

European Community Land Trust Network

Connecting and scaling CLTs across Europe



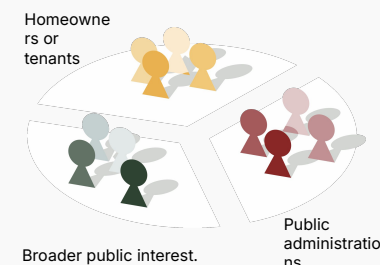
Community Land Trusts (CLTs) own, develop and steward land for the benefit of the community. CLTs are a powerful solution to the complex challenge of delivering affordable and sustainable housing in the context of a Just Transition. CLTs address this challenge by offering a long-term strategy for community empowerment, and economic resilience, as well as environmental stewardship. With more than 500 CLTs across Europe, across six EU member states and the UK, they are proven and ready to scale. Collectively they own thousands of permanently affordable homes and other assets for families and businesses across Europe. The European CLT Network aims to mainstream CLTs to deliver affordable, inclusive and sustainable land use and housing across Europe.

Why Community Land Trusts

Across Europe, housing is increasingly unaffordable and out-of-reach. Instead of reflecting citizens' right to housing, the system is exacerbating inequalities, threatening the social fabric of our places. At the same time, the built environment consumes 40% of energy and contributes to 36% of greenhouse gas emissions in Europe. In tackling these challenges, there is a lack of agency available, particularly to lower-income people in shaping their housing and neighbourhoods.

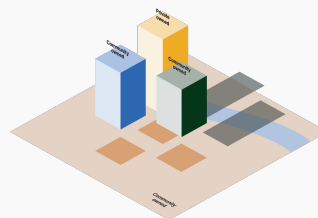
Community Land Trusts - Unique Characteristics

Community (organisation)
Democratic and inclusive governance



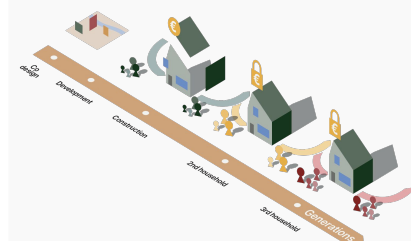
True participation of community and public representation.

Land (ownership)
Separate ownership of land and buildings



Fosters home ownership and secure tenancy.

Trust (operation)
Permanently affordable



Safeguards benefits (~100yrs).



Impact: building homes and communities

Unlock supply and public support CLTs have a track record of bringing in additional supply of social and affordable housing. Analysis from the UK shows that CLTs have the potential to [deliver 5% of supply](#) needed through a variety of pathways to scale with the right enabling policy environment. CLTs can organise local support for development to overcome opposition, and analysis from the UK shows CLTs have an almost 100% success rate with planning applications.

Permanent affordability CLTs deliver genuinely affordable homes and maintain affordability across generations by starting with the intervention point of land. Decoupling land ownership from property ownership can counter speculative real estate dynamics.

Anti-displacement In urban areas facing gentrification, CLTs act as bulwarks against displacement, enabling communities to remain rooted in their neighborhoods.

Cohesive neighbourhoods Studies have shown how CLTs improve wellbeing through increased cohesion, connection and health through [community-led stewardship](#).

Just Transition As permanent owners of the land, CLTs take a long-term, multi-lifecycle development perspective, investing in sustainable housing which takes into account future generations. CLTs are uniquely placed as [drivers of the just transition](#) and can provide social safeguards to buffer against issues such as 'renoviction'.

The impact reports of [Community Land Trust Brussels](#) and [England & Wales Community Land Trust Network](#) offer an example of the impact that CLTs can make.



CBC report, 2024



World Habitat award celebration - Community Land Trust Brussels - Vincent Lannoy

Scaling and expansion

Working in partnership City governments from Barcelona to Brussels are supporting CLTs as a solution to their housing affordability issues. Public housing providers and private developers are partnering with CLTs, learning from their best practice and using them as a test bed for innovation. Mainstream banks are demonstrating openness in lending to residents of community-led housing.

Proven and ready to scale The [United Nations](#) and the [European Union](#) recognise CLTs as examples of best practice for affordable homes and cohesive neighbourhoods and encourage their replication. CLTs in Puerto Rico, Belgium, the US and UK have won the Gold World Habitat Award, proving their adaptability to different geographic contexts. CLTs have benefited from large scale European public funding programmes and philanthropic support in the US and Europe, at an increasingly [significant scale](#).



European CLT Network - a voice for CLTs across Europe

Pan-European CLT cooperation The Network launched in 2023 with fifteen founding members across the UK, Ireland, Belgium, the Netherlands, France, Spain and Germany. A strong, connected network can help CLTs overcome challenges related to policy, funding, and land acquisition. The Network's vision is that CLTs become recognised as a mainstream option for affordable, inclusive and sustainable land use and housing across the continent. The Network Secretariat is based in Brussels and governed by a Board of Trustees and General Assembly of member organisations.



Our strategic objectives

- **Raise awareness:** Increase the visibility and legitimacy of CLTs across Europe. We promote members' successes and stories, act as a thought-leader on community-led housing and engage with sector leaders, policymakers, media and the wider movement.
- **Influence public policy:** Advance the CLT agenda in Europe using strategic engagement and influence to bring about sectoral transformation through European-level policy change and local-level capacity building.
- **Change market practice:** Drives innovation, catalysing pathways to scale and enabling partnerships between CLTs, municipalities, housing cooperatives and the private sector.

Research, innovation, and scaling projects examples

- **Growth Lab:** A six month accelerator programme, creating the infrastructure to support CLT entrepreneurs to scale.
- **Scaling pathways:** Enabling pathways to scale that can be replicated across countries e.g. CLT integration into large urban redevelopment programmes and CLTs as a basis for secure legal tenure in self-build communities.
- **CLTs as drivers of circularity:** Research and practice supporting CLTs leverage their unique approach to drive the just transition and embed circular design.
- **Upcycling Trust:** A cross-European EU Interreg funded project supporting CLTs as a basis for just renovations.
- **Collective financing:** Leveraging the power of the Network to tackle the challenges CLTs face in access to finance for land and development.



Our priorities for the EU Commission

We seek to establish ongoing dialogue with the members of the Special Committee, offering our Network's expertise to help shape effective EU housing policy that delivers high-impact investments in permanently affordable and sustainable housing, which, in turn, will strengthen the resilience of local communities.

CLTs have been recognised as 'best practice' in the European Parliament Report on Housing for All, the EU Urban Agenda on Housing and the Urbact Knowledge Hub calling for their replication. Several CLT projects have been supported by EU Funds and the Director-General of DG EMPL, Mario Nava, highlighted the great potential of CLTs to contribute to the goals of EU housing and social policy during his recent visit to the Calico (CAre and LLiving in the COmmunity) project.

We advocate for the European Parliament's continued support for CLTs by making the following recommendations for the European Affordable Housing Plan:

1. **Increase recognition and profile of CLTs** in EU Policy and Funding Framework, including the European Affordable Housing Plan, emphasising the added value CLTs bring and their potential to deliver 5% of housing supply for Europe's needs.
2. **Address housing speculation** We call for coordinated EU-level reforms to counter speculation as one of the root causes of the housing crisis, resulting in more stable housing markets with prices linked to local incomes rather than global capital flows. CLTs address speculative real estate dynamics by decoupling land ownership from property ownership.
3. **Deliver permanent affordability for intergenerational benefit** One-time subsidies without long-term controls risks creating inefficient or 'leaky' public investment. We advocate for investment with conditionalities that lock in long-term affordability, as CLTs do, protecting public investment while creating intergenerational benefit and housing security.
4. **Promote community empowerment and thriving neighbourhoods** CLTs can build community wealth, cohesion and pride, as well as housing units. They empower local communities, giving them power and agency in partnerships with the public and private sectors. To deliver inclusive housing and overcome 'NIMBY' opposition, neighborhoods require appropriate [democratic community governance models](#) - such as those offered by CLTs.
5. **Advance the just transition through an inclusive renovation wave** CLTs demonstrably deliver more low carbon homes and provide social safeguards for energy renovation investments. The [Upcycling Trust](#) model ensures benefits reach vulnerable communities and prevents "renoviction". This approach simultaneously addresses the housing crisis and the urgent need for energy renovation with a single investment.
6. **Targeted funding access** EU mechanisms should include targeted funding support and capacity building through technical assistance for community-led initiatives.



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 European Community Land Trust Network



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