were encouraged to leave post-its on the observations or proposals that they considered important. GrowGreen partners were on hand to facilitate discussion and answer questions.

Collaborative Green Initiatives Workshop: The participatory process deployed in the Benicalap neighbourhood addressed the naturalisation of the neighbourhood as well as the vegetable garden to link social needs with the pilot projects. Although a number of the participants’ proposals were addressed by the pilot projects, a number of them remained unaddressed. Therefore, an open call for green initiatives was used to address the citizens’ responses. Prior to the open call, the rules of the competition were established by the local citizens and stakeholders involved. The workshop highlighted the importance of gender mainstreaming and the need to engage with the local community on the proposed projects from the beginning, issues that were reflected in the rules of the competition. The meeting generated synergies among the attendees to propose common projects for the open call.

Public event in public space to share results: A public event was held to report on the progress of the pilot projects and show the results of the participation. Activities included a tour of the neighbourhood to explain the pilot projects, activities for children, and a presentation to the winners of the open call.

Project information brochures: Once the pilot projects had been finalised with the results of the participation, a new updated brochure was designed. The brochure includes the details of the pilot projects being implemented and how the city council are responding to the neighbourhood feedback. These were distributed in local shops in the neighbourhood, as well as participatory events.

Explanatory panels about demonstrative projects in public facilities: Explanatory panels will be installed at the site of the NBS to explain them to people who use them. There have also been a number of information points in facilities such as local libraries, schools, and museums.

Project web and mail communication: A website was established (mesverdbenicalap.eu) allowing residents to keep up to date with information on the pilot projects, and participatory actions supporting them. In addition to the website, the participating population has been kept informed through e-mail.

- **Competition for citizens to design NBS:** A competition was held to increase citizen engagement in the GrowGreen project. Participants were asked to identify NBS and green infrastructure issues that they felt needed to be addressed and to propose solutions and project ideas. The Open Call was evaluated by a jury formed of representatives of the city, several GrowGreen partners, and civil society. There were five winning projects outlined as follows:
- **ESPAI VERD BENICALAP:** This project proposed the regeneration of an area on Hermanos Machado Avenue and the creation of a green civic and educational centre for local community groups.
- **ALIATS ALATS:** Workshops to promote the presence of local fauna, bats, and birds and the installation of bird and bat boxes.
- **CENTRE CÍVIC VERD:** The construction of a pergola using local materials and knowledge to provide a meeting space in a disused area of Hermanos Machado Avenue. The project proposes the identification of local talent to help build the pergola.
- **URBAN RESILIENCE PROVISION:** To improve the climatic comfort of the courtyard of the IES Benicalap (school) by using NBS to increase the shaded areas and creating spaces for the school students to socialise.
- **ECO-REMEI:** To empower neighbours to improve their public green spaces. Producing a community video that will reflect on the green space in the neighbourhood.

Ephemeral action: The ephemeral action in public places is aimed at communicating the pilot projects to the local neighbourhood residents in an artistic way. This was achieved via artistic messages, and floor signs in Benicalap's public spaces (**Error! Reference source not found.**),



explaining the location of the projects and the environmental improvements of each them. It therefore shows residents the results of their participation in the project.



The ephemeral action in public space in Benicalap, Valencia

Maintenance and training workshops: Workshops will be held for children, teachers and families involved with the school on which the vertical garden is installed. The workshops will ensure that they are aware of how it works and how to take care of the installation to minimise breakdowns. The vertical garden must work properly so that the school garden is watered with treated water successfully.

Biodiversity App: The Biodiversity App was designed to allow citizens to improve their knowledge of biodiversity in their neighbourhood. The app helps to improve local citizens' knowledge of their urban green infrastructure and build on their perception of its benefits, including local biodiversity and NBS. By using the app, citizens can contribute to a bird census with green infrastructure managers and academics, and users can follow different routes (with an ecological theme) and carry out missions. The app works in the Benicalap area and the city council aims to extend the use to the rest of the city. It will be used in the schools of Benicalap as an educational tool while informing and involving inhabitants in NBS projects.

The app contains three main modules. The 2D map indicates the user's real-time location, the game mode introduces the user as an avatar in the 3D world, and a module that promotes environmental awareness through bird watching. Through different routes, the user visits a series of points of interest (POIs) that appear on the 2D map. The POIs are the species of trees, shrubs, urban and peri-urban birds, which represent the most common flora and fauna species (birds) of Benicalap and Valencia, as well as the architectural heritage (Alquerías and Casino of Americano) and the NBS elements in the GrowGreen project.

Solidarity Food Basket: This initiative aims to improve access to agro-ecological, local, and seasonal food grown in the Benicalap area of Valencia, while improving social and labour integration for people with disabilities. In May 2019, a network of local producers and sellers linked to a distribution method via a group of people at risk of social exclusion was identified.



This will promote direct purchase, without intermediaries, from local producers in the community.

[3] Wroclaw: Downtown and Great Island

There are a number of NBS demonstration sites installed across the Olbin district of Wroclaw as part of GrowGreen. The concepts were co-designed with a wide group of stakeholders at a series of workshops held with citizens and other interested parties. Each stage in the workshop series consisted of eight workshops for residents and stakeholders – one for each demonstrator plus the green street. The four stages were as follows:

- The first series introduced residents to GrowGreen and NBS and aimed to learn about the space in which each demonstrator would be installed. The residents were asked how they used the space, what they needed from it and what they would like, by filling out questionnaires about their needs and expectations. Visual materials helped to explain what NBS are. Photo maps were used so that residents could draw what they wanted where, or where the problems were, which fed into the first designs of the NBS. There was also a “wheel of fortune: with questions related to ecology and blue-green infrastructure, and there were fresh fruits and home-made lemonade.
- The second series presented the first designs of the NBS to residents. The designs were discussed with residents and changes made.
- The third series took place during construction of the NBS. They were prepared in the form of a festival with games, charades. Citizens were encouraged to plant flowers and shrubs and some of them brought their own plants.
- The fourth series took place after completion of the NBS. It aimed to provide all additional information that the citizens needed to contribute to and benefit from the demonstration projects. For example, information packs for rain barrels were provided, herbs and flowers were planted. There were also games, competitions, and other activities – such as creating a garden in a jar. The last series, due to the Covid -19 restrictions, were limited to four demonstrators.

In addition to the workshop series, an exhibition of the final designs was held in the public library.

There were meetings with the district council as well, which was very active in the process of designing and delivering demonstrators. There is a [website dedicated to the GrowGreen project](#) in Wroclaw that is a source of information about the project, its goals, ambitions. It serves as an education tool – information about NBS and all activities connected with the demonstration projects for citizens and other interested parties.

The NBS were positively received by the local community. Some were installed in the courtyards of apartment buildings and were positively embraced due to local residents’ personal relationship with the green space. During workshops for one of the courtyards, citizens were asked for their recommendations for planting flowers, herbs and vegetables. The



project gave space for community gardens, initiated by local citizens who began the process of planting flowers and vegetables in the garden independently of GrowGreen.

Some NBS were installed along public streets, and therefore different issues were raised in comparison to the courtyards, some of which were difficult to reconcile. With the arrival of spring, and the planting establishing, more people accepted the changes.

A broad information and education campaign launched on social media, local radio, and TV about the project, the solutions, and the impact of NBS on climate change. A walking tour of the demonstration projects with local media is planned.

The municipality has dedicated funds for raising awareness about climate change adaptation and Green and Blue infrastructure (NBS). As part of the broader citizen engagement on NBS, a catalogue of sustainable urban drainage systems for citizens' own gardens has been developed. A programme of engagement activities has also been undertaken in schools.

After the initial pilot projects, the citizens have taken action into their own hands by initiating more project using the participatory budget. After seeing the outcomes of the NBS constructed in the neighbourhood there is now a demand for more projects.

[4] Zadar

A public hearing was held, which detailed the process to develop a [nature-based solutions strategy](#) for the city of Zadar. Up-to-date information was published on the government's website, including a call for citizens and interested stakeholder's engagement. Furthermore, relevant news articles were posted on local [radio stations](#) and [news pages](#).

[5] Brest

The city of Brest is vulnerable to sudden flooding caused by heavy rainfall, made worse by climate change, and the roads, pavements, and other impermeable surfaces in the city. As part of GrowGreen, the city is updating its stormwater management plan to better manage rain and reduce flood risk. A [video](#) has been produced to help citizens understand stormwater management and how NBS can be used to help tackle flooding. The River Spenot is being re-naturalised and [local children](#) helped out by placing rocks in the stream, and learn about water management in the city.

[6] Modena

Following engagement with city policy makers, planners and practitioners' events will now be developed to engage citizens in the NBS agenda.

4. Lessons learnt from citizen engagement in GrowGreen cities

To assist with identifying lessons learnt from engaging citizens around the GrowGreen demonstration projects, the successes and challenges encountered in the three Frontrunner cities of Manchester, Valencia, and Wroclaw were assessed. This assessment took place



between December 2020 and February 2021, which in the case of Valencia was during the construction of some of the demonstration projects, and in the case of Wroclaw and Manchester was approximately one year and eight months post-construction, respectively. It is acknowledged that further lessons learnt are likely to emerge as the demonstration projects are in place for a longer period and as the monitoring of their social impacts is completed.

Valencia

The engagement process began at a disadvantage, both the choice of the place of intervention and the planned pilot projects had been designated by the Council beforehand, without a participation process. Therefore during the development phase, these decisions had to be validated, and a relationship of trust built with the community. Transparency with the neighbourhood associations allowed openness of opinion and vision throughout the process. The first lesson learned was that this honesty provoked a reaction of mutual trust with the neighbourhood that has remained throughout the project.

Another successful idea was not to address directly the pilot projects, but rather the problems and needs related to the wider public space of the neighbourhood, to draw attention and talk about issues that influence the community, and finally to apply these opinions to the pilot projects indirectly. At a later stage, work was done on the pilot projects specifically, with the most motivated people in the community.

The long time between the diagnosis and the start of the work, almost two years, could have created a dangerous gap, as citizens could feel disappointed or neglected. For this reason, it has been positive to present intermediate milestones such as the competition for collaborative green initiatives and the public presentation of the final pilot projects.

Another of the lessons we have learned is the need to be attentive to the needs and capacities of the community, to take advantage of their energy, and apply it in favour of the project. There were community leaders with many ideas, consequently, the Open Call was redirected into a citizen's competition, and it has become the Green Space Benicalap, an unexpected citizen NBS garden and space next to the Huerta.





One of the keys that has given rise to the good synergies of the process is the connection between citizens and project partners. It is necessary for facilitators to act as translators and liaisons, remaining attentive to the doubts and problems of all the people included in the project in order to relate them and resolve misunderstandings.

There are still important lessons to be learnt, as most of the pilot projects are not finished, so the social impact and the community's receptivity to these final projects will have to be assessed.

Manchester

Citizen engagement for the demonstration project, a park that drinks water, in Manchester was run by Groundwork, a charity that has existing links to the community, which suffers high levels of deprivation.

Young people were a key focus of the citizen engagement to ensure their input was incorporated into the process and with the intention of reducing anti-social behaviour in the park in the long term. Working with schools and youth groups with which there were existing connections, as well as with individuals and groups already active in the community, was effective. The two tenants' and residents' associations were also involved.

Involving the community in planting in the park worked well. Further planned activities include a 'seeing is believing' tour of the site to explain its features, and working with the local school to make a map of students' favourite places in the park.

A key challenge was that it took a long time to reduce doubt and scepticism amongst the general community that what was being promised would be delivered. Investing time in the process to build trust helped to overcome some of these challenge. The community also had some specific worries related to the design of the park, including that the stormwater stored in the swales would be a safety hazard for children. Concerns about anti-social behaviour were



also present – these were taken into account in the design of the park to ensure that it was open, with no hidden spaces, and with sightlines across the site.

The construction of the park was delayed, which led to challenges in aligning the engagement activities with the changed construction schedule planned for GrowGreen. This was resolved by using other projects and other opportunities to maintain engagement with the community.

Educating and engaging citizens around the climate change aspects of the project was also difficult, as many people did not feel they had much knowledge of climate change and there hadn't been any floods in the area. The engagement therefore first focused around health and wellbeing benefits, play opportunities, and other 'fun' aspects to open the conversation and build the relationship. The climate change benefits were then gradually introduced to people. The language around NBS can also be quite inaccessible and difficult to understand. To address this, terminology and explanations were simplified as much as possible and visual aids were used.

With regards to engagement methods, the use of technology (e.g. tablets) was tested to facilitate data collection and analysis during door-to-door surveys. However, these methods were not effective due to poor internet connections and some residents not being familiar with the technology. People responded better to traditional methods of spreading information, such as flyers and posters. It is important to maintain a balance in the different methods used to ensure that all groups of people can be reached.

Since the park has been open, it has been well used by a diverse range of people and a diverse range of activities. The park is situated between the two halves of the residential estate, helping to emphasise that it is a community park for everyone to use.

Wroclaw

The citizen engagement process in Wroclaw highlighted many activities and approaches that worked well. The series of dedicated workshops with local residents and other stakeholders, for each demonstration project, worked well. They provided an opportunity to bring different residents and stakeholders together in one place to discuss the future of the area they live in. A key element of success was including the district council in the workshops – the council is closer to the citizens than the city municipality and is aware of the problems in the area. The final workshop post completion was a useful opportunity to address information gaps that had not been originally identified, tailored to the needs of each demonstration project. For example, some citizens were not aware that the rain barrels were available for their use or of how to use them.

The various techniques used in the workshop series were also effective. The photo maps were helpful in two ways: they were easy for the citizens to see the whole area and identify what they wanted. They were also easy for the designers to use and to incorporate into their NBS designs. A set of printed examples of good NBS were provided at the first workshop to show people what they are and to make it easier to explain the concept. These examples also served



as inspiration for citizens to identify what they wanted. Inviting citizens to plant shrubs, flowers and herbs helped to build a sense of ownership so that citizens felt that the NBS belonged to them. It also allowed the residents to get to know each other, share knowledge, and support each other.

The public exhibition of the final designs in the public library was successful in presenting the NBS to citizens, stakeholders, the district council, the municipal maintenance company, and municipal representatives.

In Wroclaw, many citizens did not want green walls or rain barrels to be installed in their area due to fears that rain barrels were a safety hazard or that the green walls would attract vermin. However, once the demonstration projects were completed, many citizens requested them having been able to see their benefits.

Citizens' initial concerns that the demonstration projects would reduce available space for parking were alleviated primarily by changing how parking is managed. The parking spaces in the residential courtyards are now more organised, allowing space for both parking and other uses. The district council together with citizens proposed to introduce a paid parking zone in the green street and adjacent streets as well. The residents will have lower charges for street parking than non-residents.

A key challenge was that the demonstration projects were completed in winter, meaning that they were not green and that a launch event or festival was not possible. In spring, residents started to use NBS in the courtyards naturally. When they were first completed in winter, there were a lot of complaints about the parklets installed on the green street. However, once spring came and the flowers and leaves appeared, the reactions were better. Some adjustments were also made to the parklets, such as adding lighting. Now that citizens have seen them in bloom, the reactions are positive, and citizens defend them and promote them to each other.

5. Examples of citizen engagement across Europe

This section presents a set of examples of citizen engagement activities used by cities for developing strategies, such as NBS, strategies, climate action plans, etc., or for developing projects on the ground. Table 4 lists all the case studies presented in this section. The examples are sorted according to the type of case study (developing a strategy (e.g. action plan, strategy, framework) or a project), the position of the case study along the public participation spectrum, the geographic scale (city-wide, neighbourhood-wide, site-wide), and the type of challenges they faced. Links to external sources are also provided in the table. In Table 5, the case studies (referring to their index number) are grouped according to the type of approach/technique used. Each case study can use more than one approach, and hence may be present more than once.



Table 4: List of the Case Studies presented in the document.

Type (project vs strategy)	Degree of public participation	Geographic scale	Project title	External Links	Tackled challenges
Strategy	Collaborate/empower	City-scale	[1] Neighborhood City Planning (Utrecht, Netherlands)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	Barriers to social inclusion
Project	Involve/collaborate	Neighbourhood-scale	[2] Barrhead Water Works (Glasgow, UK)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3 ; Scottish local government ; Barrhead Water Works	Barriers to social inclusion
Strategy	Involve	City- scale	[3] Participatory Budgeting (Lisbon, Portugal)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	NA
Project	Consult/involve	Site- scale	[4] Community Gardens in via Gandusio (Bologna, Italy)	Naturvation	Integration and exchange
Strategy	Inform	City- scale	[5] Collaborative project in city planning (Fukutsu, Japan)	The Nature Of Cities	Adult participation
Project	Involve/collaborate	Site- scale	[6] Am Gleisdreieck Park (Berlin, Germany)	The Nature of Cities ; Am Gleisdreieck Park	NA
Project	Collaborate/empower	Site- scale	[7] Tempelhofer Feld (Berlin, Germany)	The Nature of Cities ; Visit Berlin ; Green Berlin	Engaging marginalized groups
Project	Involve/collaborate	Neighbourhood-scale	[8] High Point community development (Seattle, US)	Seattle municipality	Engaging marginalized groups
Strategy	Collaborate/empower	City- scale	[9] Crowdfunding platform (Ghent, Belgium)	Climate ADAPT	Lack of funding
Strategy	Inform	City- scale	[10] Citizen Card (Paris, France)	Paris municipality	NA
Strategy	Involve/collaborate	City- scale	[11] Resilient Glasgow Conversation	Scotland's Towns Partnership	Engaging marginalized groups



Type (project vs strategy)	Degree of public participation	Geographic scale	Project title	External Links	Tackled challenges
			(Glasgow, Scotland)		
Strategy	Collaborate	City- scale	[12] SynAthina (Athens, Greece)	EUROCITIES	NA
Strategy	Collaborate/empower	City- scale	[13] Workshops organized by ICLEI in its frontrunner cities: Turin (IT), Dortmund (DE) and Zagreb (HR)	proGReg deliverables D2.3 , D2.4 and D2.5	Define stakeholders and their role; identify risks and their implications; Engage marginalized groups
Strategy (Green hubs)	Collaborate/empower	Country- scale	[14] Green wish (Netherlands)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	NA
Strategy (Green hubs)	Consult/involve	Neighbourhood-scale	[15] Gardens of Art (Wroclaw, Poland)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3 ; Karadimitriou & Mironowicz 2012	Stimulate stakeholders past stalemates
Strategy (Green hub)	Collaborate/empower	Neighbourhood-scale	[16] Green Hub (London, UK)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	NA
Strategy	Collaborate	Province- scale	[17] Co-governance (Wageningen, Netherlands)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	NA
Project (Green barter)	Collaborate	Site- scale	[18] Green Barter (Lodz, Poland)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3	Lack of funding
Project (BID)	Collaborate	Site- scale	[19] Business Improvement District (BID) (Hamburg, Germany)	GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3 ; Tibarg BID	Mall opening (detrimental to small businesses)
Strategy	Empower	Site- scale	[20] Community Engagement and Participatory Planning at Heyford Reserve (Salisbury,	Participedia	NA



Type (project vs strategy)	Degree of public participation	Geographic scale	Project title	External Links	Tackled challenges
Both	Public participation spectrum covered completely	Worldwide	Australia [21] Participedia Database	Participedia	NA

Table 5: Case Studies grouped by the type of approach used.

Type of approach	Case Study
Access to services/knowledge	[10]; [12];
Art	[11]; [15];
Drop-in opportunities	[20];
Exhibitions	[6]; [7];
Face-to-face gatherings/meetings/forums	[2]; [3]; [4]; [5]; [6]; [7]; [8]; [11]; [12]; [14]; [20];
Funds provision	[3]; [9]; [16]; [18]; [19];
Games	[11];
Hands-on approach	[2]; [4]; [8]; [17]
Informative brochures/explanatory panels	[20];
Lectures	[7];
One-to-one engagement	[8]; [20];
Perceptive maps	[13];
Physically reaching the community at its location	[1]; [2]; [4]; [8]; [11]; [20];
Public-Private Partnerships (PPP)	[18]; [19];
Social events, dinners, aperitifs	[4];
Social media/online platforms	[2]; [3]; [6]; [7]; [12]; [14]; [20];
Surveys (in multiple languages)/interviews	[6]; [7]; [8]; [20];
Tours of the area	[6]; [7];
Workshops	[6]; [13]; [20];
Workshops targeted to specific groups	[5]; [6]; [7]; [13];

[1] Neighbourhood Green Planning (Utrecht, Netherlands)

Neighbourhood Green Planning (NGP) is a municipal-level initiative established in 2010 with the aim to facilitate citizen engagement in the design and implementation of green infrastructure projects. The initiative encourages bottom-up processes, so active citizens will have more influence on decision-making (e.g. which GI should be implemented in which area). Moreover, the initiative stimulated ownership of the GI by the citizens, ensuring its care and maintenance are continued over time, by encouraging co-governance and grassroots initiatives. The planning covered the 10 neighbourhoods that constitute the municipality of Utrecht, with a budget of €500.000 each.



Every neighbourhood of the city has its own social and environmental context, which in turn affected a) the opportunities for social inclusion and b) the potential spectrum of ideas and outcomes for green infrastructure. Acknowledging these different characters, no prescriptive process for NGP was established at the city-level. The GI projects in each locality were tailored to the context of the neighbourhood in which they were implemented, and were developed separately. As a result, the projects differed in procedures, content, funding, and actors involved. The recurrent theme throughout all neighbourhoods however was that citizens were encouraged to share their ideas and views on projects to ameliorate green spaces in their neighbourhood, both in quantity and in quality. After brainstorming, the ideas were assessed by the municipality and the viable ones were selected and implemented.

The NGP initiative was led by the municipality officials; however, due to the large scale of the project, the municipality very often cooperated with neighbourhood councils that acted as consulting body in each location. This collaboration was a way to overcome barriers to social inclusion and to promote the engagement of a mix of individual citizens, grassroots, and civil society organizations, ensuring continued involvement in the process.

Engaging people from different backgrounds proved difficult, especially in poorer neighbourhoods, which were usually also the ones with less green space. These citizens appeared to be less interested in sharing their ideas.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[2] Barrhead Water Works Community Green Space and Garden (Glasgow, Scotland)

Water Works is a co-governance project with the aim of regenerating the Barrhead neighbourhood of Glasgow, Scotland. This area is characterized by social deprivation and inequality, coupled with very large areas of brownfields resulting from abandoned industrial land. The Water Works initiative, an integral part of the Council's Local Development Plan, transformed the 2-hectares area from derelict sewage works into wildflower meadows and community gardening space. The project constituted a novel approach in the sense that it strived to construct a tight partnership for co-governance, by means of community involvement and promotion of active citizenship and community action. The Council brought its standard consultation and engagement onset one step further, motivating citizens to lead the way through the hands-on transformation of the area. Involving the community in the physical work, allowing them to contribute with their skills, knowledge, and resources to the design and implementation of the project put the community at the core of the initiative. This approach spurred discussions regarding social inclusion, cohesion, well-being and sustainability, and actions to promote them.

Obstacles and barriers to social inclusion were resolved by increasing the opportunities for engagement with varying degrees of involvement, at various stages of the projects, at different



times of the week, using different forms of engagement, from social media to face-to-face contacts. Such onset ensured the broadest possible inclusion of individuals and groups.

The initiative involved:

- More than 1000 local citizens in the site transformation
- 180 students at the local high school
- An intergenerational project between a Youth Group and the Men's Shed which increased connection between groups that wouldn't otherwise come in contact with each other
- 2 additional projects spurring from the starting initiative (community orchard and beekeeping)
- A budget of £90,000 to be dedicated to other community green spaces projects
- 6 apprentices trained in plant care and maintenance

At present, the area is managed by a newly established social enterprise, with the support of a "Friends of" group. There are continued opportunities for citizens and groups to take part in the governance of the site.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#); [Scottish local government](#); [Barrhead Water Works](#)

[3] Participatory Budgeting (Lisbon, Portugal)

In 2009, the City of Lisbon started the city-wide Participatory Budgeting project, intending to improve participatory planning and provide local communities a chance to have a say in the direction the city development should take. Through this initiative, any citizen could submit their ideas about the development of public space. A budget of 2.5 million Euros was dedicated to the implementation of winning projects. Every resident older than 18 years could participate, either via SMS or website. To include groups with no access to technology or reduced knowledge, the municipality regularly organised events to explain the process and collect citizens' ideas. Once the proposals were assessed, they were presented to the citizens, so they could vote for their preferred project. The initiative has had a significant effect on green infrastructure in Lisbon, as smaller parks and gardens created through participatory budgeting form a green corridor connecting two pre-existing bigger green areas.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[4] Community gardens in via Gandusio (Bologna, Italy)

In Bologna, a social housing complex was built during the '60s with the aim of providing housing to workers who migrated from Southern Italy during that period. At present, two communities live in the area: elderly, retired Italians and international immigrants. As these two groups are very different sometimes conflicts arise, thus limiting relationships within the complex. In an attempt to create a more cohesive social fabric, a community garden project was initiated in 2011 to provide a meeting point for the local citizens. Food production became



the link between neighbours to exchange experiences, culture and knowledge. The 250m² roof garden of via Gandusio was the first of its kind in Italy.

Implementation

The design of the project was in the hands of the municipality, in cooperation with BiodiverCity and the University of Bologna. Local inhabitants were involved from the very beginning (2010) for the design and experimentation. During the first meeting, the residents were presented with the idea, and a key to access the roof was provided to the individuals showing interest. The staff provided all the material for the building of a hydroponic garden, which was the best option since a) hydroponic gardens ensure the best results with minimum effort and waste, and b) the materials needed for this type of garden are cheap and mostly recycled. Local residents were taught planting and maintenance techniques, and they grew plants together. A manual on best practices and rules to ensure plants and residents are respected was provided, together with sheets to record activities.

The organisations involved mainly aimed at increasing citizens' education and cultural involvement. To this end, a Facebook page was created ("Gandusio Green Project"), and social activities were planned. A series of community social events, dinners, and aperitifs were organised. During such events, residents and BiodiverCity members cooked the products of the community gardens, offering them to the guests. Sharing food is a good way of facilitating encounters and exchange.

The initiative has surely had a very positive effect, bringing different communities together. Hydroponic techniques used in the garden allowed water savings of 25-30%, also thanks to the care of residents. The produce is fully organic.

More information: [Naturvation](#)

[5] Collaborative project in city planning (Fukutsu, Japan)

The municipality of Fukutsu City, in Japan, has committed to integrating environmental planning in the basic city planning, based on the ecological features of the city. To this end, the city initiated a collaboration with the Keitaro Ito laboratory (Kyushu Institute of Technology), which has been directing the project together with high school students. The city covers an area of 52 km² and is inhabited by 58 000 citizens. The city is rich in biodiversity, even within its borders. If the residents were to lose natural areas, a cascade of effects would ensue and ecosystem services such as fish would not be available anymore. Nowadays, the populations of endangered species are declining, and at the same time, people do not realize how crucial ecosystem health is, for both their well-being and their economy. City dwellers are disconnected from nature. Hence, the important task the municipality has is to lead people back to a path where they live in harmony with nature, recognising the benefits deriving from it.

Fukutsu's environmental plan aims at assessing the characteristics of the city's nature, by means of a collaboration with residents and youth. The views and opinions of the youth are



considered fundamental, as they live and enjoy their city every day. To this end, every month the municipality meets with the lab to discuss the project, and hosts workshops with students and residents every three months. Student participation has the effect of increasing adult participation, as sometimes parents take part in the workshops their kids are attending.

More information: [The Nature Of Cities](#)

[6] Am Gleisdreieck Park (Berlin, Germany)

In summer 2014, Berlin's new inner-city park opened: the Park am Gleisdreieck. Half of the 26-hectare area had already opened in 2011. The city proposed that the wasteland site be used as a park in 2006, and shortly afterward, a public engagement process began with the aim of determining design priorities. Initially, the area represented an intricate array of stakeholder interests, from the landowners (the privatised railway company) to the municipality and developers. In order to step up citizen engagement, the city sent out surveys to local residents and organised walking tours to raise awareness of the site's unique ecology. On top of these initiatives, workshops, forums, and exhibitions of design concepts were organised, as well as a "planning weekend". These events aimed to increase dialogue between designers and citizens. Moreover, an online engagement process started in order to collect the inhabitants' visions for the park. However, despite focus groups invitations and translated surveys, it was challenging to fully involve immigrant communities.

As a result of this initiative, the [Park am](#) Gleisdreieck took form. The park is a modern urban location, with the basic essentials of landscape architecture in mind. The park constitutes a "green break" in the city, offering at the same time a contemplative and stimulating experience of green space. Many types of scenery are created, which together form one big landscape comprising meadows, forest, nursery, terraces, sports tracks, and a central plaza.

More information: [The Nature of Cities](#); [Am Gleisdreieck Park](#)

[7] Tempelhofer Feld Park (Berlin, Germany)

The park was once an airport, which closed in 2008. To decide on the future of the area, public meetings and forums began in 2007 (before the closing of the airport) and eventually included tours, exhibitions, and lectures. Furthermore, a web dialogue was started alongside the distribution of surveys to residents. Additionally, moderated focus groups had the aim to engage immigrants, which historically did not participate in the surveys. Individuals were contacted through associations and religious groups. After the closure of the airport in 2008, a "Call for Ideas" was launched, attended by 3500 individuals. Subsequently, an Open House showcased the concepts developed by the finalists of the design competition.

The park opened in 2010, becoming one of the city's bigger green spaces. The city has continued the engagement process via the abovementioned means, and in 2014 launched an online program, which was followed by the formation of several citizen working groups to develop more detailed strategies and inputs. The online information-gathering phase coincided



with an extensive series of public events –from focused workshops to larger plenaries– throughout the whole process.

At present, the site has a six-kilometre cycling, jogging, and skating trail, a 2.5 hectare BBQ area, a 4-hectare dog-walking field, and an extended picnic area. The Tempelhofer Park also offers school students plenty of room to explore and exercise, as well as guided tours on various subjects. 19 initiatives stemmed from the establishment of the park, experimenting with arts, gardening, and social ideas.

The engagement of residents was key to the project. In 2014 citizens voted against construction on the edge of the park through a referendum. However, problems in the engagement process arose, as citizens felt a general distrust of development proposals.

More information: [The Nature of Cities](#); [Visit Berlin](#); [Green Berlin](#)

[8] High Point community development (Seattle, US)

A focal point for the redevelopment of the High Point neighbourhood was community engagement in planning and development. Throughout the process, local authorities provided several opportunities for residents, service providers, and neighbouring communities to give their input on issues such as park space and community facilities. This was achieved through community gatherings, design meetings, door-to-door surveys (in multiple languages), and one-to-one engagement. Moreover, local authorities hired residents from the community to sort material obtained from the deconstruction of old units in order to minimise the need for new materials.

More information: [Seattle municipality](#)

[9] Crowdfunding platform (Ghent, Belgium)

Citizens propose and finance their ideas for the city as a means of developing bottom-up initiatives for climate change adaptation. Applications are submitted to the platform, receive technical support, and collect donations from citizens. This platform provides a mechanism for financing small-scale projects that receive local support, which combined may have a bigger impact on climate change adaptation. Crowdfunding also gives citizens more control over the projects implemented in their neighbourhood, by allowing them to donate or not according to their preferences.

More information: [Climate ADAPT](#)

[10] Citizen Card (Paris, France)

The citizen card is free for any resident of Paris and allows access to a range of educational, civic, and cultural services and events. It aims to encourage citizens to engage and participate in their city. Citizens can access workshops, training, libraries, events with elected officials and others.

More information: [Paris municipality](#)



[11] Resilient Glasgow Conversation (Glasgow, Scotland, UK)

A city-wide ‘conversation’ enabled citizens to contribute to the draft resilience plan for the city. The municipality collaborated with public health researchers, council officers, change practitioners, artists, and others. Engagement techniques were focused on face-to-face conversations through street games, interactive art, and other activities. Workshops were targeted towards different stakeholder groups.

More information: [Scotland’s Towns Partnership](#)

[13] Green wish (Netherlands)

Several groups in the Netherlands started to organise the diversity of active citizen groups in cities or across the country. Among these groups, Green Wish (which started as a small Green Hub, i.e. a coalition between citizens, businesses, and NGOs) is organising and connecting knowledge about active citizenship across the Netherlands. Green Wish has now evolved into a network of individuals and small social enterprises. Using their network, they gained expertise regarding effective self-organization.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[14] Green Hub (London, UK)

In 2015, several actors partnered together in London: Groundwork London, the London Borough of Hackney, landscape architects, and businesses. The partnership aimed to design and implement new methods to raise funds for parks in the Shoreditch area of London. The partnership created a method for businesses to contribute to and benefit from parks in the long term. The Hub employed open engagement techniques in order to engage enterprises and enable them to develop methods to improve the green plots around and within Shoreditch. The aim was to ensure both the community and businesses benefitted from the initiative. One of the first steps was the creation of the TreeXOffice, a contemporary space to be used as a shared working space. The facility could be hired out by businesses, to raise funds, which were reinvested in the district’s parks and green areas.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[15] Co-governance (Wageningen, Netherlands)

In Wageningen (Netherlands), there is an ongoing collaboration in the form of a co-governance agreement involving the following parties: the citizen group “Mooi Wageningen” (Beautiful Wageningen), the local association of agrarians, the State Forest Service, and the province of Gelderland. Co-governance refers to a partnership between a local municipality and non-government actors, including non-governmental organisations, grassroots organisations and active citizens. The coalition between the partners is formalised, but at least some of the power and decision-making processes are shared between the players. In this case, all groups agreed to a project for the development of 300ha of wetlands and low-intensity meadows, in which the responsibility for the implementation and maintenance is allocated to both citizens and agrarians collectively.



More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[16] Green Barter (Lodz, Poland)

Green barter is located at the heart of Public-Private Partnership (PPP) schemes, in which both the goals and the way of implementation are defined by the public and private partners together, and the parties also share the risks and benefits of implementation. Between 2009 and 2013, the Lisciasta Park Residence (Lodz, Poland) was built. The Residence comprises seven buildings and a total of 158 apartments. On the southern and eastern side of the residential area, there is green space, including a park with a small river and several reservoirs. The wilder parts of the green area, very close to the Residence, hid important amounts of construction waste that had been dumped during the last decades of the twentieth century. Since then, the waste had been overgrown with vegetation. When the sales of the apartments started in 2013, the developer company proposed to clear and requalify the land where the construction waste was located. Thus, they cleared about 600 m² of the contaminated area, so they would fulfil their legal obligations (due to the tree felling they had to perform in order to build the residence) and at the same time improve the neighbourhood.

The municipality did not have the funds to restore the area, hence a public-private partnership was established between the developer and the municipality with the goal of restoring the area. The partnership was temporary, as the land is publicly owned and the management of it is in the hand of the municipality.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3](#)

[17] Business Improvement District (BID) (Hamburg, Germany)

A Business Improvement District (BID) is a financial and legal framework for the maintenance and/or development of open areas in delimited urban spaces. BIDs can vary in their degree of public involvement. The goal of BIDs is to ameliorate urban areas that could generate greater revenues after the development.

In 2002, a shopping mall was opened at the northern edge of the pedestrian street in Tibarg, a central area of Niendorf neighbourhood in Hamburg. The opening posed a threat to the small, traditional retail businesses present on the street. Hence, in order to promote shopping and utilization of the area, in 2010 a Business Improvement District was established (via application to the municipality) by an interest group of Tibarg entrepreneurs. The legal framework for BIDs had already been defined by the municipality in 2005.

The first phase of the BID –costing €1.75 million– ran between 2010 and 2015, and focused on infrastructure improvement: better street lightning, bicycle paths, increasing and ameliorating green areas, installing playgrounds and street furniture. Moreover, the BID improved services in the area, such as more efficient cleaning and marketing initiatives. As the first phase was a success, a Tibarg II BID was established. The project runs for 2016-2021, with a budget of €1.2 million. The aim is to improve the maintenance of public spaces and marketing for the district.



The money needed for the activities was collected through an additional tax on property owners in the area. These actors paid around 1.7% of their property value every year for five years. In turn, the interventions increase the value of their properties. Moreover, the BID took on a loan to cope with the uneven schedule of costs.

More information: [GREENSURGE Deliverable 6.3 ; Tibarg BID](#)

[18] Community Engagement and Participatory Planning at Heyford Reserve (Salisbury, Australia) – retrieved from Participedia Database

The Heyford Reserve is a park area and reserve built during the 1960s in the city of Salisbury in Adelaide, Australia. Starting from 2012, as the area needed refurbishment, the municipality decided to involve community members in the project so the results would better suit their needs. The municipal council directly contacted residents, looking for suggestions and ideas on how to redevelop the Reserve in ways that would promote their use of the site. Through community engagement, a wide range of ideas was considered, and it ensured the investment to be beneficial to the local community.

Participatory planning and involvement were crucial for this project, as the Reserve had been initially created by the community itself. Most of the residents' suggestions were met, which minimised conflict. Engaging citizens in the planning helped reach a consensus, and the community was supportive of the decision.

The municipality of Salisbury has been involving local residents in various planning processes for quite some time now and has a dedicated Community Engagement Officer whose task is to develop strategies to engage residents in planning and increase participation. A community engagement plan was developed by the Officer, in collaboration with landscape architects and others. The municipality funded both the refurbishment of the Reserve and the community engagement programme itself.

The engagement programme was open to community members, visitors of the Reserve, and the local shopping district, and aimed to promote as much participation as possible. In order to reach the most people, flyers, and leaflets were handed out on the streets and delivered via mail, and the local newspaper informed residents of the upcoming public consultation, encouraging people to participate.

The events were “informal”, and participants were asked to write their ideas on blank pieces of paper, which allowed free-flowing idea generation. Moreover, social media platforms were used to reach and involve more people, and the municipality often posted on Facebook and Twitter, encouraging people to “Have Your Say”. The council created content encouraging residents to visit the area and share their vision or access the “Have Your Say” section of their website to provide input. The council also set up stands for people to drop in and interact with employees of the municipality.



At first, participants were asked “What do you think should happen to the Reserve?” through online polls and face-to-face surveys in locations around the Reserve. Afterward residents were asked to write their ideas on how to refurbish the Reserve. For this, the municipality installed stalls with leaflets illustrating their ideas on redevelopment but also included loose ended and informal surveys for the participant to fill in their vision. Finally, the municipality produced a list of the most suggested ideas, and the community then voted their preferred choice.

The community engagement strategy was successful. As a result of the plan, more community members have become engaged in similar initiatives and now feel more encouraged to share their opinions and views.

More information: [Participedia](#)

[19] Participedia Database

Participedia offers a searchable database of content related to worldwide public participation. It is “a global community sharing knowledge and stories about public participation and democratic innovations”, and is accessible and editable by anyone.

More information: [Participedia](#)

6. Further Reading

[Citizen Engagement 101 – A guide for local governments](#)

[Supporting climate resilience of communities in and around protected areas](#)

[Nature-based solutions to address global societal challenges](#)

[Policy Framework on Sound Public Governance: Baseline Features of Governments that Work Well](#)

[Smarter engagement: Harnessing public voice in policy challenge](#)

[proGReg Horizon 2020 project Dortmund’s citizen-centered approach](#)

Further resources and guidance on this topic are available on the [GrowGreen website](#).

