

Winner of the 5th edition of Holapueblo's revitalisation project

Holapueblo presents Centro-vivo Aroche, a multifunctional space dedicated to citizen participation, sustainability, and local development

- **IKEA has transformed an unused room in the former Guadalinfo building into a multi-generational meeting space, where workshops, training sessions, entrepreneurship meetings, screenings, and social gatherings are held.**
- **It is estimated that approximately 3,000 residents, including children for activities, students, professionals, and seniors, will benefit from the space, allowing them to enjoy recreational and community moments.**
- **Aroche mayor Cristina Romero and Juanjo Manzano, Director of Alliances at AlmaNatura, along with Laura Escalante, responsible for IKEA Spain's Sustainability team, have presented this space**

Aroche, Huelva, 21 May 2024 - The municipality of Aroche in Huelva has been awarded first place in the III edition of the '**Proyecto Reactivadores**' by **Holapueblo**, a project conceived by **AlmaNatura** and promoted by **Redeia** and **IKEA**. Its purpose is to encourage the re-population of rural areas.

Representatives from these entities have introduced the **new space, Centro-vivo Aroche: Innovation, Culture and Community**, which arises from the need to create a **multifunctional venue that encourages citizen participation, sustainability, social cohesion, and local development** - contributing to residents' well-being and strengthening ties to this rural environment.

IKEA has transformed **an unused room in the former Guadalinfo building into a multi-generational meeting point** where workshops, training sessions, entrepreneurship meetings, screenings, and social gatherings are held.

'We envisioned a place where young people could study or play, the elderly read or converse, entrepreneurs dream, and local associations create new possibilities together on the horizon,' says **Laura Escalante, IKEA's Sustainability Project Leader**.

It is a space measuring approximately 100 m², for which a project has been specially designed with aesthetic elements inspired by the local area. 'We envisioned an aesthetic that reflects both tradition and modernity, with colours that evoke limestone, holm oaks, and black vultures... Because here, not only are ideas projected, but identity is built,' **said IKEA's spokesperson**.

The design also prioritises a positive impact, incorporating sustainable furniture and recycled materials, along with ensuring efficient and environmentally respectful décor. Low-energy LED

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lighting has been installed to optimise energy use, and specific containers for waste separation and recycling have been provided to promote sustainable practices in activities conducted within the space.

In the years to come, various activities and gatherings are expected to take place, including training sessions, entrepreneurship events, cultural activities, heritage identity projects, and spaces for leisure, meetings, and exchanges. The plan anticipates hosting at least ten events annually, involving approximately one hundred residents in its first year of operation. Moreover, the estimated indirect impact includes nearly 3,000 local residents, who will not only have a new space to enjoy but also see the local community revitalised, which may also attract new residents.

Cristina Romero, mayor of Aroche, said during the presentation of the space: 'The Centro-vivo Aroche is the fruit of the firm commitment of this Town Council to the well-being of our residents. *This new facility is much more than an upgraded room; it is a symbol of opportunity, cohesion, and future for Aroche. Thanks to the support of IKEA, Redeia, and AlmaNatura and a boost from the Holapueblo programme, we have taken another step in the fight against depopulation today, investing in a place where people can live, create, and grow together. This project not only revitalises a physical space but also rekindles the soul of our town.*'

Juanjo Manzano, Director of Alliances at AlmaNatura, highlighted that collaboration has been key to activating this space and its impact on the community: *'When a space is revitalised, the community gets stronger. And when collaborations between institutions, businesses, and communities are aimed at a clear purpose, new opportunities arise that strengthen the future of rural areas.'*

'Proyecto Reactivadores' (Reactivator Project), an initiative to design spaces with socio-environmental value in rural areas

Aroche was one of the winning towns in the most recent call for **'Proyecto Reactivadores', an initiative within the framework of Holapueblo**, in which Redeia, AlmaNatura, and IKEA collaborate to design spaces with purpose and socio-environmental value in rural areas, helping people grow and enjoy new opportunities. Municipalities are selected based on their projects aimed at revitalising spaces as hubs for new entrepreneurship, serving as catalysts for positive transformation to turn their communities into breeding grounds for intercultural coexistence with a clear focus on sustainability. These initiatives help energise the economic and social activity of the municipalities and promote demographic growth.

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