

ARCHWAY



Good Practice Guides: A Summary



**Chester
City Council**



PROJECT PART FINANCED
BY THE EUROPEAN UNION

North East South West
INTERREG IIC

ACCESS AND REGENERATION OF CULTURAL HERITAGE IN WALLED TOWNS (ARCHWAY)

In June 2007, at the ARCHWAY legacy conference in Chester, representatives from walled towns and cities across Europe came together to share the results of 3 year's joint working on the development of 6 guides to good practice in the management and development of walled towns and cities. They addressed Conservation (Protections and Enhancement), Transport, Spatial planning, Tourism Development and Visitor Management, and Creative Management of Cultural Heritage. Cutting across all the guides was the key issue of promoting Access for all. The ARCHWAY project was part financed by the European Union under the ERDF Interreg IIIC programme and led by Chester City Council.

The production of each guide involved a working partnership of relevant experts in the field. Each of the theme partners has led two workshops and managed email and web-based dialogue to produce the Good Practice Guide. With wide circulation through the Walled Towns Friendship Circle (WTFC) and the internet, the five Good Practice Guides allow practicing professionals, administrators and politicians and a wider academic urban studies community to participate in a developing learning network.

Walled towns and cities with their obvious barriers exemplify



Chester UK, as the ARCHWAY Project lead partner and Verona (Italy), Pécs (Hungary) and unwalled Lörrach (Germany) as the supporting partners and the five theme partners, have all contributed expertise and case studies to these themes. Academic advice is provided by University of West of England, Bristol.

the development of historic towns, and which can serve to inform regional policy across Europe.

ARCHWAY aims to develop shared expertise on key urban development issues. In tackling such issues from an historic (walled) town perspective ARCHWAY suggests solutions and

The five ARCHWAY themes and Good Practice Guides

Conservation, protection and enhancement:

enabling the development of a modern environment with the constraints of a historic setting, led by 's-Hertogenbosch, the Netherlands.

Local Transport

parking and access to and within some of Europe's most attractive and historic places, led by Valletta, Malta.

Spatial Planning and Development:

realistic planning and management systems to create vibrant and modern spaces which do not compromise the historic and local distinctiveness of walled towns and cities, led by Arabarri, Alava County, Spain

Tourism Development and Visitor Management

establishing walled towns as a focus for sustainable tourism and economic development without damaging their distinctive and historic qualities, led by Piran, Slovenia.

Creative development and management of the cultural heritage

how to harness this as a driver for their economic future in a sustainable way, led by Lucca, Italy



best practice relevant in and for Europe's most distinctive and historic cities. Mainly small and medium sized, these historic (walled) towns have close relationships with rural hinterlands and are affected by regional and international frontiers as well as the other social and cultural barriers, which constrain sustainable regeneration.

The Access Agenda running through all the five themes is how to overcome barriers to mobility within and around walled towns and cities, which typically present their own particular challenges to disabled people and others with mobility difficulties. Other forms of barrier in terms of social disadvantage or cultural differences also inhibit access to and appreciation of the historic built environment.

Issues, Challenges and Ways Forward

Drawing on the wealth of experience represented in the partnership of 8 walled and one other town a number of key

Archway Principles

1. History as a Guiding Principle:

informed by the history and aware of the heritage of walled towns and cities

2. Sustainability:

looking to the interests of future generations socially, environmentally and economically through local Agenda 21

3. Accessibility:

acknowledging the rights of all, whether locals or strangers to have the historic (walled) city and its heritage physically and socially enabled.

4. Dynamism in the living historic (walled) walled city:

recognising the value of appropriate change and development

5. Territorial Balance:

planning mutual benefits for networks of towns and mutually supportive historic (walled) cities and surrounding suburbs and countryside

6. Social Involvement:

building broad-based inclusive stakeholder participation and consensus in development and heritage interpretation

challenges in and around the historic walled town and city have been identified:

Conservation

- the conservation of town walls creates a wide variety of dilemmas, paradoxes, conflicting interests, drawbacks and burdens
- Past and present: Defence works in a modern city
- Historical relevance
- Different approaches in restoration
- Reversibility and non-destruction of the built heritage
- Accessibility : Physical accessibility and Visual accessibility
- Legal protection issues
- Financial and funding aspects

Tourism

- development of the walled town and city as tourism product/attraction
- the concentration of visitors by day of week and week of year
- the concentration of facilities and historic attractions,
- degree of the preservation of the monuments,
- accessibility for the disabled and disadvantaged
- tourism related local transport and parking
- the long distance transport issue
- the interaction of tourists and local residents
- second homes
- information services for tourists

These challenges are common to other tourist destinations but, in walled towns and cities, they are intensified because of that limited space which is so highly attractive for visitors and residents alike.

Cultural Heritage

- Inadequate Financial resources
- Listing
- Inseparable bond with setting
- Authenticity and Conjecture
- Integrity
- Coping with demographic trends

All the challenges demonstrate the difficulties of managing walled towns and cities which is greatly assisted by bringing together and sharing expertise both in marketing and promotion. Other factors that assist are the generation of private funding and respecting the various historical periods and sectors of society which are present. Any action should entail minimum intervention and loss of fabric, guarantee reversibility and legibility and carefully balance demolish/rebuild with preservation to develop the relationship between the conservation project and the community.



Transport

- When originally built, no one ever envisaged today's methods of transport
- major conflict with the motor vehicle mobility
- the need to minimise the impact of the mechanical modes of transport on historic fabric and local people

These can only be tackled by recognising a number of considerations:

- the size of the town (within the walls), its area, its development density and its topography,
- the difference in levels of various parts of the town, which will affect acceptable walking distances/time for different sorts of people,
- the amount, ownership and location of parking available within and adjacent to the walled area,
- the land-use activities that occur and are planned to continue or grow or be phased out within or adjacent to the walls,
- other cross-cutting policies related to the town in question, such as those related to air quality and conservation of buildings, including the walls and historic fortifications, as well as of public open spaces.

Spatial Planning

- false boundaries;
- decline in status;
- lack of economic and administrative alignment
- local/regional tensions.

Social diversity, cohesion and lack of balance were also found to be widespread but intensified within the walled urban core or excluded from that core by real or artificial barriers. Often this has been reflected in the housing question: how to achieve social diversity by means of housing policy? Where the city is attractive to visitors this may contribute to a 'second home' problem with a negative influence on the social structure of the community in the historic (walled) centre. All the challenges demonstrate the difficulties of managing walled cities. Spatial issues also include how to manage and plan for outlying, transitional, residual and discordant spaces around the walled enclosure.

Ways Forward

The workshops at which these problems were acknowledged also found good ways forward for dealing with them, among which were the value of networking cities, both locally in the Low Countries, across nation states and across Europe. To share potential solutions and approaches by acknowledging that cities have more to gain from co-working, collaboration

and building on their complementarity has been clearly seen as more productive than simply competing in the place market. Good examples of new forms of all the five themes were drawn from the experience of 's-Hertogenbosch, Chester, Lucca, Verona and Lörrach.

As Living Monuments, walled towns and cities continue to evolve. It is important that sensible decisions are made in relation to the promotion of development in the Historic Core where there are significant land use pressures. However, there are many good examples from the partner walled towns and cities of effective contemporary architecture being woven into the ancient city fabric. All these examples are amplified with others in the case studies presented in the full Good Practice Guide (and at www.archway-interreg.com).

To take the debate and policy forward the network has developed:

The Archway Approach

KNOWLEDGE:

evidence collected from surveys of history, the patterns, the values, the social partners and commercial opportunities of the historic (walled) town and cities.

REFLECTION and ANALYSIS

of this data to create an information base for clearly funded and planned

IMPLEMENTATION

which is to be supported by wide stakeholder involvement, based on **DISSEMINATION** and local participation, well monitored and reviewed for future adaptability.

By developing and applying best practice and innovative new approaches clearly related to the needs of the whole management process for historic (walled) towns and cities, the strong focus on access and mobility for all aims to create and support ENABLING historic cities through an open learning network and also via the Technical and Professional Network of the WTFC (www.walledtowns.com), which was launched at the Archway Legacy Conference in Chester.

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