



# “Connecting Urban & Rural”

# 4



## Projects, tools & processes

European delegates gathered in Sweden in November for the Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) Winter Conference.

Project partners and experts from the North Sea Region participated in the event which involved a series of workshops to examine tools for the urban fringe, with a focus on specific situations and contexts for implementing the tools.

This work will be used to develop an urban fringe toolkit, to be published in 2012, which is aimed at practitioners developing projects in the urban fringe.

The conference was hosted by Swedish project partner, Harryda who are working to investigate the potential and conditions for the renovation of a walking trail that runs through the municipality.

“The event was an opportunity to learn more about the projects, tools & processes being used to establish projects in the urban fringe.”

Participants were able to meet key stakeholders in the region to find out more about local work on the analysis of land use and spatial planning.

Delegates received information on the project area including a report on the “Description of Green Corridors in the Gothenburg region”.

The document describes the significance of the green corridors for land use planning around Sweden’s second largest city, Gothenburg and local planning in the surrounding Harryda area.

Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) was approved by the Interreg IVB Programme in September 2009. The project brings together partners from 5 countries across the North Sea Region.

The SURF project is split into 4 workpackages dealing with-

1 Project Management

2 Publicity & Communications

3 Review & Analysis

4 Testing & Implementation



# Virtual Tour

Local people in Norfolk have helped exploring their local urban fringe with the launch of a new virtual tour.

SURF partner, Norfolk County Council, has worked with researchers from the University of East Anglia to create 3 virtual tours of the Gaywood Valley.

The virtual tours provide an introduction to the key environmental features of the Gaywood Valley, east of Kings Lynn in Norfolk. They contain highlight sites that can be visited, to encourage local people to explore the valley and find out more about its history and wildlife.

Teaching materials are also being developed so that the tours can be used in local schools.

Each tour has a different theme, the first supplying a general introduction to the area, the second focusing on geology and past climates, and the third including details of possible walks and sites to visit.

To take a look at the virtual tours log onto [www.uea.ac.uk/env/research/reshigh/gaywood](http://www.uea.ac.uk/env/research/reshigh/gaywood)

## Award Finalist

A stretch of the urban fringe between cities Enschede and Hengelo was selected as a finalist from over 50 entries in the "Gouden Piramide" Award. The project demonstrates a mix of functions within the urban fringe, looking at water treatment, nature and urban fringe recreation. It has involved a new way of cooperation between local government authorities and the waterboard.

# Launch of Regional Urban Fringe Vision

A Regional Vision on Urban Fringes for the Dutch, Twente region was formally launched on 6 October.

The Deputy Boerman of the Province Overijssel, marked the occasion by the symbolic gesture of throwing a



stone in the pond of the Weusthag Park, in Hengelo.

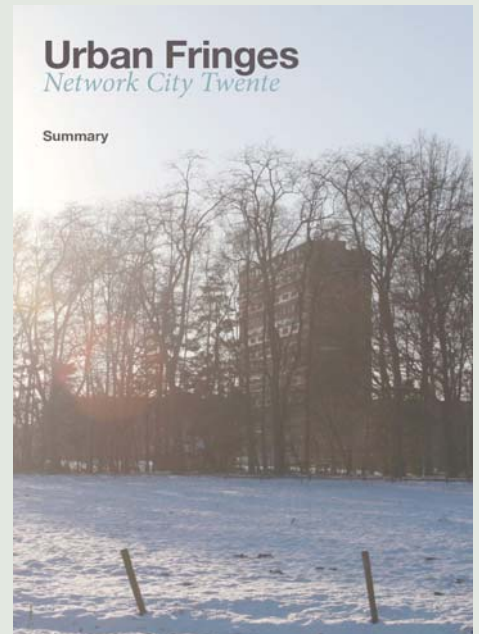


The creation of this vision document followed a decision by the

city councils, in the Twente region; Almelo, Borne, Hengelo, Enschede and Oldenzaal, to work together on an urban fringe vision and strategy, acknowledging their common urban fringe areas.

The value of these cities working together to make one regional vision was recognised by the province and the national government.

The document looks at improving the transition between urban and rural zones, strengthening the identity of the urban fringe and ways to encourage use of these urban fringe areas.



This vision document describes several tools including:

- The appointment of biking paths around the several cities.
- The appointment of three buffering zones.
- The determination of green areas in the cities.
- A common implementation programme.

*A copy of the summary document can be viewed on the Sustainable Urban Fringes website.*

## Sharing Learning...

As the Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) project enters its final phase we are building networks and sharing information and learning with other projects.

Partners were able to capitalise on the learning and experience of the PURPLE network and the PLUREL project at the Sustainable Urban Fringes, Mid Term Conference in Bradford in June.

Recently, we have been able to expand this net with presentations to the Periurban Parks Conference; discussions with the RELU (Rural Economy and Land Use programme); and a presentation at the New Bridges Final Conference. Communicating with these projects ensures learning is enhanced, duplication avoided and brings a stronger voice on urban fringe issues.

## Join us on LinkedIn

The Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) project has a discussion group on LinkedIn. Why not join the group and have your say? Visit [www.linkedin.com](http://www.linkedin.com)



# Spotlight on SURF partners

In each edition of the SURF newsletter we will catch up with the work of some of our partners. In this edition, the spotlight falls on Almelo and East Flanders.

## Almelo



**The project aims to** develop a new connection from the city centre to the eastern green lung, to give a boost to the area by entrepreneurs so a new “suburban economy” can be made.

With a primary theme focus of the role and value of green spaces, Almelo has also been exploring accessibility and entrepreneurship.

- In October, the vision for the connection of the Almelo Northern Park, with the green lungs in the eastern part of the city was approved. Drafting this vision and defining measures and project has been an important part of the project for Almelo.
- Almelo is exploring the potential of an art route as an engagement tool. This is to encourage people to use this urban fringe route to connect with the city centre.
- Work has involved dialogue with landowners and other stakeholders.
- Involvement of an external organisation Landscap Overijssel looking at combining natural areas with business areas in the city.

## East Flanders



**The project aims to** develop an integrated view for an area of the urban fringe. This will involve testing and implementing transnational approaches in planning & public policy making for spatial quality.

With a primary theme focus of Spatial Planning & Stakeholder Engagement the East Flanders project is working to gather insights in governance structures and methodologies and build interest and commitment from stakeholders.

- Gathering information from experts to refine a 3D visualisation project.
- Consultation with vegetable growers on the future development plan, in August 2011.
- Holding a series of meetings of the Provincial Quality Chamber.
- Interviews with a range of stakeholders as part of “Stepstones for Spatial Quality”.
- Planning for a publication on “Stepstones for Spatial Quality” due in 2012.
- Producing articles on the urban fringe for provincial publications - including an article on the “Opportunities of the Urban Fringe”.
- Presenting a poster on the project at the “Day of Agriculture”, in September 2011.

## SURF Recent Achievements

Information on the SURF project was presented at the “Day of Agriculture” in East Flanders in September...

**Attendees at the second River Don Communities Network Meeting in Aberdeen had the opportunity to view a draft spatial plan for the area...**

A questionnaire to discover how people view their local fringe was distributed in Laarse Beek, Anwerp ...

**Another of Hamburg’s successful Colloquium series is taking place over the winter and will inform a Regional Workshop...**

Excavators started work on the reconversion of a disused railway track in West Flanders...

**Presentations on SURF were made at the Periurban Park Project Conference in Aberdeen in September...**

Information on SURF was exhibited at a Supporting Scotland’s Cities Conference in September...

**Consultation with vegetable growers in East Flanders on future development plan for greenhouse clusters...**

The first Weusthag Day event was held in Hengelo to encourage local people to get to know the park better...

**SURF met with a representative of the RELU project...**



Find out more about the SURF partners on our website [www.sustainablefringes.eu](http://www.sustainablefringes.eu)

# Urban Fringe Research



## Review & Analysis

Contributing to SURF theme Review and Analysis and the peer review process, SURF theme leaders have held in depth research visits with several SURF partners. This learning has been enhanced with visits to site areas to gain first hand experience of project areas.

Work gathered for these visits and partner contributions to theme working over the course of the project

4 project themes for the urban fringe.

- Economy, competitiveness and enterprise
- The role and value of green spaces
- Spatial planning and stakeholder engagement
- Governance of urban fringes

will be used to inform and develop the project final deliverables.



### Project Partners are:

- Aberdeen City Council - (Lead Partner)
- School of the Built Environment at Leeds Metropolitan University
- City of Bradford
- Norfolk County Council
- City of Enschede
- Saxion University
- City of Almelo
- City of Hengelo
- Province of East Flanders
- Province of West Flanders
- City of Hamburg
- Municipality of Harryda
- Province of Antwerp

## Final outputs

Planning is underway for the Sustainable Urban Fringes (SURF) final deliverables due to be published in June 2012. The project is building upon the findings of partner urban fringe projects to produce an urban fringe toolkit detailing project interventions that have helped work towards a sustainable urban fringe.

The practical projects carried out by partners in their own city regions has been a valuable source of information for pinpointing approaches that work in the urban fringe.

Further information on these urban fringe projects will be highlighted in a final report for the project when it is published in 2012.

They will also be used to inform the development of policy guidelines and recommendations that have come from the findings of the project.

Supporting this work, a Sustainable Urban Fringes position paper is being drafted to highlight the value of the urban fringe at EU level and draw attention to the benefits these areas can bring to city regions within Europe.

## Find out more...

The Hengelo Het Weusthag, the Park of Connection, website has now been translated and is available in Dutch, English and German.



Log onto [www.hetweusthag.nl](http://www.hetweusthag.nl)

The latest edition of the Stad-Landschap, 't West-Vlaamse hart magazine has been launched by our West Flanders partner.

The magazine deals with ongoing and completed urban fringe actions in the areas...

## SURF events

- A second Leeds/ Bradford Conference is planned for April 2012. A report from the first event is available to download from the SURF website.
- The Sustainable Urban Fringe (SURF) Final Conference will take place in Aberdeen in June 2012.

The Interreg IVB  
North Sea Region  
Programme

Investing in the future by working together  
for a sustainable and competitive region



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