

BELGIUM

Local development

Location

Froidchapelle

Programming period

2014 – 2020

Priority

P6 – Social inclusion and local development

Measure

M19 – LEADER/CLLD

Funding (EUR)

Total budget 140 000

EAFRD 54 180

National/Regional 71 820

Private 14 000

Project duration

2019 – 2019

Project promoter

GAL de la Botte du Hainaut

Contact

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Website

http://galdelabotte.be/page/63_batibotteprojet

The project considered built heritage as a development lever for a rural area and relied upon the younger generation to raise awareness about it and to take care of it in the longer term.

Summary

In continuation of an INTERREG IV project for creating an inventory of built heritage in the area, the LAG de la Botte du Hainaut, which had developed the inventory in four municipalities of the area, decided to continue this work by including in the inventory another 14 villages. The aim was to have an updated inventory of built heritage for the whole area.



The RDP support was used for the coordination and facilitation of the project through hiring a project officer to steer the specific activities in cooperation with the relevant partners and their targets groups, including the local population, certain groups of inhabitants in smaller locations, scholars and teachers.

Results

- 100 teachers briefed on built heritage initiation classes;
- Four local classes registered the initiation workshops organised by IPW.
- 10 heritage classes supported with local field visits in the area.
- 150 pupils participated in heritage classes in the area.
- One booklet compiling experiences during heritage classes' field visits.
- Eight teachers volunteering as mentors at the end of the project cycle.

Lessons & Recommendations

- Each project requires that the project officer in charge has received specialist training. In this case, the job profile required a Master's degree in history of art and archaeology.
- The success of the project strongly relies upon the partnership and support of existing regional policies for the promotion of regional identity through built heritage and the contribution of specialised educational staff – in particular for heritage classes.
- The common approach to the project is an additional factor in its success, with the 'OpenStreet' database available to everyone and the workshops open to the local population.

Context

'La Botte du Hainaut' is a rural area located in the south of Hainaut, a region to the southeast of Charleroi and Mons, along the French border. Five municipalities make up the area: Beaumont, Chimay, Froidchapelle, Momignies and Sivry-Rance.

The Bâti-Botte project was born from a reflection initiated on the occasion of the 15 years of the LAG. In October 2013, a roundtable on the theme of 'promoting heritage in Botte du Hainaut' was organised with the aim of establishing an initial inventory and collecting ideas.

In September 2014, the cross-border conference 'Heritage and territory: how can heritage be a driving force for territorial development?', organised in the context of the INTERREG IV, a project titled 'Transformation du patrimoine' that further explored the topic and opened new perspectives for old buildings preservation and promotion.

The 2014-2020 local development strategy of the LAG Botte du Hainaut highlights the need to preserve local amenities, including built heritage, while developing its potential in order to create jobs. Its cultural heritage is made of numerous properties, castles, abbeys, churches, chapels, industrial buildings, bridges, etc., which contribute to the quality of the living environment and the attractiveness of the area. This heritage is irreplaceable and part of the local collective memory. It deserves to be better known by the inhabitants and visitors to Botte du Hainaut.

The Walloon government supported the preservation and promotion of Walloon built heritage and set up awareness-raising activities, such as the Heritage Days organised by the Walloon Heritage Institute and interventions on the small-scale built heritage. In addition, the online inventory update of built heritage (*inventaire du patrimoine culturel immobilier - IPIC*) represents today a formidable source of information for the Walloon municipalities and their citizens.

Objectives

The project aimed to complete the inventory of local heritage, promoting architectural buildings in their local context and generating new ways to enhance and transfer this heritage.

Activities

The RDP support was used for the coordination and facilitation of the project. The recruitment of a project officer in charge of the whole project was carried out in 2016. It is a three years contract corresponding to 0.8 FTE. The role of this agent is crucial to ensure the complementarity of all tasks and to steer the specific activities in cooperation with the relevant partners and their targets groups, whether it is the local population of the area in general, certain groups of inhabitants in smaller locations (i.e. each village in the Chimay area), the students or their teachers.

The project included four complementary strands:

1. Updating the inventory of built heritage for the municipality of Chimay with an online tool.

This inventory is primarily a scientific tool for knowledge, awareness raising and preservation of built heritage. It will help raise awareness of a wider audience through online information sharing and enhance the value of built heritage in urban management and planning.

Each building is described with historical data, building date and pictures. It is the result of fieldwork carried out by art historians, including in situ analysis. The methodology adopted complies with EU guidance in the field.

2. Outlook of built heritage in Botte du Hainaut

The idea is to outline the profile of built heritage, its main architectural features, to determine its local identity with a dimension of cultural tourism but also in view of letting inhabitants to recapture the memory of these places. The outcome of this activity is the design of a booklet and traveling exhibition, conceived as an educational and reflexive function for its population, in a participatory manner.

Evidence collected through the local population reveals original features of the local built heritage such as hipped roofs, alcoves, etc.

Several activities are proposed to citizens, such as heritage tea parties, discussions fora, heritage education classes, etc. The aim is to cooperate with the local inhabitants and to collect their opinions and testimonies.

3. Feasibility study with recommendations on the creation of a heritage tourism route

This activity derives from the previous task and examines several itineraries (i.e. car or motorbike circuit with short walks) that put forward in a coherent way the various features of built heritage in the five municipalities of the Botte du Hainaut. These itineraries should enable visitors to admire and appreciate rural heritage curiosities and learn about the local history.

4. Initiation classes on inner-village heritage

The aim is to help teachers from primary schools to tackle the topic of local built heritage with their pupils. The activity is carried out in partnership with the Walloon Heritage Institute in order to support the hosting of heritage classes locally.

Main Results

The following output indicators were set:

Task 1: inventory

- Contact local elected representatives and the urban planning staff in each municipality;
- Three information campaigns targeting the local population (leaflet, articles in municipal newsletters, media coverage);
- Four technical meetings with the team responsible for the Walloon Inventory (IPIC);
- A conference to disseminate results and share data;
- A traveling exhibition on built heritage from the Chimay municipality.

Task 2: outlook of built heritage

- Four workshops co-designed with inhabitants;
- A booklet entitled 'Outlook of built heritage in Botte du Hainaut';
- A traveling exhibition titled 'Outlook of built heritage in Botte du Hainaut';
- 10 guided tours of the exhibition;
- 10 public spaces where the traveling exhibition can be visited.

Task 3: feasibility study

- A compendium with iconographic and documentary data on each component of built heritage;
- Three workshops with inhabitants;
- A public presentation of the pre-project;
- Three consultation meetings with the NGO Qualité-Village-Wallonie.

Task 4: heritage classes

- Five days coaching with the Walloon Centre on Heritage Skills (IPW);
- 20 individual meetings with schools directors
- Four joint meetings with teachers;
- Three local communication campaigns (flyers, exhibition announcements, press releases, etc.)



Key lessons

The project officer in charge must have received specialist training in archaeology, history of art, study and heritage management. In this case, the job profile required a Master's degree in history of art and archaeology.

The success of the project strongly relies on the partnership and support of existing regional policies for the promotion of regional identity through built heritage, the contribution of specialised educational staff – in particular for heritage classes.

The common approach to the project is an additional factor of its success, with the 'OpenStreet' database available to everyone and workshops open to the local population.

Additional sources of information

http://spw.wallonie.be/dgo4/site_ipic/

www.wallonie.be/fr/guide/guide-services/16342