



**SECHURBA**  
(Intelligent Energy – Europe, EACI 2007)  
**Sustainable Energy Communities in Historic Urban Areas**

Introduction

Marches Energy Agency is the Project Coordinator in this new initiative, which is being administered and part funded by Intelligent Energy – Europe (IEE). IEE is the EU's tool for funding actions to move towards a more energy sustainable Europe.

The project objective is to study and demonstrate sustainable energy intervention in historic urban areas and buildings, respecting culture, heritage and local character.

Important aspects of the SECHURBA project include:

- Engagement with the local community to establish Historic Community Climate Change Strategies as a route map for dealing with the pressures of climate change and cultural preservation.
- Engagement with key actors including planning authorities, policy makers and installers highlighting the opportunities that exist in using current technology to promote a reduction in energy and CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in traditionally sensitive areas.
- To build an intelligent energy application tool to enable effective and appropriate renewable energy and energy efficiency advice to be generated for historic buildings and communities.
- To identify case studies for improvement in a variety of historic buildings and communities, carry out energy audits in all case study areas and buildings and identify potential sources of funding for carrying out suggested improvements/installations.

The project involves 13 partners from 7 EU countries (UK, Italy, Greece, Hungary, Bulgaria, Spain and Denmark) who will each have case study buildings and communities, one of which will be Shrewsbury. At the end of the project a dissemination plan will be constructed to set targets beyond the project's end. A best practice guide will be published evaluating the tools developed, identifying constraints that were encountered and benefits achieved, for distribution to key actors and communities across the EU to enable replication in other communities.

Funding

IEE is funding 65% of MEA's costs for the project, with further match funding being contributed by Shropshire Council.

Timescales

The project started officially on the 1st September of 2008 and will last for 30 months.

### Case study buildings

A minimum of 5 historic buildings within Shrewsbury will be studied, and will include a mix of commercial, public and residential and those within conservation areas and with different types of listings. Audits of the buildings will be carried out looking at energy use, construction type and current CO<sub>2</sub> emissions. A sustainable energy “makeover” will then be recommended with appropriate renewable energy systems and energy reduction measures proposed, demonstrating how constraints and barriers can be addressed and benefits achieved. The aim is to achieve a 40% reduction in CO<sub>2</sub> emissions in each building.

### Community involvement

In order to get feedback and consult with relevant groups, local community forums will be set up, both through workshops and on-line forums. This will involve residents’ groups, environmental organisations, housing associations etc to identify barriers, perceptions and experiences of sustainable technologies in an historic context and future prospects for such communities. An open event will be held to raise awareness of sustainable energy technologies and discuss impacts of climate change and a web-based forum set up to open channels of communication. A Local Community Steering Group will be set-up to ensure local opinions are represented and hopefully to take forward and implement recommendations that are not achieved within the timescale of the project.

Consultation will also take place with planners, installers, engineers and designers to gain from their experiences of working within historic areas and findings will eventually form the basis for an Historic Community Climate Change strategy. This will set out a vision for the community and an evidence-based route map to achieve this.

A SECHURBA award will be devised for display in public areas and awarded to communities and buildings that have achieved certain standards of energy efficiency and carbon reduction and demonstrated significant steps towards becoming historic sustainable energy communities. It will be presented by the EC to highlight achievements and encourage other historic areas to use the tools and methods developed throughout the project. An External Advisory Committee will consult on this and other aspects of the project – within the UK the committee members are from English Heritage and BRE (the Building Research Establishment).

### Financing mechanisms

Existing financing options for sustainable technologies will be researched, and links made with other European projects currently investigating this area. A guideline will then be produced outlining funding opportunities, advice on accessing funding in each community and links to potential funding organisations will be put on the project and partner websites.

A SECHURBA Guide will be published at the end of the project including an evaluation of all tools and methods developed within the project for public view and distribution amongst key target groups. It will include references from all cities and buildings examined, planning issues, financing mechanisms and sustainable energy interventions. It will summarise benefits achieved, the role of communities and hopefully serve as a best practice guide for historic urban areas to meet the challenges of climate change.

For further details of the project please contact:

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