

## A new circular life in Ghent's Old Dockyards

*In Ghent, Belgium, the circular economy brings together companies, institutions, governments and citizens on the way to sustainability. At the same time, its potential for innovation, job creation and economic development reinforces the attractiveness of the city.*

The Old Dockyards is a waterfront housing project where closing loops at the district level is key. Approximately 1,500 housing units will be constructed through public-private partnerships (PPPs). Ghent wants to develop a holistic approach for the area that encompasses the wider concept of circular economy. The project is supervised by the city of Ghent and the autonomous municipal Ghent development authority (sogent).

Thanks to innovative technologies, some residential buildings in the Old Dockyards will use heating systems based on biogas from black water. Such systems reuse the warm air produced by industrial factories, as well as captured heat and nutrients from used water from dishwashers and laundry machines.



But the Old Dockyards is more than a simple housing project focusing on constructing new low-energy and passive houses. Thanks to the regeneration of the area, new business models such as car and bike sharing have developed, and the city has launched activities that challenge residents' linear lifestyles. Indeed, throughout the Old Dockyards, people can already experience the circular economy through the presence of temporary buildings constructed with recycled materials, guided walks, a 'circular dialogue café' as well as short-term exhibitions that demonstrate the different possible uses of city infrastructure.



That is why the Old Dockyards project was chosen as one of the good practices inventoried by the Cleantech Cluster Regio Gent, a regional partnership that stimulates the use of clean technologies and the circular economy, with the ambition of making the Ghent region a robust and resilient ecosystem by 2030.

The Old Dockyards project also shows the importance of using participative PPPs to scale-up your project. Indeed, PPPs not only allowed the city to work together with different actors and achieve a sustainable business model, but they also ensured that different services, such as water, energy and mobility, are characterised by a circular approach.

