

Best practice 23: Atelier 231 in Sotteville, France

Scale: Urban

Stage of tourism development: Beginning

Main objective: Balanced tourism growth/ Urban development

Categories of effects:

Effects on urban governance

- Cultural tourism strategy
- Stakeholder participation

Effects on quality of life

- Cultural practices and representations

The municipality of Sotteville has chosen street arts as a key cultural development strategy, in order to meet residents' and local artists' demands to conserve urban heritage and generate people interest in the local culture. The objective is to make the street arts initiative a participatory project where citizens are involved in planning and implementation. The Atelier 231 is located at the periphery of Sotteville. The host building previously belonged to the French railway company and was rehabilitated to accommodate thespians and artists involved in the production of plays, synchronised dancing, poetry, paintings and sculpture activities. The venue has allowed valorisation of the city's industrial heritage through regular free of charge street art showcases in an open area. The rehabilitation system has been centered on two main axes: a popular and free-to-all open policy, which resulted in very high attendance rates; a series of campaigns to sensitise and inform the urban population on the importance of cultural heritage, targeted to municipal departments, schools, cultural associations and citizens. The street art project motivated different departments of the town councils to get involved in festivals and other events management; the philosophy was to initiate a cultural project in a city that had no previous experience and to make it sustainable in terms of cultural value and social significance. The project helped build and strengthen social links in the cities; it won the Territoria Prize delivered by the National Observatory for Public Innovation and was designed as a "Best Practice" in recreational and cultural programming by the UN-Habitat in 2000.

Source: UN-Habitat, 2004. Best practices Database in Improving the Environment.

Links:

http://www.bestpractices.org/database/bp_display_best_practice.php?best_practice_id=553

http://www.vivacite.com/web/Culture/La_culture/L_Atelier_231.php