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Urban Sustainable Environmental Actions



AN URBACT II PROJECT

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FIFTH USEACT BILATERAL MEETING REPORT

NEW USES FOR HERITAGE (RESIDENTIAL) BUILDINGS

Dublin City Council, 4th - 5th November 2014



Connecting cities
Building successes



USEAct Fifth Trilateral meeting Report Urban Sustainable Environmental Actions

Hosting Partner

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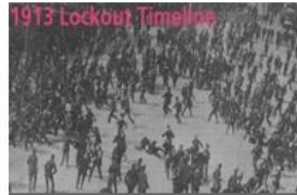
www.urbact.eu/useact

This Third Trilateral meeting Report is
written by **Vittorio Torbianelli**,
UseAct Lead Expert.

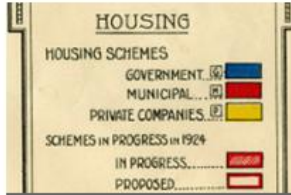
Gaetano Mollura, Anna Arena, Maria
Luna Nobile and Vincenzo Fusco,
(Lead Partner team) contributed to
editing the report.



About Living in the Lockout



1913 Lockout Timeline



Interactive map



Read the blog

NEW USES FOR HERITAGE (RESIDENTIAL) BUILDINGS

Meeting Report by Vittorio A. Torbianelli

UseAct Lead Expert

with kind collaboration of John O'Hara (?)

Dublin City Council

1. INTRODUCTION AND MAIN ISSUES

1.1 Introduction and concept paper

The Fifth UseAct Bilateral/Trilateral meeting, entitled “New Uses for Heritage Residential Building –took place in Dublin, on 4th and 5th November 2014.

It ideally represents a focused (on heritage building) “prolongation” of the Meeting held in Riga dedicated to refitting and Adaptive Reuse.

As stated in the meeting Concept Paper, Adaptive Reuse (AR) is a fundamental pillar of any integrated land take reduction urban strategy. AR should not be simply defined as the act of finding a new use for a building. It is a “process by which structurally sound older buildings are developed for economically viable new uses”.

As pointed out in a toolkit on good practice for the use of historic buildings recently published by “British Property Federation” and English Heritage”, “critical to the success is finding a viable economic use that can support initial refurbishment, provide the owner or developer with a reasonable return on their investment and which generates sufficient income to ensure the long-term maintenance of the building fabric and any associated public open spaces”. AR is widely recognized, in principle, as a complex challenge: obsolescence of buildings can ideally differentiated among physical, economic, functional, social, technological and legal obsolescence.

AR requires solutions capable to deal with all these factors. Moreover, developers, design professionals, owners, and other team members often face many regulatory procedures (e.g. “Listed Buildings Consent” or “Fine Art Administration Prescriptions”) and financial challenges when undertaking the adaptive reuse of “heritage” building.

Any AR implementation strategy –as affirmed in the above mentioned guidelines - should be project specific and able to provide viability in business, financial and heritage terms; a clear land assembly strategy if needed; a creation of a development vehicle or procurement strategy to carry a proposal forward; a robust town planning strategy; a clear public and/or private sector funding differentiation strategy.

Financial innovation is important: tools as heritage Tax Credits, Historic Preservation Revolving Funds, REITS or Community Infrastructure Levies, are opportunities to be considered, also by public authorities. In fact, also for public authorities, there is a strong economic case for regenerating historic buildings, since the benefits relate not only to the individual building, but also to the wider area and community and involving the community can build support for a project, help to avoid opposition later and may uncover unexpected resources. The success of many adaptive reuse projects can result in revitalization of a block or neighbourhood.

From the urban administrations point of view, large scale inventories can be powerful preservation tool for vacant or underutilized buildings. They can reveal potential developments to for-profit and nonprofit developers at urban scale. To face the issue at urban level, quick scans (on a broad scale) are useful and different “standard models” to identify AR Potential have been developed.

The B/T dedicated to “New Uses for Heritage (Residential) Buildings” has focused the AR issues starting from Dublin experiences and challenges. During the meeting, there has been occasion to meet professionals involved in the issue (planners, conservation advisers, conservation architects) while partners will be invited to contribute through their “cases” and their “questions”.

1.2 Strategic Approaches to Heritage Building Adaptive Reuse; an overview

The USEAct Lead Expert, Vittorio Torbianelli, during the first presentation of the meeting, tried to focus on some general issues posed by “reuse” of heritage buildings.

As correctly pointed out in a research paper on AR in Australia, when AR is aimed at heritage buildings, the new use should, in general, ensure the appropriateness of potential uses in the light of the assessment of significance and take into account the medium and long-term financial (and cultural) viability of the site.

Balancing cultural significance and economic viability is one of the major challenges in the reuse of historic buildings.

Market potential and benefit/cost ratio are both strategic variables for AR.

The building condition, scope of refit, overall cost saving, value of the building and land should be all considered for the purposes of a private perspective cost-benefit analysis.

AR works if the bottom line is fully measured i.e. that all the costs and benefits are factored in over the projected lifecycle of the building.

Adaptive reuse may not be an economically viable option when the structure of a building requires extensive strengthening to be undertaken. Also for public authorities, there is a strong economic case for regenerating historic buildings, since the benefits relate not only to the individual building, but also to the wider area and community

A typical Adaptive Reuse decision-making process, relates to “four” different criteria categories (environment, economy, social and governance).

Involving the community can build support for a project, help to avoid opposition later and may uncover unexpected resources.

The success of many adaptive reuse projects can result in revitalization of a block or neighborhood.

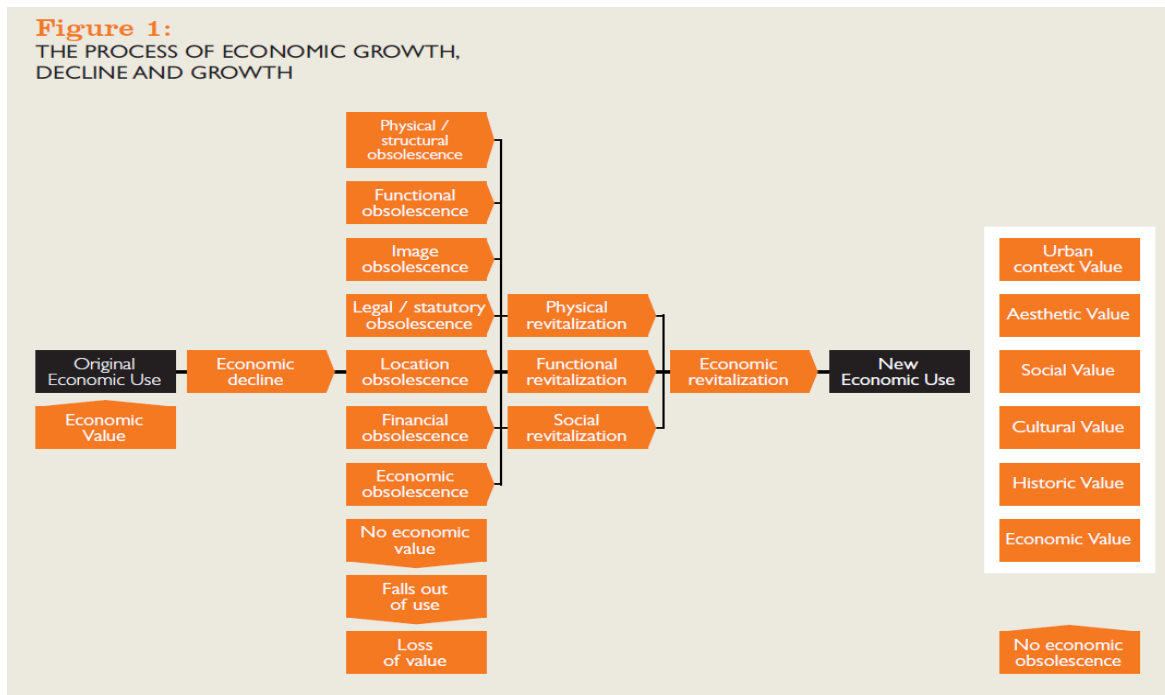
Discovering AR potential at urban scale Importance of inventories and «quick scans”are also important, stressed the Lead Expert.

Facing the AR challenge by local administration require sound strategic approach, in particular when assets to be potentially reused are many.

Independently on the fact that buildings are or not “heritage”, may be useful ranking existing buildings in an organisation’s portfolio or existing buildings across a city or territory, according to AR potential.

Inventories can be powerful preservation tool for vacant or underutilized buildings. They can reveal potential developments to for-profit and nonprofit developers.

The need to take in consideration different “obsolescence” facets, is widely recognized, published in a recent UK “guideline” on adaptive reuse.



2. PARTNER CONTRIBUTIONS

2.1 Dublin: the Georgian Dublin Reuse Projects

Georgian Dublin” is a collection of elegant landmark buildings in an urban setting of tall brick terraces.

As explained by Eugene O’Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner at Dublin City Council, Dublin City Council is developing a multi-action strategy aimed at improving the adaptive-reuse potential of the “Georgian houses” built heritage in Dublin. The strategy is based on several activities related to pilot projects in different “Georgian Townhouses” and is focused on building knowledge and experience on how to deal with the multifaceted reuse challenge

The South Georgian townhouse has a rich history of use within the city of Dublin. It has been considered by planners, architects and architectural historians as one of the more robust and resilient building and urban typologies, which the continual and diverse pattern of use confirms.

It also comprises the basic component of the distinctive urban set-pieces of internationally significant form and character within the historic centre of Dublin City.

The growing importance of the City’s built environment and public realm to Dublin’s success in competing against other capital cities for investment, tourism, is a key issue.

Georgian Dublin is perhaps the defining physical character of Dublin.

More than a tourist image, the Georgian city evokes a deeply urban city, full of fine proportioned and light-filled rooms and generous public gardens (squares) set within a calm, coherent “urbanscape”. That this urbanity is well used and well tended is of significant importance to the wider City’s well being.

This can facilitate the promotion of the South Georgian core as a place which can (continue to) accommodate quite a range and scale of uses.

Despite this long tradition and acknowledged importance, the ongoing suitability of the Georgian townhouse to accommodate certain uses is today being challenged.

This challenge has led to a growing public and policy concern over the future of the South Georgian townhouse.

The objective to support Dublin's designation as a World Heritage City (currently on the tentative list).

After the presentation by Mr. O'Callagan, *Grainne Shaffrey, Conservation Architect (Shaffrey Associates Architects), focused on some technical aspects of the "adaptive reuse" of Georgian Dublin.*

The study on "South Georgian Dublin Townhouse Reuse", carried on by Shaffrey Associates Architects, is an important initiative, therefore, to confront the apparent anomalies between a history of continuous and diverse occupation of the Georgian townhouse (comprising the full plot), a history which shows a relatively safe occupation, and, today's regulatory and economic context which appears to be limiting the potential for re-use.

The introduction of Disability Access Certificates has raised a number of conflicts between conservation objectives and compliance with accessibility regulation, and associated implications

On the other side, after recent downturn, situation has moved from a severe fall-off in demand for property to a gradual revival and the South Georgian core is emerging slowly from a low-value base.

The continuing perception that these buildings are difficult to adapt may temper any property price escalation in the South Georgian core, which may be a positive situation in the long term. Moreover, evolving demographics and patterns of living and property use are further important variables.

In relation to the Conservation objectives issue, it should be recalled that statutory footing of conservation since 1999 has had a profound impact on the management of use and intervention within the South Georgian city.

This is supported by a growing knowledge base of research and survey, which ranges from the construction practices, materials and decorative finishes to the way in which the urban unit operated and the social city it supported. Many of these studies and significant inventories have been led by Dublin City Council.

The range of typology and condition is another important aspect of the project. There exists a range of historic typologies and plan forms, but

also the extent and nature of alteration which has occurred over the years has to be considered.

Anyway, there are opportunity for diversifying internal uses of buildings and dealt with the "division of property boundaries" challenge.

Georgian Houses: possible division of property boundaries



The erosion of the plot and the dominance of rear gardens/sites as car parking is another challenging frequent issue. Compounding this is the premium value of car parking with the historic city centre.

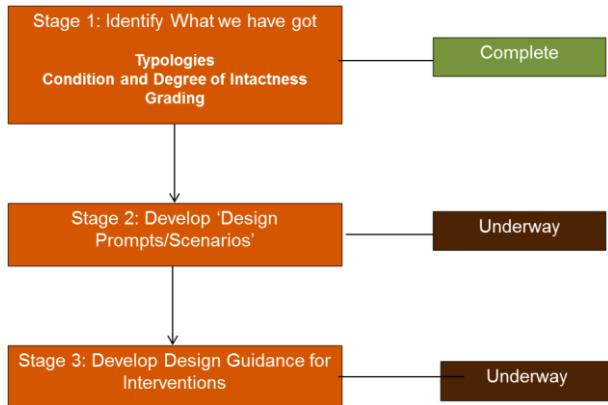
2.1.1. The Urban Memory Project in Henrietta Street

Mr. Charles Duggan, from the Deputy City Heritage Officer, at Dublin City Council, turned back to the general framework of activities planned by Dublin City Council to support reuse of Georgian buildings

He showed as all the Pilot Projects are integrated into broader initiatives, as the "Living City Initiative" and other incentives.

The recently expanded "Living City Initiative" offers the opportunity to incentivise strategic approaches and standards to be developed within the South Georgian Dublin Townhouse Re-use guidance document.

“South Georgian Town Study” – development stages



Henrietta Street is a place “full of history” and “people stories” in Dublin. An accurate study about the story and socio-economic features of the place across time has been carried out and shared with inhabitant, to feed an “urban memory project” to collect and disseminate recollections and stories on tenement life beginning with Henrietta Street.

Themes which have emerged from initial research into tenement life are, just for example, “the invisible people”, the role of women, children, migration, cultural diversity and religion, education, employment and occupations and citizens.

Flexible exhibition/performance spaces with a digital self-guided exhibition and interactive website have been provided, in one building, to promote initiatives.

The house used to host the exhibition center (with space for temporary exhibition and performance) is the “primary artefact” and therefore low level installation of digital technology will be developed to allow the qualities of the house as object.

The “cultural” project is aimed at providing: immersive exhibition experience through digital exhibition and smart phone technology, people engaging and dynamic website, “Urban Memory Project” (potential collaboration with National



Folklore Foundation currently being scoped), “Public events programme”, including talks, seminars, recitals on themes related to Georgian and Tenement Dublin (through a website), tours of cultural and architectural history of North Georgian Dublin, “Youth programme” and “Heritage trades programme”.

Scope of this Project is creating a platform to promote the culturale and community values related to the Georgian Town Hoses.

A Georgian House in Henrietta Street is used as space to develop the “Urban Memory Project”. Main elements of the projets are, in short, the

following ones.

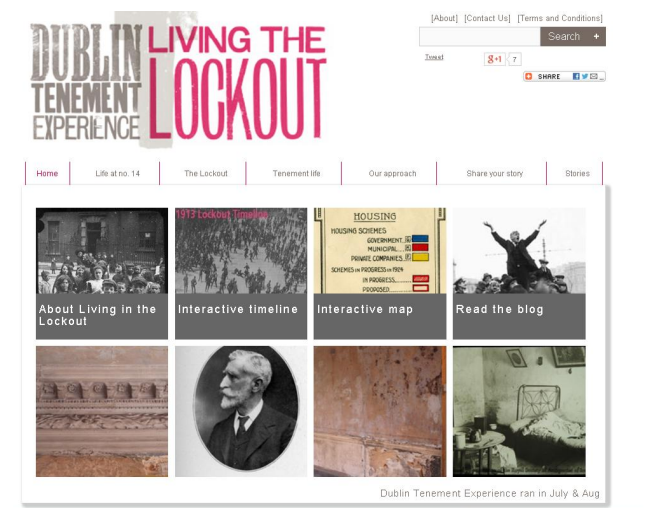
The house is the primary artifact and therefore low level installation of digital technology will be developed to allow the qualities of the house as object. Immersive exhibition experience through digital



exhibition and smart phone technology are provided:

- Engaging and dynamic website
- Space for temporary exhibition and performance
- Urban Memory Project (potential collaboration with National Folklore Foundation currently being scoped)
- Public events programme, including talks, seminars, recitals on themes related to Georgian and Tenement Dublin
- Tours of cultural and architectural history of North Georgian Dublin
- Youth programme
- Heritage trades programme in conjunction with DIT (for 3rd and 4th floors)

The website of the “Dublin Tenement Experience” (Urban Memory Project).



2.2 Nitra: Adaptive Reuse of heritage industrial buildings

As explained by Zuzana Ladzianska, Architect, pedagogue at the Slovak university of Technology, Faculty of Architecture, Department of spatial planning, and Zuzana Holičková / architect, officer of Regional monument board office in Nitra, responsible for the heritage structures and monuments preservation, in Nitra, some recent interventions tried to reuse industrial heritage buildings.



Arpádov mlyn, obnovený po požiari v roku 1922 (r. 1923)

Nitra had, in the past, a remarkable range of historically valuable industrial structures and complexes built in 18th–19th century, but nowadays, just a small number has been preserved.

The Flour Mills was situated in the Historic Zone in a very attractive and luxurious location within the historic city centre

It was the oldest and the biggest factory in the city, founded in 1863.

The Flour Mills in fact has been fully redeveloped, as a modern Mall.



Positives elements of the transformation are: Solving the parking problem in the city centre and Positive transformation of a former brownfield site, and a successful and very vivid conversion

Negatives aspects are disruption of the historic structure and urbanism, loss of heritage values, outflow of people from the pedestrian zone in the historic city centre into the shopping mall

Another industrial heritage building, the Mestský pivovar (City Brewery). It is currently facing an adaptive reuse process, thanks to a Master plan elaborated and approved for the whole area of the former brewery.

Conversion of some historic buildings with heritage value is a part of the project complemented by new structures of multifunctional and housing use. Regional Monuments Board was an important member of the project committee. The project, which has started in 2009, is under development and will provide a multifunctional complex including two housing buildings are finished. The most valuable brewery structures are still untouched.

Nitra – “City Brewery” redevelopment



Kasárne (Military Barracks) is, probably, the most relevant heritage building in Nitra that could benefit from a deep adaptive reuse process. Barracks are a National Cultural Monument and a very important archaeological site. Built at the end of the 19th century for the military garrison force, it was one of the five military campuses in Hungarian Kingdom.

Currently, the site is without any function, and appears to be the largest brownfield derelict site in the city. Several architectural studies and university projects have proposed solutions in

order to reuse the site with new functions. Regeneration of old structures and park is required, but many questions should be answered. Is creative industry a solution for the site? Has to be carried on a brownfield regeneration? There is room for PPP, and if yes, how? URM (Sustainable development of cities) let imagine that there is the possibility of funding the project with 18-20 millions Euro but many questions have to be answered before.

Proposed redevelopment plan of the “military barracks” in Nitra



Source: Municipality of Nitra

2.3 Riga: the wooden architecture reuse and the “Free Riga” initiative

As explained by Agnes Bidermane, Riga Planning Region, 19th century wooden architecture represents a distinctive feature of the Riga urban heritage, although not several buildings survived until now.

Three recent cases of adaptive reuse of wooden buildings in Riga appear to be of particular interest to understand potentials and possible strategies.

Interventions took place respectively in the “Grizinkalns” areas (‘Koka Rīga’), in Kalnciema Street (residential building) and in Miera Street (“Creative quarter”).

Koka Riga is a small area in Riga, where the construction of wooden buildings was commenced in the seventies of the 19th century. Buildings are designed as the two-storey wooden tenement houses. In May 2013, a “wooden buildings renovation centre”, called “Koka Rīga” has been opened. It works as a “community centre” aimed at

promoting intergenerational dialogue but also at stimulating reuse of other buildings in the area.

In Kalnciema Street twenty-three two-storey and one-storey wooden buildings, decorated with exquisite details are located.

This heritage represents an outstanding example of “classic” 19th Century wooden architecture in Europe. Buildings of the area are used for business and cultural events, aimed at – among others – to promote the area, within initiatives which are supported through a website.

Along with the wooden architecture initiative, Riga City has developed another project aimed at reutilizing vacant flats.

Riga ‘lost’ 1/3 of inhabitants during last 25 years. About 14 % of Riga’s buildings are empty or ‘idle’ for a long time and inhabitants of the city do not live in Riga, since more and more people live in “Pieriga” municipalities, thus inducing heavy “urban sprawl” in the area.

To deal with this challenge, a bottom-up and “market based” answer has been proposed.

The initiative, called “Free Riga”, based on a web-portal, provides tools to facilitate renting empty and unused houses.

Maps and information on vacant residential units are visualized, together with other useful information and “networking” occasions.

Initiatives to reuse wooden architecture in Riga: Koka Rīga Kalnciemaiela and “Miera Street”.



3. CONCLUSIONS

The meeting allowed a very interesting comparison between approaches to 4 different cities (and jurisdictions)

Some have strict regulatory environment, while UK and Ireland not as prescriptive in law (apart from Fire regulations in Ireland). Slovakia has a similar register for protected buildings and monuments as Dublin City and owners have to apply for permission to carry out works on historic buildings of significant value.

Where Dublin has a single status ranking for historic buildings and monuments, Slovakia provides for a hierarchy of designation for buildings and monuments depending on their level of significance.

There was general concern from all partner cities about getting public funds to refurbish these buildings for different reasons. For example strict criteria, restricted budget, establishing how significant the building is etc. A very creative initiative from Riga is the revitalisation movement of empty houses tagged "Free Riga". The initiative consists of the public identifying empty and unused houses and enabling creative industries to occupy them. Discussion took place about whether gentrification gives opportunity to add to life of heritage buildings by private investment and long term maintenance.

Value of pilot projects has been explored, with a variety of design solutions eg. Georgian Dublin Townhouse Reuse Project (Grainne Shaffrey) and Henrietta Street.

Financial Assistance for upkeep of heritage buildings let pose questions: is it better a grant system: or tax rebates?

FIFTH USEACT BILATERAL MEETING Meeting Venue: Liffey Room, Wood Quay Venue

DUBLIN|NITRA|RIGA|BUCKINGHAMSHIRE

NEW USES FOR HERITAGE (RESIDENTIAL) BUILDINGS

ACTIVITY PROGRAM

Monday, 3rd November 2014 *Arrival of participants*

20:30 Informal welcome: Foyer, Jury's Inn, Christchurch

Tuesday, 4th November 2014 Venue: Liffey Room, The Venue, Wood Quay, Dublin 8

8:30–9:00 Registration of the participants

9:00 Welcome by the Hosting Partner

Philip Maguire, Assistant Chief Executive, Dublin City Council

9:05 Presentation of Programme and Expected Outputs

Gaetano Mollura, USEAct Lead Partner, City of Naples

9:15 Discovering Adaptive Reuse Potential

Vittorio Torbianelli, USEAct Lead Expert

9:25-10:30 Presentations on:

9:25-9:35 Dublin's Heritage – An Historical Overview

Eugene O'Callaghan, Senior Executive Planner, Dublin City Council

9:35-9:45 Nitra's Heritage

Zuzana Holičková / architect, officer of Regional monument board office in Nitra, responsible for the heritage structures and monuments preservation

9:45-9:55 Riga's Heritage

Agnese Bidermane, Rūdolfs Cimdiņš, Riga Planning Region

9:55-10:05 Buckinghamshire's Heritage

Jim Sims, Project Coordinator, Buckinghamshire

10:05-10:30 Comparative Analysis from the Four Places

10:30-11:30 Historical and Contemporary Case Studies investigating Permanent and Temporary Re-uses:

10:30-10:50 Henrietta Street

Charles Duggan, City Heritage Officer, Dublin City Council

10:50-11:10 Case study from Nitra

Zuzana Ladzianska /Architect, pedagogue at the Slovak university of Technology, Faculty of Architecture, Department of spatial planning

11:10-11:30 Discussion and Findings

11:30-11:45 Coffee break

11:45-12:10 The Georgian Townhouse Study

Grainne Shaffrey, Conservation Architect

12:10-12:40 Chaired Discussion

12:45-13:45 Lunch break at Topolis, 37 Parliament Street

14:00-15:00 Grant Aided Works: Tour of early 17th Century timber-framed house in Aungier Street, Dublin 2

Sunny Goodson/Tom McGimpsey

Comparative Analysis with the Partner Cities

15:15 -15:45 Coffee break

15:45-16:15 Some Case Studies on Adaptive Re-use

Neil McCullough, McCullough Mulvin Architects

16:15-17:00 Round-table discussion between all USEAct Partners and Experts
Main findings from the day's proceedings

17:00 End of Day's Proceedings

Evening Free to sample Dublin City's heritage and cuisine

Wednesday, 5th November 2014 Venue: Liffey Room, The Venue, Wood Quay, Dublin 8

9:15-9:30 Meet at the Venue

9:30-10:00 Conducted Tour of public buildings recently refurbished and adapted:
- City Hall

10:00-11:15 - Dublin Castle
Patricia Hyde, Senior Planner, Dublin City Council

11:30-11:45 Coffee break

11:45-12:15 Universal Access to Heritage Buildings
Clare Hogan, Conservation Architect, Dublin City Council
Comparative Analysis with Partners Cities

12:15-13:00 Workshop on Conclusions for Dissemination

13:00 Close and Lunch at Toscana, 3 Cork Hill, Dame Street (with arriving 6th Bilateral Team)

URBACT II

URBACT is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal changes. URBACT helps cities to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 500 cities, 29 countries, and 7,000 active participants. URBACT is jointly financed by ERDF and the Member States.

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