

# European Walled Towns

for **friendship** and **professional** cooperation among walled towns

December 2011



## EUROPEAN WALLED TOWNS (EWT) is going for European subsidies

**"If you can dream about it, you can do it"**

In the March 2011 Newsletter I wrote a fictional story about a number of walled towns that had been able to acquire European funding. Now nine months later, chances are that it is actually going to happen next year. The walled towns of Valletta, Birgu, Lucca, Gmünd in Kärnten, Gaziantep, Almeida, Grave, Woudrichem, Hellevoetsluis, Heusden and 's-Hertogenbosch are extremely busy compiling a first-rate application within the European framework of URBACT. If this application is granted, it will function as an important step towards applying for subsidies in the European Structural Funds (from 2014 onwards). You can read more on the URBACT application in this newsletter. Furthermore I am very proud to announce that the application Intelligent Energy Europe is conditionally approved.

I would like to thank the town of Lucca and the persons involved in the 2011 annual symposium, especially the mayor Professor Mauro Favilla. Although the conference programme was limited and only partly supported the conference theme of enhancing the local economy, we had good discussions and worked well together. So well that together we agreed to make a start with a new EU co-operation project. In the new economic situation we have arrived at, it is of great importance that walled towns share good practice and also their weaknesses to learn from each other in order to keep their historic towns vivid and vital for the future. I truly believe that friendship derives from a close working relationship.

Wishing you a festive Christmas season and many good friendships in the New Year.

Peter van Roosmalen  
President EWT



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# European Heritage Award

European Heritage Award for Chichester Weald & Downland Open Air Museum



The European Union prize for Cultural Heritage celebrate excellence in cultural heritage conservation. The awards are supported by the European Commission in the framework of the Culture Programme.

Members of the EWT visited the Weald and Downland museum at the 2004 Annual Meeting in Chichester. The Jury has granted the 2011 Heritage Award for the “exemplary initiative and long standing commitment” and “for creating a centre for training in historic building conservation”. “The wide range of skills taught, starting from inventory and research through to practical restoration skills, provide a fine example in creating the next generation of skilled personnel for historic building conservation. Its teaching programme on maintenance of the historic environment offered to the general public, is also of significant note. Through it they have ensured lifelong learning based on the museum’s collection and other resources during the past 40 years. The initiative has also involved a large number of volunteers and created an inspirational learning environment.” Learning is a core activity of the Weald & Downland Open Air Museum. From the earliest days, the museum has been a place where knowledge is shared. This continues today with 1340 days of student training given per year in practical workshops in a wide range of topics, including timber framing, repair of historic brickwork, lime and other issues in building conservation. The courses are made as accessible as possible through small group sizes, minimising cost and offering bursaries which enable people from all walks of life to benefit from the training. Two masters level degree programmes in Building Conservation and Timber Building Conservation are also given.

The EWT congratulates the Weald and Downland museum with this well-deserved prestigious European award.





# Artists city of Gmünd

A whole town celebrates the ARTS!



The small medieval town of Gmünd in southern Austria, on the edge of Hohe Tauern and Nockberge national parks, has consistently been focusing on Art and Culture for twenty years now. Through lasting and enduring emphasis on the Arts, Gmünd has proved that a strong cultural commitment enables regional development.

In twenty years of focusing on fine arts and crafts Gmünd has been able to revitalize 16 formerly abandoned historic buildings in town and open them to an enthusiastic public: Galleries, arts and crafts workshops and artists' studios open to the public, international artists-in-residence studios and unique exhibition spaces like a sculpture garden all add to the lively spirit and the versatile and enchanting appearance of Gmünd. A whole town celebrates the Arts! The dedication to cultural work and steady high quality marketing has enabled the private cultural initiative Kulturinitiative Gmünd along with the town administration and a various network of cultural and marketing organizations to revitalize the town and strengthen effectively the town's economy and so improved quality of life for inhabitants as well as for tourists.

## **Gmünd has been Austria's EDEN AWARD winner 2011.**

EDEN stands for European Destinations of Excellence, for outstanding destinations in Europe dedicating themselves to sustainable tourism. Gmünd being a town as small and remote has developed through art and culture in a unique way. For the local authorities and residents, the protection and upkeep of the old town, its architectural and cultural heritage has always been very important. The city has witnessed large-scale renovation projects aimed at preserving the flair and ambience of the city while also protecting its historic structures in an innovative way. The historical buildings have always been carefully renovated and repainted. The revival of the medieval town and its transformation into an artsy and lively place has positively affected the whole region and its tourism. The town has recognized its touristic potential of a strong focus on cultural tourism far away from big and well known Austrian touristic hotspots. It is through the help and promotion of its cultural initiatives and residents that Gmünd is today renowned as a centre for art and culture and it continues to attract increasing visitors each and every year.

## **The story of the City of Gmünd/Carinthia**

The name Gmünd derives from the word 'münden', which means 'to flow' and this is reflected on the location of the city, which is on the junction of two rivers, Lieser and Malta. Gmünd was founded by the Archbishop of Salzburg in the 13th century, and the city was built to be a fortified market town. Its initial purpose can still be seen in the architecture of the city, the old castle, the market square and the totally kept townwalls. Gmünd is member of the European Walled Towns. Today Gmünd is a city that breathes art. Exhibitions take place throughout the year at different venues. The old castle in particular has an extensive literary, music and cabaret programme, while the ancient city tower 'Stadtturm' is home to four floors of exhibition space, where famous national and international artists have already exhibited their work.

## **Informations**

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**Österreichischer  
Gewinner 2011**





# Annual conference **Lucca**

6 - 8 October 2011



## Future executive and symposia

### Spring 2012

Executive meeting in Valletta and Birgu, Malta

### September 20th - September 23rd 2012

Annual conference in Gmünd in Kärnten, Austria

### Spring 2013

Executive meeting in Capdepera, Mallorca, Spain

### Autumn 2013

AGM to be confirmed

## Executive meeting and AMG in Lucca

### Proposals made at the Executive meeting in Lucca

#### Audit

As formal auditing is only required at the end of the 3 years term of the treasurer, the chair proposes to install internal auditors (from the members) to reduce audit cost. This idea is supported by the executive members.

#### Outstanding fees

As it is the responsibility of the Executive to give recommendations on termination of membership it is decided that several executive members will make a last personal effort to contact members who have not paid for the last two years. At the next executive a definitive decision will be made.

#### Umbrella Organisations

The executive agrees to stay a member of Heritage Europe (formerly EAHTR). and to take up the offered seat in the Bureau.

The membership of Europa Nostra is also discussed. The executive agrees to end the membership of Europa Nostra.

#### Membership token Gift

The executive prefers the idea of inviting artists in Gmünd at the next symposium to submit designs with a prize of € 1.000,- for the winning design. Erika Schuster, José Carlos Marin and Vicky Macdonald will write criteria for the contest.

#### Website

European Walled Town (.org .net .eu .com) domain names should be claimed immediately and diverted to the walledtowns.com website.

### Decisions taken at the AGM 2011 in Lucca

It was agreed to invite artists to submit designs for a gift with a prize of € 1000,- for the winning design, which should have a maximum production cost of € 50,- for each gift. Further details concerning a jury and criteria will be worked out.

Mr. F. Petter was voted Treasurer by acclamation.

The proposal to install internal auditors (from the members) to reduce audit costs was supported by all members present. Together with the President the Treasurer will propose rules for this internal committee. Chichester and Grave volunteered to take a seat in the internal Audit Committee.

The proposal to change the name to European Walled Towns.

Present at the meeting are 14 members and thirteen voted yes and one member withheld the vote on behalf of Conwy. Mr. Bruce will examine the consequences on the Constitution and propose recommendations to alter the constitution accordingly at the next Executive.

The AGM decided to contribute a maximum of € 1.000,- from the WTFC's account to launch a EU project within the framework of Urbact.

Fourteen members have expressed an interest in participating in such a combined project and are willing to contribute to the initial tender fees.





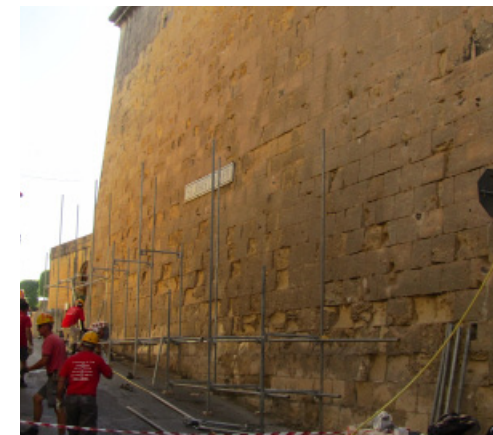
# Birgu Fortifications

Restoration of the Birgu Fortifications - ERDF Project



The Birgu fortifications are one of Malta's four major historical works of military architecture and fortification earmarked for restoration by the Ministry for Resources and Rural Affairs as part of the programme of projects co-financed by European Union funds. This extensive project aims to restore and rehabilitate the Birgu bastioned fortifications and ditch which this historical fortress rightfully deserves as Malta's first bastioned maritime city and one of the prime cultural and tourism assets that the Island has to offer. Underway since January 2008, the project aims both at the restoration of the ramparts' physical fabric as well as the recuperation of the overall legibility of Birgu's fortified enceinte and also seeks to recuperate many inaccessible areas along the fortified enceinte so as to open them up for public enjoyment.

The four selected projects (Valletta, Birgu, M'dina and the Gozo Citadel) comprise an investment of around 36 million Euros spread over a period of seven years and involve the restoration of some 135,000 m<sup>2</sup> of rampart elevations over a combined perimeter length of around 6 kms. This project is part-financed by the European Union through the European Regional Development Fund under Operation Programme 1 "investing in Competitiveness for a Better Quality of Life" for Cohesion Policy 2007-2013 with a co-financing rate of 85% EU Funds (ERDF) and 15% National Funds.



## The resoration and repair of the physical fabric

Birgu has some two kilometers of rampart walls and rock-hewn counterscarp, fashioned out of the beautiful honey-coloured, but fragile, Globigerina limestone. Erosion, pollution, vegetation, continual human use (and misuse) as well as insensitive modern accretions (metal pipes, pictures and cables) have all taken their toll of the old masonry fabric.

The projected interventions are designed to clean and repair all the surfaces of the bastions, curtains, cavaliers and gates and replace, where necessary, highly consumed elements in order to arrest the process of decay that threaten the architectural integrity of the this unique historical monument. These are executed to the highest standards in accordance with scientific criteria and practices.

## Recuperation of the legibility of Birgu's enceinte

Some important areas of Birgu's fortifications have lost their integrity and legibility as some areas were either obstructed with utilitarian buildings, filled in or demolished for roads. The most recent dismantling works revealed damage inflicted on the masonry fabric by insertion of heavy steel beams employed in the construction of an oilbunker's roof. The project seeks to unearth the ditch around the counterguard and thereby re-establish the linear continuity of the enceinte with the construction of an arch where the wall was interrupted to make way for a modern road

## Recuperation of inaccessible areas of the fortifications

An important objective is the recuperation of considerable areas of the fortifications which have remained inaccessible to the public. Amongst these are the Bastion of St James and the large tract of ramparts known as the Post of Castile which constitute about 25% of the Birgu fortification. The project seeks to take over these spaces, restore and rehabilitate them and open them for public enjoyment as places of historical, cultural and tourism activities.



## More information?

Visit the website of the city of Birgu:  
<http://birgu.gov.mt>

# Birgu Fortifications

Restoration of the Birgu Fortifications - ERDF Project



## Rehabilitation of the main ditch

The Birgu project seeks to re-establish the physical connections between the Vittoriosa seafront, Bormla and Kalkara seafront, thus creating a complete heritage trail around Birgu. An important role in this strategy is played by the land front ditch, which now is in a relatively rundown state. The ditch has tremendous potential as a pleasing and recreational environment and the ERDF project aims to redesign the layout to highlight its historical features and enhance its recreation potential.

## Introduction of a new lighting system

The project seeks to introduce a co-ordinated, sustainable and economical lighting system which will provide evening and night-time appreciation of the fortifications of Birgu. It will also include Birgu's intra-mural and historic urban fabric and architectural heritage and at the same time create safe and pleasant outdoor spaces and emphasise important features.

## Repaving of the historical intra-mural area (collachium)

Birgu, which originated as a medieval fishermen's village huddled beneath the shadow of a castle, retained its largely original medieval layout of narrow winding streets and alleys. After the coming of the knights in 1530 and the enclosure of the town within a bastioned enceinte, a substantial part of the intra-mural area was reserved exclusively for the knights and their buildings - the so-called Collachio. Unfortunately most of the streets and other spaces have lost their original paving or were re-surfaced in asphalt or concrete. The project seeks to restore the paving to further communicate the 'spirit of the place'.

## Project benefits

The significance of the Birgu fortifications restoration project extends far beyond the physical restoration of the architectural features and fabric of the ramparts and bastions. It will also serve to boost the regeneration of the areas within and around the fortification providing an improved quality of life for the inhabitants of the localities. The project has found the unstinting support and collaboration of the Local Council and the community and people of Birgu.

## Progress to date

At the time of writing this, four tenders have been awarded and two more are about to be, while another is in the publication stage. Restoration Works are in progress along the ramparts of the St Joh Bastion, its adjoining curtain and counterscarp, and on St John Cavalier, while the oil-depot building abutting the hornworks of the Post of Castile has been dismantled. Restoration works are set to begin on the Counterguard known as Couvre Porte.



# Provisional grant

## Intelligent Energy Europe

The IEE proposal ENCLOSE with an involvement of the EWT has been conditionally approved by the European Commission. Might the project be granted in Spring 2012, this will bring the EWT a grant of € 95.158,- of EU funding. In this article we will give you more information on this project.

Freight transport and city goods distribution are widely known factors of energy consumption and environmental degradation in European urban centres and increasing efforts have been undertaken in EU countries to improve operations and reduce their negative impacts. Based on gathered evidence, there is today a considerably growing consensus on the view that more sustainable urban freight operations and significant benefits in terms of energy efficiency can be achieved by an appropriate mix of different measures such as: Urban Consolidation Centres, optimised urban freight transport and delivery plans, clean vehicles and low emission technologies, restrictions and public incentive policies, last mile and value added services, integration of city logistics processes within the overall management of urban mobility. Further to this, an even stronger opportunity for a cleaner urban logistics is offered by proper integration of the latest “green vehicle” technologies. Industrial and research efforts on Fully Electric Vehicles (FEVs) and Plug-in Hybrid Electric Vehicles (PHEVs) are providing a near-to-market “green technology” which is currently considered as one of the largest opportunities to radically change our mobility system towards more sustainable schemes and operations, including freight distribution in urban areas.

Whilst efforts and city logistics innovation projects have been undertaken in most European capitals and major cities (like e.g. Barcelona, Berlin, London, Paris, Stockholm, etc.) small- and mid-size towns, particularly those involving historic centres, are somehow lagging behind, as they have to face and overcome several barriers (related to e.g. shortage of resources, competences, organisational structures, institutional backing, etc.) to be able to effectively embrace innovation, adopt and implement appropriate plans and measures towards sustainable city logistics. This is a relevant issue significantly limiting the widespread adoption of energy efficient urban freight operations in Europe. Indeed, European small-/mid-size historic towns (SMHTs) represent a major component of the EU prevailing urbanised structure, imply often additional constraints and challenges related to their specific territorial, social and economic characteristics (e.g. difficult mobility and freight distribution flows, higher impacts of environmental pollution on citizens and quality of life, etc.) and yet show increasing demand of effective measures as well as large potentials for improvements of energy efficiency and sustainability of city logistics operations.

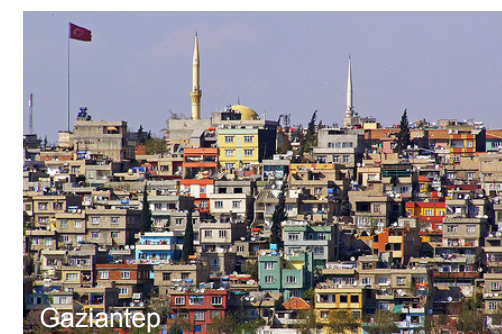
The ENCLOSE project addresses the urban energy-efficient transport theme particularly from the following angles:

- 1) addressing the specific needs, requirements, options and priorities of European small-/mid-size historic towns, demonstrating and assessing feasible and sustainable solutions leading to tangible and measurable changes in behaviour and impacts of logistics, and transferring best practice and benefits within and beyond the network of participating towns;
- 2) qualifying the demand of Local Authorities and municipalities of European SMHTs for sustainable, energy-efficient urban logistics and freight distribution solutions, generating and spreading the knowledge about good practices and suitable strategies for effective integration of freight distribution and logistics schemes in the overall urban mobility and, more generally, town governance policies;
- 3) investigating and assessing the operation of “green vehicles” (FEVs, PHEVs, Bio-gas) and fleets in urban distribution and other logistics schemes from the point of view of the needs and requirements of in small-/mid-size historic towns, assessing the full energy cycle and impacts, identifying their additional benefits and key issues for any effective adoption and integration in the overall logistics, mobility and energy management plans.

In order to reach the required European relevance, ENCLOSE will investigate and assess the energy impacts and transferability of solutions in several sites located in 12 EU countries – including Austria, Bulgaria, Greece, Ireland, Italy, Norway, Poland, Portugal, Spain, Sweden, The Netherlands and the UK – with a very high potential of achieving a much wider reach thanks to participation of the European Association of Historic Towns and of European Walled Towns, providing the necessary multiplying promotion and diffusion context.

## Urbact-programme

New EU project under construction



At the annual conference in Lucca a start was made to establish a new European project within the EWT. The aim of this project developed within the framework of URBACT is to create a thematic network of walled towns and to cooperate in a programme for sustainable economic revitalisation of the city centres.

The economic vitality of European Walled Towns is under increasing pressure. This is evident in the walled towns themselves by the disappearance of business activities, in particular the typical small-scale stores, as well as other small businesses, cafés, restaurants and hotels.

Although walled towns may still be scenic, they offer little in the way of activities and appeal to attract visitors in the long-term. As a result many walled towns have ended up on a downward spiral of having fewer shops, less business and activity, fewer visitors, even lower incomes and further decreases in the number of shops. Another consequence of this is that there are reduced resources for the management and maintenance of the walled towns, even as a scenic experience. In short, the trend of a self-perpetuating downward spiral. Yet, despite the general trend of fewer shops and ageing, it seems some European walled towns are still able to keep their centres lively and bustling. The question arises as to why some walled towns are able to stay economically vital and others not? What are the specific factors, characteristics or selling points which can make this difference?

The causes of the economic problems facing historic town centres differ for each town. As a pan European fellowship of walled towns we are in a position to identify these causes, to specify different factors and also methods by which can keep walled towns lively, economically vital and attractive.

The European Walled Towns organisation intends to tackle these problems by working closely together within a true European project, exchanging experience, expertise and knowledge for the benefit of improving local economic structures. At the same time the intrinsic historic values are taken into account and used to add extra values to modern day facilities. The URBACT-programme offers the walled towns many opportunities to work together on the theme of sustainable economic development and creating thematic networks for this purpose.



# Urbact-programme

New EU project under construction

By working together and learning from each other, the main goal of this project is to develop - in pragmatic Local Action Plans - tools and recommendations for European (walled) towns and cities in order to realize a innovative, sustainable and comprehensive economic growth in the coming years. The main themes in the local action plans will be in line with the European 2020 strategy, such as implementing high speed internet access, 'smart' transport, business development skills and training.

The participating (walled) towns at this stage are:

- 1 Valletta (Malta)
- 2 Birgu (Malta)
- 3 Lucca, (Italy)
- 4 Gmünd in Kärnten (Austria)
- 5 Gaziantep (Turkey)
- 6 Almeida (Portugal)
- 7 Hellevoetsluis (The Netherlands)
- 8 Grave (The Netherlands)
- 9 Woudrichem (The Netherlands)
- 10 Heusden (The Netherlands)
- 11 's-Hertogenbosch (The Netherlands)



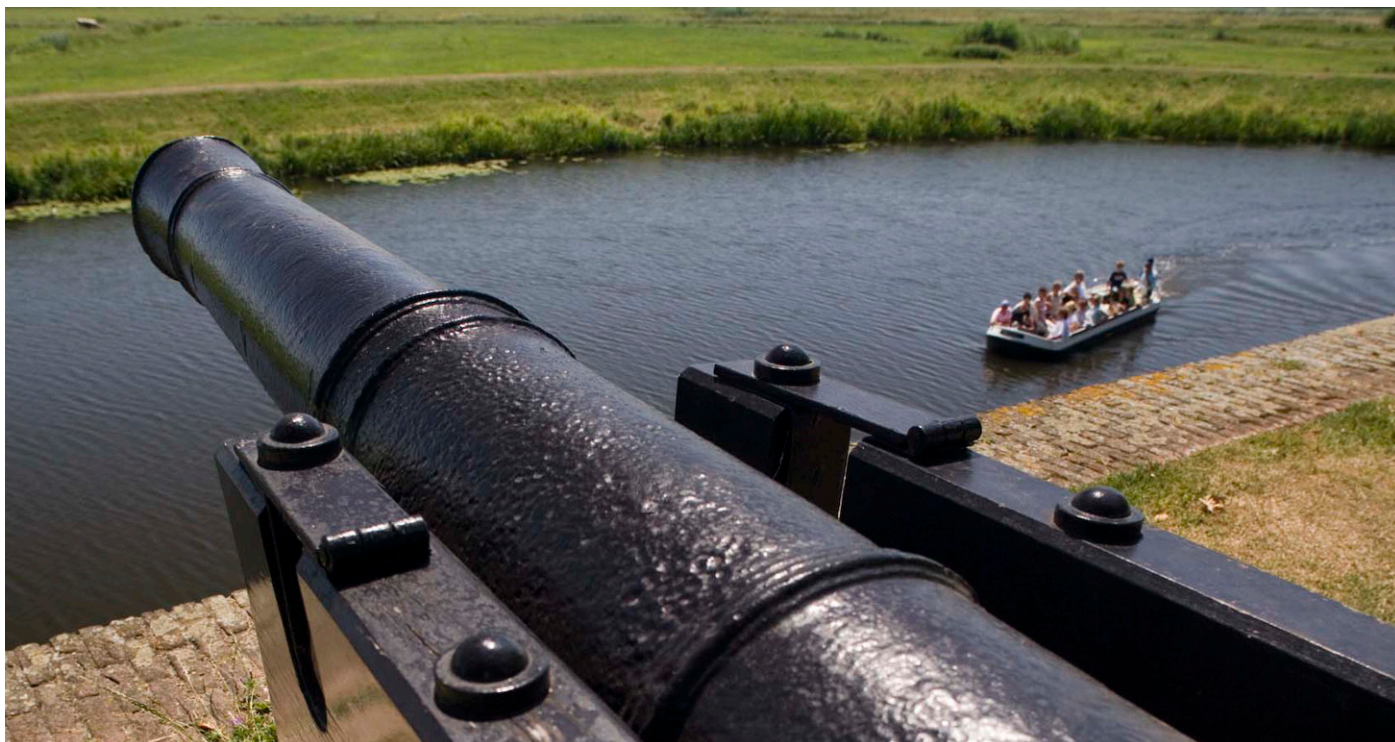
Heusden

Further information on this project can be acquired at Promint Project Management, mr. Wiljan van Laarhoven at +31765600308 [info@promint.nl](mailto:info@promint.nl)



# European walled towns

for **friendship** and **professional** cooperation among walled towns



## Membership update

Resigned: Montagnana, Italy

### New members

Isla, Malta  
Diyarbakir, Turkey  
Mr Claus Rohder, Germany

## Future events

2012 May **Executive in Valetta and Birgu, Malta**

Sept. 20-23 **AGM in Gmünd in Kärnten, Austria**

2013 **Executive in Capdepera, Mallorca, Spain**

**AGM to be confirmed**

## How to join European Walled Towns?

You can find the application form on the website:  
[www.walledtowns.com](http://www.walledtowns.com)