

# FOR A FAIR RENOVATION MODEL



## INTERREG UPCYCLING TRUST PROJECT MANIFESTO

**By the project partners in Lille, Ghent, Cork, Rennes and Brussels**

Europe is at a crossroads between two deeply interlinked and urgent challenges:

- 1 **The climate crisis**, which demands a drastic reduction in energy consumption, carbon emissions and greater climate resilience.
- 2 **The housing crisis**, marked by a growing shortage of affordable, decent, and secure homes.

Thus far, suggested solutions to one of the crises, have proven to significantly exacerbate the other. New housing developments have to take into account the limited availability of land and zero land take climate goals. At the same time, ambitious energy renovation policies could further increase housing costs, triggering gentrification and displacement – or what some call “renovictions”.

### THE UPCYCLING TRUST VISION

The Upcycling Trust project brings together social actors, researchers, housing organisations and public developers. We are piloting a transformative model to renovate and decarbonize housing, all the while ensuring long-term affordability and community ownership.

At the core of our approach is the Community Land Trust (CLT)/Organisme de Foncier Solidaire (OFS) model. Initially developed for creating new affordable housing, our innovative approach has allowed us to apply it as a tool for the advancement of a fair energy renovation and circularity in the built environment.

#### How does it work?

The Upcycling Trust model allows for the investment needed for energy renovation to be combined with the integration of the dwelling into OFS/CLT, thus ensuring its long lasting affordability. The initial investment has

a significantly increased impact, as it combines decarbonisation efforts with decommodification.

It can be used in different contexts:

- **Support low-income owner-occupiers** who cannot afford to finance renovation on their own;
- **Prevent the privatisation or loss of aging social housing**, by converting it into permanently affordable CLT/OFS homes;
- **Repurposing vacant or underused buildings** turning them into high-quality, energy-efficient community-led housing.

This model can be applied to individual homes, multi-unit buildings, or even entire neighborhoods.

### WHY SHOULD THE UPCYCLING TRUST MODEL BE REPLICATED ACROSS EUROPE?

We believe Upcycling Trust offers a blueprint for the just transition of the housing in Europe Here's why:

- 1 **The climate won't wait:** Europe's building stock must be renovated at scale to meet climate targets.
- 2 **Housing is a human right:** millions face unaffordable rents and energy poverty.
- 3 **Renovate, don't demolish:** reusing and modernising existing buildings reduces emissions, material use and prevents land artificialization.
- 4 **Strengthen communities:** the CLT model builds social cohesion and empowers residents.
- 5 **Two goals, one solution:** Upcycling Trust combines decarbonisation and decommodification.

- 6 **Cities lead the way:** local governments are best placed to drive innovative, inclusive policies.
- 7 **It's scalable:** with the right support, this model can be replicated on scale across Europe

## A EUROPEAN OPPORTUNITY

The Upcycling Trust shows that climate goals and housing justice can be advanced together. Yet to bring this vision to scale, enabling conditions are needed at the European level:

- **Support innovative local approaches** that respond to both the climate and housing crises;
- Provide **targeted funding to scale up** pilot projects like Upcycling Trust;
- **Use renovation funds strategically** to prevent displacement, combat speculation, and promote permanent affordability;
- **Recognize the potential of CLT/OFS models** to anchor social equity in the green transition.

The energy transition must not leave the most vulnerable behind. on the contrary—it is an unique opportunity to build a more just, inclusive, and sustainable Europe.

We are ready to lead this transition from the ground up.

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**Upcycling Trust**

More infos on the Upcycling Trust project on our website: [upcyclingtrust.nweurope.eu](https://upcyclingtrust.nweurope.eu)  
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