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## Enabling Collaboration: Policies and Governance

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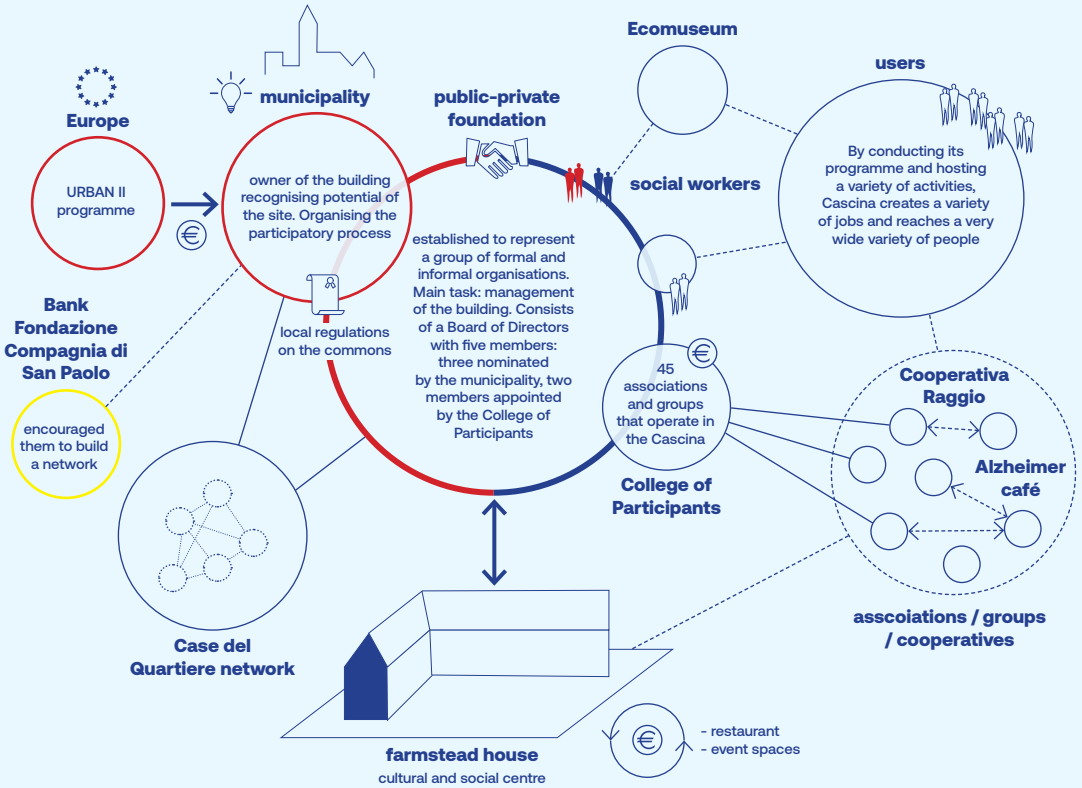
The OpenHeritage project was conceived to explore a more inclusive, sustainable, and community-based concept of adaptive heritage reuse (AHR), a concept that is discussed in greater detail in Part 2 of this book. The project built on hands-on good practices (Observatory Cases) and ongoing processes (Cooperative Heritage Labs), as well as their policy contexts. Researchers emphasised the uniqueness of all cases, often based on individual initiatives, idiosyncratic constellations of actors, and personal engagement; and also revealed clear patterns across the cases, particularly in some of the key factors facilitating or hindering success (Veldpaus et al., 2019). All of the Observatory Cases and Cooperative Heritage Labs were contextualised through policy analysis of their broader contexts, particularly the enabling or hindering policies and the governance structures that define the modalities of cooperation and decision-making between the various actors involved in developing them (Polyák et al., 2019).

### **Adaptive heritage reuse at the crossroads of policies**

There is a wide variety of policies potentially relevant for the community-driven adaptive reuse of heritage assets, which need to be taken into account for an integrated approach. The structural factors include horizontal and vertical policy integration, e.g., across heritage and planning policies, and between tiers of governance (Veldpaus et al., 2020). Moreover, AHR also becomes easier when heritage is seen as 'useful' to broader policy aims such as sustainability or regeneration. This can extend to a wide range of policies dealing with place, including those on environmental sustainability, participation, health and wellbeing, socio-economic development, housing, culture, and tourism. Finally, it is helpful to rethink building codes, regulations on changes of use (including temporary uses), and zoning laws, as well as tendering, funding, and procurement criteria, and fee/tax levies or waivers. Such policies often focus on new-build or archetypal restoration projects, with no regard for the 'hybrid' needs of AHR.

The policies used in the OpenHeritage Observatory Cases and Cooperative Heritage Labs, to enable community-driven adaptive heritage reuse, range from heritage protection (withholding demolition permits), urban planning (zoning to allow experimental uses), and real estate policies (providing access to properties or innovative financial mechanisms to renovate endangered heritage buildings), to housing (requiring a proportion of affordable housing), and social and cultural policies (funding activities or encouraging local cooperation).

# Cascina Roccafranca



- Business actor
  - Civic actor
  - Institutional actor
  - Initiator (s)
  - Contract / specific legislation
  - Money (rent, investment, ...)
  - Collaboration / agreement
- The lineweights indicate the importance of the actor or relationship.

**Fig. 1**  
Governance structure of Cascina Roccafranca

## **Policies and governance in the OpenHeritage cases**

This chapter focuses on three case studies that intertwine decision-making structures with specific policies. If public policies or third-sector strategies can support initiatives in securing land or buildings, raising funds to purchase properties, or for renovation or structural collaboration at the local level, they can also shape collaboration at the local level by encouraging more inclusive modes of governance, allowing for horizontal decision-making and co-management structures (Fig. 1).

Cascina Roccafranca in Turin has a strong public policy dimension (Fig. 2). While its current form is the result of a series of public policies, it has also decisively contributed to shaping the city's commons regulation and related policies. A former farmstead transformed into a community venue in Turin's Mirafiori district, Cascina Roccafranca is a public facility managed collaboratively by the municipality and various civil society organisations. The partnership here is based on a decision-making structure that involves both municipal departments and representatives of NGOs, thus creating a balance between institutional and community interests and ensuring both municipal support and greater outreach to local citizens and communities.

Cascina Roccafranca has been a testing ground for Turin's commons regulation that, through its Pacts of Collaboration (tailored agreements between the municipality and various organisations / individuals), allows citizen groups or civil society organisations to care for and co-manage public or private properties defined as commons. These properties are often regarded as heritage for their important role in local narratives or social infrastructure, and their reuse is often initiated by the surrounding community.

Public-civic cooperation around commons is facilitated by a municipal working group that connects 'representatives of sectoral departments of the city administration, including those in charge of green areas, social services, real estate management' (Polyák, 2022) and representatives from the local district. Cascina Roccafranca's governance model exemplifies the potentials of the commons framework, and has provided a blueprint for various other initiatives in Turin that subsequently founded Rete delle Case del Quartiere, a network of similar community centres mostly in vulnerable and peripheral areas of the city.

The Sunderland High Street Lab helped us implement some of the key concepts of OpenHeritage (Fig. 3). The three 18th-century buildings, originally built as merchant townhouses but soon turned into shops, are now listed as Grade 2 heritage buildings. They were acquired and renovated by the Tyne and Wear Building Preservation Trust (TWBPT) in order to reverse the decline of Sunderland's city centre. Collaboration with local groups and organisations generated new activities and increased footfall, and TWBPT was a key stakeholder in the project to regenerate the wider area.

Public policies played an important role in this work. The buildings, located within the Old Sun-

derland conservation area, which was designated by the national heritage protection body Historic England as 'Heritage at Risk', became a catalyst project of the Sunderland Heritage Action Zone (HAZ). The HAZ policy tool was newly introduced by Historic England to prompt the creation of local partnerships and 'focus heritage expertise and funding towards marginalised areas', as detailed in the chapter on Sunderland. The HAZ also acts as a governance model, facilitating cooperation between different partners and stakeholders in the area. TWBPT is now involved in discussions on establishing a more permanent governance structure for the area, and building on the current collaborations towards collective maintenance, finance, and governance.

Sunderland City Council, another key stakeholder in the HAZ, played a crucial role in protecting the buildings – first preventing their demolition, then purchasing the properties and immediately transferring ownership to TWBPT for a symbolic price of £1. This required TWBPT to develop a viable business plan for the buildings' regeneration, initially through a mix of grants for capital works and temporary/future uses, and later also through crowdfunding and loans. Key in this was the collaboration with Pop Recs, a local café and music shop that now operates in two of the three buildings. The trust model is a key element of the Sunderland High Street Lab. Building preservation trusts (BPTs) typically acquire ownership (or long-term lease) of buildings, and raise funds from various organisations (including Historic England, the National Lottery Heritage Fund, and the Architectural Heritage Fund) to renovate them for sustainable uses. Any revenues are used to repay loans and support further projects. Heritage trusts take various forms (including heritage trust networks), and have proven to be an efficient vehicle for restoration (especially where local government steps away from direct involvement), and can also facilitate cooperation between public, private, and third-sector organisations.

Community land trusts (CLTs) are another version of the trust model. London CLT is one of the first urban community land trusts in the UK, and thus exercises significant influence on new CLTs both in the UK and on the European continent. CLTs are usually created to counter gentrification or the financialisation of housing assets, through community ownership. By owning land or leasing it from public owners, community land trusts can control rental and purchase prices and keep properties affordable in the long run. Depending on the particular CLT, homes may be rented or purchased from the Trust but cannot be resold for above-inflation profit. In the case of London CLT, housing prices are based on the median income within the local borough.

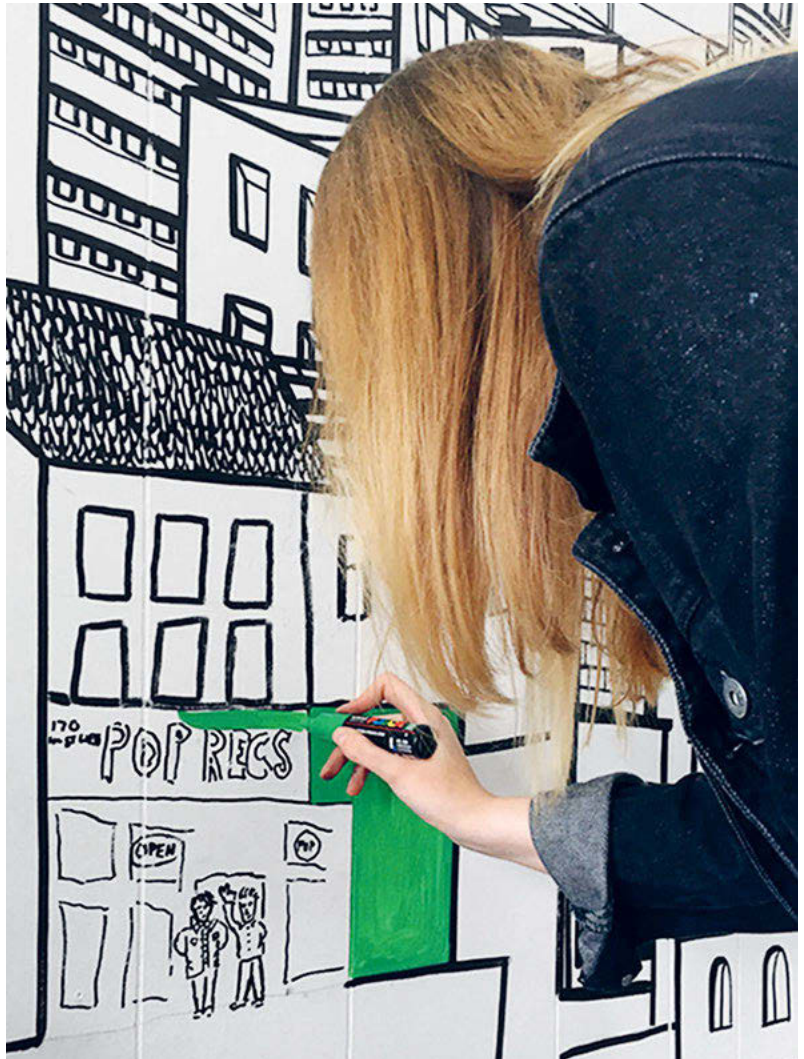
Horizontal governance is a key feature of CLTs. To ensure better integration within a neighbourhood, CLTs often involve residents, together with experts willing to support the project, in their decision-making. This involvement means that the individual interests of homeowners need to be harmonised with (rather than dominating) those of the community.



**Fig. 2**  
Visit at Cascina Roccafranca

**Fig. 3**  
High Street Sunderland,  
Heritage Open Days

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Enabling policies are important for creating CLTs. As the CLT model is based on accessible, affordable land, initiatives to establish new CLTs rely on a great diversity of public property owners (municipalities, public railway companies, etc.) or charities to donate or lease land. This is possible when public actors or charities have a long-term strategy for affordable housing or a development focus on a certain area that allows them to provide land for purposes that match these long-term goals.

In some cases, the CLTs' quest for affordable land is supported by complementary policies. In the case of London CLT, Section 106 planning obligations attached to the former St Clements hospital site stipulated an affordable housing allocation of 30%. Such mechanisms can ensure the future diversity of a neighbourhood in transition as well as the adaptive reuse of its heritage assets.

While the policy sphere is particularly pronounced in defining the modalities of decision-making and co-governance in these three cases, policies are key to most of the Observatory Cases and Cooperative Heritage Labs presented in this book and the OpenHeritage database (Baudier & Erzberger, 2020). The rent-to-investment scheme of Stará Tržnica in Bratislava has created a financial mechanism that ensures the renovation of the Old Market Hall while also allowing the association managing the building to experiment with new uses and activities to make better use of it. In Lisbon, the BIP/ZIP funding scheme supports development in vulnerable neighbourhoods and encourages local initiatives to collaborate towards shared goals. In Naples, commons regulation provides a set of policies designed to create open community venues with horizontal co-governance structures, enabling citizen initiatives to utilise empty buildings such as the Scugnizzo Liberato, Ex Asilo Filangieri, and Ex OPG.

### **Supporting community-driven governance**

Policy has important implications for adaptive heritage reuse. The OpenHeritage Policy Briefs present a series of recommendations designed to support policymaking in enabling community-driven AHR processes (Veldpaus et al., 2022), Mechanisms to support partnerships between different authorities as well as local stakeholders (Policy Brief #02: Veldpaus et al., 2022) can mobilise a diversity of skills and competences while ensuring more horizontal decision-making processes and outreach to a broader community. A diversity of funding sources, including grants, loans, equity, guarantees, or community investment (Policy Brief #03: Veldpaus et al., 2022), can enable AHR initiatives to build a sustainable financial trajectory. A long-term territorial vision (Policy Brief #05: Veldpaus et al., 2022) for an area helps different approaches, policies, and projects coalesce into a coherent strategy with better-defined local impact.

While these policy recommendations focus on local and regional administrations, they also have a strong EU dimension (Policy Brief #04: Veldpaus et al., 2022). AHR has been an important focus of European

heritage and cultural policies, especially since the European Year of Cultural Heritage in 2018. Within the EU policy landscape, AHR is already central to EU cultural- and heritage-themed programmes and is included to some extent in agendas on economic, urban, and regional development. Particularly in the context of the European Green Deal and the New European Bauhaus, AHR is also becoming important more broadly in improving the quality of the built environment and architecture, as well as greening and circular economies, material sustainability, recycling, and waste reduction. AHR is not, however, reflected in how the majority of EU subsidies are spent within the European territories. Given that innovation, inclusion, and sustainability are already criteria for funding research (Horizon Europe), innovation (European Capital of Innovation Awards), and urban (URBACT, European Urban Initiative) programmes, it is time to rethink how the EU's investment funds and Structural Funds can be utilised to finance territorial development.

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