

## MIDTERM NEWS

The project **ATFORT** "Atelier European Fortresses - Powering Local Sustainable Development" is a Regional Initiative Project supported by the INTERREG IVC programme. The **ATFORT** partnership brings together 10 important European fortified heritage sites and 1 university who share the firm belief that preservation of these sites, coupled with their economic exploitation can only be achieved by creative and shared ideas, building on an exchange of experiences.

Three **main themes** of the **ATFORT** project are:

- ✚ Multifunctional re-use
- ✚ Enabling conditions
- ✚ Governance models

The eleven partners of the **ATFORT** project, invited by the Vauban Network, met in Besançon from 10. to 12. June, 2013. Partners, under the lead of the New Dutch Waterline, shared the firm belief that preservation of these sites, coupled with their economic exploitation can only be achieved by creative and shared ideas, building on an exchange of experiences.

More than sixty participants discussed the midterm results of the project, which started in December 2012., and will run until December 2014. It aims at exchanging knowledge and good practices multifunctional reuse of fortified sites, following the motto „**preservation through development**”.

**Jean-Louis Fousseret**, président of the Vauban Network, host of the midterm event, highlighted: „*The debates and shared experiences on urban planning of our fortified towns and landscapes are very inspiring and challenging for all of us. By fostering new functions we can guarantee handing over this fortified heritage to the next generations.*”

During the press conference, the partners introduced their practices and impressions about the first half of the project.



**Peter Ros**, project manager of **ATFORT** informed the representatives of the media:

*“The project **ATFORT** is running on time and a lot of expertise is exchanged towards the reuse of fortifications. The Project Partners finished the first and second phase of the project. Everybody produced a self-analysis report (SAR) including 20 good practices. The partners organised local meeting (RSGs) to develop the SAR and discuss the analysis outcomes. The findings of the self-analysis period were presented and discussed during the interregional meeting “Good Practices Engineering Workshop” in Italy, October 2012. Eleven ateliers were held in 2012 and 2013, including the midterm event. I am happy with the outcome and progress of the project. We are looking forward to the third and fourth phase of the project, were we will make an implementation plan and policy recommendations.”*

On behalf of the Lead partner, he stressed: „*Fortifications, originally built in historical contexts of conflict, now contribute to European cooperation. Reuse of military heritage is a very current topic in the whole of Europe. By this project we try to find creative solutions together for this challenge.*”



1. Midterm press conference

## THE ATELIERS

During the implementation of the **ATFORT** project partners met on 11 'ateliers' or workshops at which the main topics of the project were investigated. The ateliers were held at each of the partners' fortification sites.

Every atelier was about one or more theme(s), which were the focus of the site visits and interactive workshops.

### Conservation and restoration

Suomenlinna, Finland, 19-20. November 2012.

The first atelier of the **ATFORT** project focused on principles for reuses, theories of conservation implemented, and methods of conservation used. During two days, participants discovered management practices of the Suomenlinna Sea Fortress of Helsinki by site visits and presentations. Presentations of case studies and good practices carried out in the partner fortresses enhanced knowledge transfer. Intensive discussions on themes in teams and altogether led to joint conclusions.



2. groupwork about conservation

The Atelier participants surveyed in teams the presented management practices of the Governing Body of Suomenlinna and their experiences at the Sea Fortress. Multifunctional re-use was stated as an obvious strength of the site. The authenticity of the fortress was appreciated. It is based on documentation, historic studies, surveys and adoption of a multidisciplinary approach, not only structural issues. Authenticity targets also include use of original or proper materials and intangible values.

Contemporary conservation of the Suomenlinna fortress is of a good quality with very minimalistic additions and quality details. Intrusive materials are not used. The quality of new architecture is high; there is integrity of material but contemporary architectural form.

### Governance, Accessibility & Safety

Komárom, Hungary, 25-26. February, 2013

Fort Monostor in Hungary, hosted three different topics. The first was governance models. The partners and experts came to the conclusion that there is not one ideal governance model, the decision makers should choose the best for their sites - related to their enabling conditions and possibilities.



3. groupwork about accessibility

There are basics for choosing the right model:

- + Identification of the site – holistic approach, know the most about the place (intangible and tangible cultural heritage) past & present.
- + Clear ownership, decision-making process.
- + Defined responsibility (organisational, personal).
- + Exact vision of the future of the site.
- + Defined goals of utilisation.
- + Utilisation plan and cost-benefits analysis/or feasibility studies (not just from an economic point of view, but also focusing on sustainability)

The Accessibility & Safety part of the atelier focussed on:

1. Accessibility to the site, into the site and within the site.  
Viewpoints were: arriving to the site (transport, parking, guiding), entering into the site (physical accessibility), staying there (within the site) visitor management, info-communication accessibility), accessibility for disabled people: what can, what should: EU- and national legislation and smart solutions
2. Safety: responsibility and solutions.

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A selection of ideas from brainstorming, presentations and workshops:

- ✚ A historical site - for example fortresses - cannot be changed to become 100 % accessible.  
A wheelchair route map can be made, which shows the main attractions but also hindrances on it, including uneven pavement and steep parts of the route like in Suomenlinna, World Heritage Site.
- ✚ Do not only plan the physical accessibility, but also visual connections between objects and elements.
- ✚ Close unsafe places to the public (Komárom).
- ✚ Create a special offer for disabled people.
- ✚ Create a different entrance if necessary: safety first (New Dutch Waterline)

**Prof. Dr. Jukka Jokilehto** concluded:

*„All the decisions related to the accessibility and safety of forts (and other related types of defence systems, such as fortifications, fortified boundaries, and fortified cities) depends on the recognition of this property as heritage. The recognition of the fortification as heritage should also include understanding and recognizing the significance of the related setting.”*

### UNESCO World Heritage nomination

Komárom, Hungary, 27 February 2013

Two project partners in the **ATFORT** team are inscribed on the UNESCO World Heritage List, and there are others, who are working on the nomination file of their sites. Experts, interested in the preparation of the nomination file were invited to present their current situation at the workshop, where there were some professional members of ICOMOS, ICOFORT, and the UNESCO WH Committee.

A selection of the numerous proposals for a more successful nomination:

- ✚ If more State Parties are cooperating, it is necessary to produce a common policy for nomination. Better to make it jointly in one nomination file or separately but as „synchronised” nomination (nominated at the same time).
- ✚ One of the most challenging but indispensable features for a serial nomination is the creation of an appropriate common management structure, which is vital for inscription.

- ✚ Setting up the statement of O.U.V. should be as simple as possible: less is actually more!
- ✚ Use good maps with clear, short (!) and easy to understand indications.
- ✚ Put the accent on good visual presentation – few people read the nomination file in detail because of the overwhelming quantity and size of working documents.

### Multifunctional use

Venice Italy /Slovenia, 18-19 March 2013



4. Landscape view Italian Ossuary (Bovec,SLO)

The joint Atelier Venice/Nova Gorica has achieved two main goals:

- 1) Participation and cross-fertilization of Regional and local authorities on the current and future scenarios of development of Forte Marghera, highlighting its multi-functional vocation as green gateway between the lagoon of Venice and its mainland and its function as a key-driver for the social, cultural and environmental development of the surrounding urban areas of Mestre.
- 2) Presentation of the future International interdisciplinary centre for research and education on fortified heritage that will be settled in Forte Marghera that will also have the task of keeping and disseminating the main outputs and results of **ATFORT** after its termination, as well as future focal point for the **ATFORT** partnership

### Multifunctional use

Paola, Malta, 22-23 April 2013

The scope of the Paola Atelier was to focus on the principle of adaptive re-use especially through Malta based projects. The Atelier also considered various sites and agents spurring multi-functional use, best-practice management and systems of governance related to adaptive re-use. These were further supplemented by examples from **ATFORT**

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partners and experts invited to participate to the 3-day atelier.

Most important conclusions:

- ✦ As in the case of the URBACT REPAIR Project multi-functionality proved the more sustainable formula for maintaining and redeveloping forts. In this case it was referred to as the triple-helix option.
- ✦ The best-practice governance examples, the re-development experience of the above mentioned forts point to multi-functionality as the most viable option.
- ✦ With reference to sustainability other viable soft options may be proposed i.e. the romantic ruin and open parks which provide recreational space.
- ✦ The examples also showed a very important component which is often not connected to fortifications; archaeology. The archaeology of buildings is a clue to the study, interpretation and conservation of fortifications.
- ✦ The examples shown were not necessarily supported by heavy capital investment. Those which were supported by heavy capital investment did not necessarily follow best-practice in planning, restoration and adaptive re-use.



5. guided tour at the former prison, Paola

### Funding and financing

Kaunas, Lithuania, 21-22 May 2013

During this atelier, the partners had the chance to listen to presentationa on EU structural funds financing experience for Cultural Heritage objects 2007-2013 period and also about the possibilities in 2014-2020 period. The partners' presentations were about their practices and challenges of financing the development and utilization of fortresses. Kaunas atelier on funding and financing took place in several places: official part started in

Kaunas city municipality Main hall and workshops lasted in Kaunas city 7<sup>th</sup> fort. Participants on atelier Kaunas were specialists with different background.

The experts work together on a case study of development of Kaunas 6<sup>th</sup> fort, and gave some suggestion to the owner.

At the end of the Atelier all the participants of the event made proposals for Kaunas 6<sup>th</sup> fort financing strategy. A selection of the suggestions:

- ✦ master plan of all the forts must be made;
- ✦ calculation of all resources is necessary;
- ✦ must communicate with local people;
- ✦ voluntary work in fortification objects is an option form saving financial resources;
- ✦ involvement of universities: fortification objects could be a place for studying, meeting, and collaboration among universities in a field of research;
- ✦ energy, ambitions, brave innovations of various stakeholders are necessary;
- ✦ fortification object(s) could be an instrument for city marketing;
- ✦ competition among different forts must be avoided in the frames of activities and choosing the right function
- ✦ the special interest must be focused on former military objects development;
- ✦ combination of new and historical architecture;
- ✦ being innovative and brave;
- ✦ city needs must fit each fortification object infrastructure or plans to create it;
- ✦ PPP model must be used.
- ✦ Medway: Don't rely on a group of volunteers only, be sure there is an overall strategy and support volunteers with professional staff members.
- ✦ Infrastructure should be organised by the government.
- ✦ Organise ambition, find the right partners, from different fields of interest.



6. workshop at Fort VI. Kaunas

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### Landscaping, Maintenance, Spatial Planning

Besançon, France - 10-12 2013, June

The main task of this atelier was to find a solution for reinforcing the link between the city and its fortifications. How can we visually and physically connect the fortified heritage and the urban landscape? How can fortified sites strengthen urban renewal? In which ways can vegetation interact in safeguarding and enhancing this particular heritage? Which creative solutions and partnerships can contribute to maintenance and development? These have been some of the matters of discussion during the atelier, with various contributions amongst which the experiences of the citadel of Spandau, the Quality team of the New Dutch Waterline, and the Maltese fortifications.

The partners were also very interested in the original partnerships for maintenance at the Citadel of Besançon, in particular with the 19th Engineering Regiment for “acrobatic” interventions and with the ADDSEA foundation of social rehabilitation.

The partners will evaluate in the next few months how to tailor these inspiring examples to their own particular needs, in order to foster new adaptive reuse in the European fortresses and stimulate an integrated approach for development of the urban fortified landscape of tomorrow.



8.on-site workshop about spatial planning

### Communication and Marketing, Branding

Citadel of Spandau, Germany - 26-27 August 2013



**Andrea Theissen, director, Citadelle Spandau:** “At the Atelier “Marketing, Communication, Branding” in Berlin were presented good practises – general knowledge as well as practical experiences – in the field of

*fortress marketing, but we took also the opportunity to discuss our current questions and our plans for the future with many experts. This was valuable to us”.*

The problems of communication and visitor management Citadel of Spandau deals with were discussed in four workgroups:

1.Visibility and accessibility (metro station, way to the Citadel, parking)

A selection of the suggestions from the partners:

- ✚ use larger signposts in distinction to advertising.
- ✚ built a bridge across the moat to the glacis of the citadel.
- ✚ cut vegetation the make the citadel visible.
- ✚ the lane should have a pavement that is viable for disabled people.

2. Tourism advertising, information (website)

A selection of the suggestions from the partners:

The website should be optimized for all displays like smart phones, tablets and notebooks. In addition to that it was suggested that the design of the website should become more aesthetic for the user. The website has to be up to date and the content has to be short and precise (this is important for the visitor and for google). Moreover the menu should be clearly organized and easy to understand.



9.experts visit the Citadel of Spandau

3. Tourist infrastructure, safety (guide signs, guided tour on the curtain wall, audio guide)

A selection of the suggestions from the partners:

- ✚ Is it worth investigating a walk around the citadel.
- ✚ Create places to stop and relax and select places where the fort can be well appreciated.
- ✚ Invest in a good safety plan which can encourage visitors to read/understand design/function at fort.
- ✚ Be careful of where signs are located, it should not interrupt important views.

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4. Development of a tourism concept for the harbour

Suggestions from the partners:

In search of a concept for the harbour the group decided that it is very important to change the area around the harbour so that the visitor can feel comfortable. For a comfortable atmosphere you need to have better furniture, more light elements and clean water. Furthermore there should be a coffee and a bar which offer cake and drinks. Moreover you can offer a boat trip on a wooden boat.

### Alternative Labour Force

Medway, United Kingdom, 16-17. September 2013



10. visit to Fort Amherst, Medway

There were various presentations of using different groups as labour force for management and maintenance of fortifications. It was clear that most partners used a mix of public services (for instance the army in Medway and Besançon), employment projects, various forms of community service (compulsory or optional), volunteers, people with disabilities, prisoners and students and pupils.

One of the **learning points** of this atelier was that the concept of 'volunteer work' is very different in the participating countries. Concepts and experiences from the UK and the Netherlands - where volunteer work is very common - can not be easily transferred to other European countries. For instance in Lithuania and Hungary volunteer work is not really incorporated in society/culture and therefore volunteers are very scarce.

In other cases - Finland, Germany - legislation about paid and unpaid labour and safety are a hindrance for volunteer work.

A raw distinction was made between 'volunteers' and 'un-volunteers'. Volunteers are internally motivated to do the job. They come to the site for their love of the heritage. The un-volunteers -

employment projects, compulsory community service, prisoners etc. - are externally motivated and it is sometimes difficult to get the right quality of work. But partners agree on the fact that working on heritage can get the un-volunteers motivated, give them pride in what they do and can enhance work skills.

### Management plan

Provincial Government of Antwerp, Belgium, 14-15 October 2013

Content of a management plan; process of compiling, involving stakeholders. Short, medium and long-term planning; regional, local scale. Characteristics and conditions of restoration and redevelopment. Flexibility and adjustment of planning; quality standards.

The city and province of Antwerp used the atelier for a presentation to the press about the policy and possibilities of the fortresses of Antwerp. This was successful since this resulted in a lot of attention in the press. Different fortresses with different governance models and uses were visited. Examples of all types of governance models were shown: public, public-private, private-commercial and private-non commercial. They all have their advantages and disadvantages. It was clear that also private commercial owners are very involved with their fort. Making money is not their sole purpose. They also want to restore the fortress and give the public on special occasions access to the site. The partners agreed that in the future with dwindling public funds the governance model of public-private partnership shall become more important.



11. The ATFORT team in Antwerp

The partners who are farther ahead in the development and re use of fortresses - for instance Suomenlinna - are starting with a long term management plan for their fortress or their

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complex of terrain, fortification and buildings. The UNESCO website gives guidelines and examples for management plans. Suomenlinna uses these UNESCO guidelines to stay attuned with UNESCO and their policy on heritage.

### Sustainability and UNESCO

New Dutch Waterline, The Netherlands, 11-13 November 2013.



12. Visit to Fort Bakkerskil

During the expert meeting, participants were shown how the New Dutch Waterline uses sustainable solutions that contribute to our main aim of 'Preservation through development'. The **ATFORT** and New Dutch Waterline partners shared their experiences on sustainability: how to optimize military heritage with state of the art techniques to minimize the use of natural resources. Furthermore, can military heritage and landscapes produce energy? And finally the UNESCO issues in the New Dutch Waterline were discussed. Experts of Indonesia, America and Brasil, owners of former colonies Holland, joined the **ATFORT** expert meetings.

The lack of resources as electricity, water and gas made fortresses often abandoned. Implementing renewable energy solutions is a must. And these sites should be considered as pilot projects for the development of this specific field.

Marco Acri, University of Nova Gorica thinks we need to turn weaknesses into strength.

A few examples are

- ✦ The simple brickwork of most fortresses are more easy to replace or convert to lower energy costs. Also the simple wooden doors and windows are less expensive to maintain.
- ✦ Another benefit is the shooting range fortresses have. It kept the fortresses in an open area.
- ✦ New technologies eg solar can easily be implemented and the impact on the fortress is reversible. It has an impact on visual integrity.
- ✦ The material for biomass often is close by, because of the landscape the fortresses lay in.
- ✦ Easy storage. (fortresses often have a lot of space). But also the stock of resources is visible an space consuming.
- ✦ Fortified sites are very good places to test these green solutions.

A special project in the Netherlands is 'Using the New Dutch Waterline for sustainable watermanagement', shared by Sander Booms, municipality of Culemborg. In the project 100.000 m<sup>3</sup> water storage and 70 ha nature for EHS is landscaped. Together with that the Waterline Landscape has become recognizable.

Nature development and waterstorage were the main goals of the project, including the discharge of water in situation of heavy rainfall, but also in a more ordinary situation of draining larger water quantities from the city. In wet periods, a larger part of the Molenkade-area is covered by water. Along with the permanent lake along the A2 these wetlands makes clear how the inundation functioned.

The result is that not only sustainable water and nature are realized here, but also the context of this landscape is recognizable. And that's what we know from the **ATFORT** meeting particularly important for UNESCO nominations.



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### Activities of the ATFORT project



#### Phase 1

Apr 2012 - Oct 2012: every partner produces a self-analysis report. This report sets out the current situation and transferable case studies of own good practices and research questions.

Oct 2012: Good Practices Engineering Workshop in Venice

#### Phase 2

Nov 2012 - Oct 2013: Fortress Development Ateliers (one per partner) and Good practice Transfer Visits: 1 Report/Atelier and 1 Integrated Atelier Report/theme (result Toolkit)

Nov 2013: Integration Seminar Paola, Malta

April 2013: Midterm event in France including policy advisors

#### Phase 3:

Nov 2013 – June 2014: Making implementation plan

June 2014: interregional event in Komárom, Hungary

#### Phase 4:

July 2014 - Oct 2014: Making policy recommendations

Oct 2014: final result presented at final event in Antwerp, Belgium

End of project: 31. December 2014

### Key Facts

11 Partners

Total costs of the project: EUR 2,170,753.80

Funding period: January 2012 to December 2014

INTERREG IVC Programme

**For more info, visit [www.atfort.eu](http://www.atfort.eu)**

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