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Climate Active Neighbourhoods

Newsletter N°8

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Extension Period: Arnhem's Pilot on Energy Poverty

In 2019 the municipality of Arnhem started with a new and optimized pilot 'Energy Poverty', based upon experiences of the City of Plymouth (UK) as well as research and experiences in the Netherlands with tackling energy poverty.

Via this pilot during the extension period of CAN Arnhem aims to investigate the effects of a face-to-face approach and one-on-one support for residents with low income or who are unemployed to reduce their energy bill and consequently reduce the percentage of their income paid on energy. The goal is to determine the best ways to approach these target groups on a broader city wide scale.

The main challenge in Arnhem was to create an inclusive approach for all types of vulnerable households within the neighbourhood-oriented energy transition. In Arnhem three approaches for three preselected districts were distinguished. The three approaches differed in the way the households were invited and approached to 'take' the free energy advice. The offer of products consisted of the same measures, and we tried to create a similar guideline for every consultation by the three types of coaches.

In all three approaches the household was visited by an 'energy coach' with specific skills to

address the residents with regard to their individual living conditions. During the visit the coach offered energy saving tips and advice combined with the installation of free small energy saving products.

The three engagement approaches reached from an invitation letter from the municipality, application cards (analog and online), neighbourhood events to social workers, who directly work with citizens within the target group.

Until end of January 2020 35 households have been visited at least once by a trained energy coach. Advice on how to adjust one's behaviour has been offered as well as low-threshold energy saving devices have been installed. Based upon statistics from the Dutch National Information Point (MilieuCentraal) the total available package of measures (€250) might result in savings of up to € 350 a year per household.

This pilot on energy poverty offered the City of Arnhem the opportunity to test different approaches and further develop their strategy on successful and socially just neighbourhood engagement within the frame of energy transition.



© Gemeente Arnhem

CAN wins Regiostars Award for “Building Climate Resilient Cities”

During the festive REGIOSTARS award ceremony on 10 October Climate Active Neighbourhoods won the award in category 4 “Building Climate Resilient Cities”. The REGIOSTARS honours EU-funded projects, which demonstrate excellence and innovative approaches in regional development.

Energy retrofits of existing residential areas make an important contribution to achieving

EU goals on CO2 emissions. Since 2016, the CAN partners have been increasing the capacity of their local municipalities to implement their climate action strategies more effectively using a bottom-up neighbourhood approach. CAN successfully tackles a range of issues related to energy efficiency and local responsibility via innovative financial tools, home energy visits for retrofitting, citizen engagements and new governance models. Residents of deprived areas are empowered to take initiative and act for climate locally mainly thanks to energy-improved households, a key factor to reduce energy poverty.

The success of CAN is the sum of many. All partners are beyond proud of being part of this unique project and their achievements. The project consortium consists of partners from Belgium, France, Germany, the Netherlands and the UK – a great example for inter-regional cooperation.

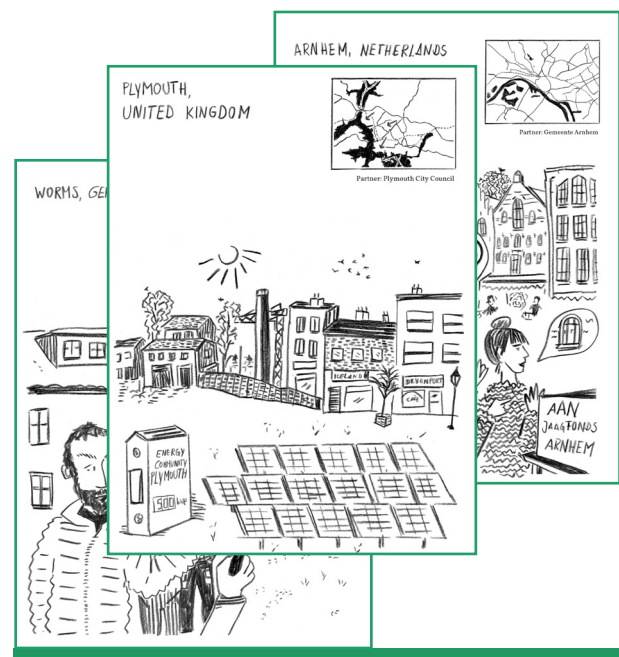


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Picture Gallery vibrantly showcases CAN activities

The CAN team has worked with an artist to visually present the project’s activities. The result is an illustrated picture gallery with one illustration for each municipality involved - Frankfurt (DE), Hastings (UK), Arnhem (NL), Brest (FR), Vallendar (DE), Essen (DE), Liège (BE), Plymouth (UK), Mantes-la-Jolie (FR) and Worms (DE).

You can find the whole picture gallery [here](#) and get a good impression of the variety of activities within CAN. Let yourself be inspired.



© Silvia Geier/RosinaRosina

CAN partners to share neighbourhood activation experience in Mainz

For many municipalities in Rhineland-Palatinate (RP), neighbourhood-related energy improvement is part of the local climate mitigation or spatial development policy. This is supported and accelerated by an attractive funding framework, in which federal and state funds jointly provide 85 to 95 percent of the municipal expenses for integrated neighbourhood energy concepts and for neighbourhood energy management and counseling.



© EA RP

To date, 135 neighbourhood processes have been and are being funded this way in RP. The Energy Agency (EA) Rhineland-Palatinate and State Ministry of the Environment repeatedly invite interested municipalities to network meetings in order to exchange experiences in and introduce new, specific approaches to neighbourhood energy improvement processes.



© EA RP

On 18 Sept. 2019 about 20 of them joined the network meeting on neighbourhood activation issues in RP's state capital, the city of Mainz. This time EA RP didn't just weave CAN knowledge into the meeting agenda, but could happily draw on the personal input of a handful of CAN colleagues. Thus, the attendees learned about the Arnhem approach, saw a range of activation approaches and their financing from Essen, and gained profound insight into the energy caravan of Worms. The lively input triggered intense dialogue in the subsequent facilitated discussion rounds between the "CANnies", including Climate Alliance, and the RP municipal representatives and consultants. The feedback was very positive on both sides.

To reward, to a certain extent, the fruitful joint effort, EA RP did a field trip with CAN partners from Arnhem the following day, to see and learn about the Ellern solar district heating, a RP leading community energy project.

Partners in the Spotlight: City of Worms



The City of Worms is a local authority of 87.000 inhabitants in Rhineland-Palatinate near the river Rhine. The city has long been concerned with climate change and the reduction of CO2 emissions within the urban area. In 2010, a climate protection concept was adopted, which has since been implemented.

Why did you join the CAN consortium?

We joined the project because it fits very well with our current climate protection activities. We have already had many good experiences with the Energy Caravan, a project for citizen activation, which we would like to pass on to European and international partners. Furthermore, the CAN project enabled us to further develop our activities in the energy caravan and to try out new methods. Last but not least, we hoped to hear about many good ideas from other cities and partners that we could incorporate into our climate protection activities.

What are your key activities?

Our main activities were various measures for citizen activation. The energy caravan, a free on-site energy consulting service for homeowners, and its extension by the thermography walk, an evening event for neighbourhoods and interested residents. Both activities reach many people who have previously done little to improve energy efficiency in their homes, which could benefit from renovation.

Especially the thermography walks with its colourful pictures attract even previously not interested people, as the eye-catching visualisation of energy loss makes the necessity of insulation visible. After the tours there is always a closing with hot drinks and small snacks where the participants can exchange ideas and the energy consultant is available for questions.

What was your highlight during CAN?

The thermography walk in Worms-Leiselheim was a special event. At the same time as Worms, the municipalities Vallendar (DE) and Brest (F) also organised simultaneous thermography walks. After the walk through the neighbourhood with the energy consultant,

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For further information,
click [here](#).



© City of Worms

the results of the walks were exchanged in a vivid transnational video conference. At this event, German-French snacks were served at the end of the evening.

How did you benefit from the transnational partnership?

The transnational partnership has given us many good ideas on how we can further improve our offer around the energy caravan and reach even more citizens. The regular exchange of ideas is extremely important, as it is often only in personal discussions that new ideas emerge and lively reports are particularly motivating.

How can other organisations/municipalities benefit from your experiences?

The energy caravan is a well-structured, well-documented and therefore an easily implementable project. We have already tried many different extensions to the project and every year we gain more experience and try out further additions. We are happy to pass on the "recipe" for the energy caravan to interested communities and organisations. It would be nice to see many imitators of this successful, neighbourhood-activating format.

Partners in the Spotlight: Energy Agency RP



ENERGIEAGENTUR
Rheinland-Pfalz

The Energy Agency Rhineland-Palatinate (RP) is a federal state-owned limited company. Our mission is to support our partners mainly being municipalities, state and other public institutions or private enterprises and give advice in starting or perpetuating action for energy transition. Therefore, we manage respective networking activities, and help to initiate climate-mitigation projects, particularly in the fields of energy efficiency, renewable energies and sustainable mobility.



© Energieagentur RP

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shared our lessons learnt with EA RP's network of municipalities for neighbourhood energy development & integrated approaches.

What was your highlight during CAN?

There were several: 1) working with students in Ludwigshafen, generating so many good ideas on solving the unsustainable mobility situation in the neighbourhood, culminating in mocking-up the "perfect" local ridesharing app, 2) Transnational neighbourhood action by having three thermography walks in parallel in Worms, Brest and Vallendar, and a final video conference between the three neighbourhoods, 3) The partnership meeting in Brest – just to mention one focussing the fuel poverty issues really opened up new policy perspectives for us.

How did you benefit from the transnational partnership?

Partner meetings – either physical or digital – are the place to be! Hardly anything works better as a "mind-opener" and to reflect your regional experiences against a wider background. So, generally speaking, we've found a lot of inspiration for our own project work and beyond through interaction with our project partners. And there was simple practical aid like "Oh, you need a flyer for that? Well, we already developed one for a similar action. Feel free to use it as template!"

How can other organisations/municipalities benefit from your experiences?

As an interested municipality or neighbourhood organisation: just contact me via the Rhineland-Palatinate Energy Agency's channels and ask! You can look into our regional fact sheets or join the network of municipalities in RP.

Why did you join the CAN consortium?

In Rhineland-Palatinate (RP) we are facing poor energy refurbishment rates of rather less than 1 %. To meet regional, national and European climate mitigation goals, we need to speed up climate action and find solutions. Thus, neighbourhood approaches are very appropriate and conducive. Before CAN, we struggled at neighbourhood level at the turning point of conceptualization into action. We've had an urgent need for "new" policy approaches at neighbourhood level, a wider range of instruments and more participative processes on the ground. With CAN, we've found a partnership to get into new lines of thought and create innovations we needed in local energy transition action.

What are your key activities?

We started with a desk research on participative approaches & financing issues, and built a dedicated pilot neighbourhood approach, partnering with multipliers in Ludwigshafen and Vallendar. We went into neighbourhood action with workshops, energy advice and community events in Vallendar, and with educational approaches in Ludwigshafen, involving school students of the area as local experts on neighbourhood mobility issues and energy refurbishment. Additionally, we directly

What's next?

Follow-Up Projects of CAN

«France-United Kingdom: For a Strengthened Cooperation between our Local Authorities»

A short-term project focussing on the impact on health of households suffering from Energy Poverty is being conducted in Plymouth and Brest. While both cities face similar issues the approach to tackle this subject is different from each other. While the Plymouth and British approach allows for a focus on the householder's health - including engaging health professionals and services on the energy poverty agenda, the approach taken in Brest and France has a focus centred on the condition and quality of housing. Both approaches are valid but both could be improved considerably if the key learning points from each were exchanged between these neighbours across the sea.

The project will deliver 40 home visits (20 per city) to vulnerable households experiencing energy poverty. The home visits will be undertaken by experienced energy advisors who is able to provide the householder with

advice tailored to their situation. This may include advice on energy tariff switching, behaviour change, income maximisation (social benefits), and installation of simple energy efficiency measures (LED bulbs etc.).

Whilst national definitions of energy poverty may vary, both Plymouth and Brest understand that regardless of nationality, energy poverty is cold, it's miserable, it's about making impossible choices like eating or heating, and most of all it is unjust. This project will look to change the circumstances of 40 households facing these conditions whilst learning from each other to be able to help hundreds more in the future.

For more information contact [Gladys Grelaud](#) of Brest Métropole or [Paul Elliot](#) of Plymouth City Council.



HEET Project and Others

By being part of the CAN project, some partners have identified aspects within their activities, which they are planning to dive deeper into. Thus, they have gained inspiration to work towards further project proposals, which they hope will be approved to enable them to work further and in a broader scale on the identified important aspects.

One core aspect, which has been identified during the lifetime of CAN, is the risk of energy poverty of approximately 1.4 million low-income homeowners in the NW European region. This target group has to cope with 'double deprivation': they have limited means for basic needs, yet spend a large share of their income (>10%) on energy. This share will grow as a result of future rising of energy prices, while financial means to invest in measures to lower the energy bill are absent. They are stuck in a detrimental vicious circle lead-

ing to decreased wellbeing. Tailor-made support to help the target group is lacking. Given the scale of this socio-economic situation, social innovation is needed. This insight has led to a project proposal called HEET (Homeowner Empowerment in the Energy Transition), led by the Municipality of Arnhem, with the goal to target this specific issue in the Netherlands, Belgium, the UK and France by testing and implementing a transnational and integral set of social, technical and financial support tools. This will be further enhanced by the cooperation of local and regional authorities with (social) enterprises to deliver a successful strategy, which will be ready for scaling within NWE by the end of the proposed project.

For more information contact [Hans van Ammers](#) of the City of Arnhem.



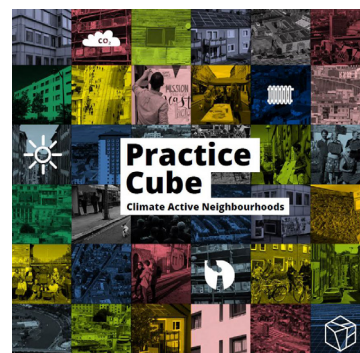
Practice Cube - A Tool to Inspire YOUR Neighbourhood Climate Action

The Practice Cube is a collection of best practices and is targeted towards municipalities, who are looking for successful climate action solutions for realising a low carbon future, increased energy efficiency and a socially just energy transition on the neighbourhood level. The best practices are divided into three categories:

- “New Ways of Cooperation” showcases the importance of rethinking the municipalities’ role towards facilitation and bottom-up cooperation on the local level in direct contact with the residents & neighbourhood initiatives.
- “Engaging Residents for Change” displays methods of engagement and of fostering intrinsic motivation by positive communication.

- “Support & Financial Tools” focusses on offering residents and neighbourhood initiatives the support they need, starting from personalised advice services up to the creation of new financial tools on the neighbourhood level.

Have a look [here](#) and get inspired!



Project Facts

The Partners

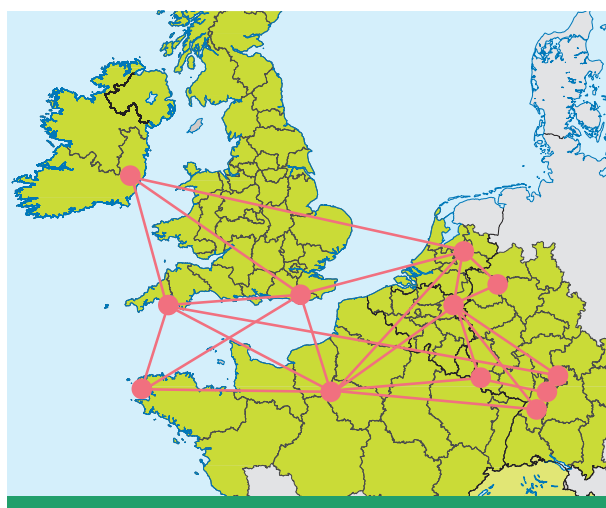
- Climate Alliance (Lead Partner)
- Optivo with Hastings Borough Council and Energise Sussex Coast
- City of Arnhem
- Brest métropole with Brest Ener'gence
- Energieagentur Rheinland-Pfalz
- City of Essen
- Liège Energie with City of Liège
- Plymouth City Council
- EPAM Seine-Aval with Mantes-la-Jolie
- City of Worms

[Read more](#)

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The transnational partner network of CAN

Duration

February 2016 to April 2020

€ 7.8 million total project budget
€ 4.7 million funded via ERDF