

# Big Benches Community Project (or BBCP)

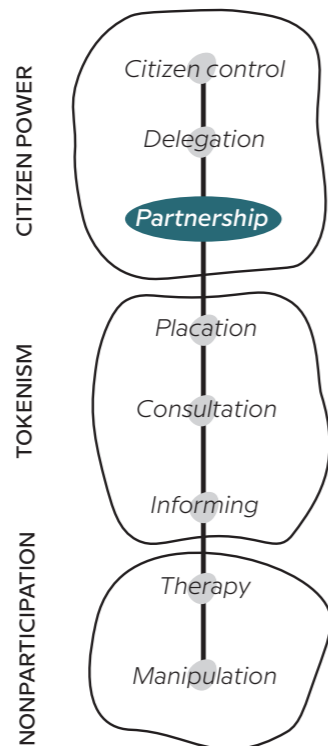


LOCATION  
**Vezza d'Alba, Italy**

TIME PERIOD  
**Since 2010**

## THE PROJECT

The "White Big Bench" is an out-of-scale bench located on the highest point of "Bricco del Castellero" hill. The place hosts Torion's ruins but was left abandoned until 2014 until it was renovated and turned into a recreational space for tourists and local walkers. This big bench is part of the broader "Big Bench Community Project", a non-profit initiative promoted by the American designer Chris Bangle and his wife Catherine to support local enterprise, tourism, and craftsmanship in the towns that host these out-of-scale installations.



bench in a scenic location that must be freely accessible to the public.

## RESULT

For the BBCP team leaders, the initiative is very successful because it has **improved the local economy and attracted more tourists**. Indeed, the central part of the economic return is from the people who visit the benches and become active consumers in that place. The BBCP has strengthened the community's sense of pride and belonging in terms of the human aspect. More specifically, in Vezza d'Alba, the construction of the White Big Bench has generated curiosity, and **the place has become a new recreation point where events take place**. Thus, the local community has widely and positively received the Big Benches for their aims and results.

## DESCRIPTION OF THE SPACE

Vezza d'Alba is a small town in the Piedmont region with a **low population density**. The village has a huge potential for different local activities based mainly on **tourism or agriculture**. However, the **lack of suitable transport connections** and the difficulty in creating a solid systemic network hinder some economic activities. These facts place the population in an isolated condition. Vezza d'Alba **inhabitants do not consider themselves remote but are aware of their "marginal" position**, primarily due to difficulty accessing roads.

on the hill. They contacted "Chris Bangle and Associates," which offered its support providing big benches technical drawings.

## ROLE OF THE LOCAL COMMUNITY & METHODS USED

The involvement of the local community happens in different steps of the project, from the activation process to the **construction of the big bench by volunteers** or the fundraising to buy materials. The enthusiasm of local communities and associations that strongly want a Big Bench in their settlement is a crucial factor. Since the BBCP is a nonprofit association, the construction of the benches is financed through private funds by citizens, associations, or Chris Bangle's company. Moreover, the natural heritage is a crucial point of the project because the main requirement from BBCP is to build a

## INITIATION AND ACTORS

The initiative for the construction of the "White Big Bench" has been led by the Association of Merchants and Entrepreneurs of Vezza d'Alba, who wanted to set up a big bench



Vezza D'Alba town\_People sitting on the White Big Bench next to the "Torion"  
©"Big Bench Community Project"



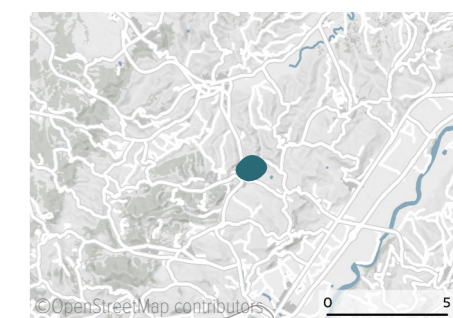
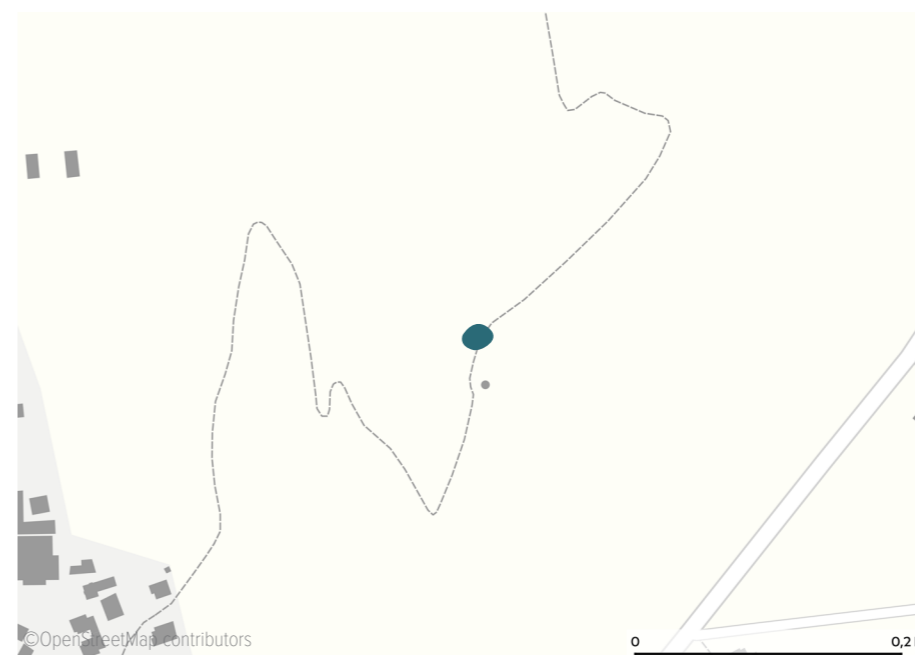
Vezza D'Alba town\_Big Bench under construction  
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Vezza D'Alba town\_The space where the White Big Bench is located, next to the "Torion", covered with snow (aerial image - drone)  
©"White Big Bench Vezza d'Alba - L Torion"



Vezza D'Alba town\_Big Bench inauguration with mr. Chris Bangle and authorities of Piedmont region and Vezza d'Alba town  
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Vezza d'Alba, Piedmont, Italy

more about this project

