



# Danish URBACT National Dissemination Point Bi-Annual Report

## URBACTII



Photo: Bitten Dallas

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## Cities as living rooms? Inclusive urban spaces



How can we create urban spaces that can be inclusive to all the different citizens in a city? Citizens have very different needs where urban spaces like parks and squares are concerned – and in order

to create inclusive urban spaces it is necessary to pay attention to the fact that not all users are alike. The Danish consultancy and analysis firm Hausenberg have made a case study of the planning of urban spaces and their inclusivity in three major cities in Denmark - Copenhagen, Aalborg and Odense. The main focus of the case study was marginalised citizens (boozers, drug addicts and homeless people), their occupancy and use of public spaces and their mixing with other urban citizens and users of public spaces.

### The “Swamp”

The six examples of mixed-use public spaces show different designs are presented. Some designs are more divided and some more integrated, but all solutions have positive and negative sides. One example is ‘Nørrebroparken’ (Nørrebro, Copenhagen), where marginalised people have a space of their own, the ‘Swamp’, which they appreciate very much. The ‘Swamp’ is fenced in by a wooden fence that you can see through, and within the area the users have a toilet and benches. They keep the place clean themselves. The fence has proved to be a positive solution in Nørrebroparken, as the users of the ‘Swamp’ as well as other users of the park are very satisfied with the way it works. The fence has given the boozers and other marginalised a ‘free space’ in which they can socialise and not be exposed to judgmental attitudes, while other users, like families, can feel safe from the boozers’ noise and dogs. The ‘Swamp’ is an example of how clearly marked boundaries can create peaceful coexistence in the

urban space. At the same time, the fences raise an ethical discussion – Is it morally justifiable to ‘fence in’ marginalised people and is segregation of citizens in the urban space a positive solution?

*Read more*

<http://www.hausenberg.dk/#/359983/>

## The Copenhagen City Bee Cooperation

### Ecological sustainability

The Copenhagen City Bee Cooperation is a socio-economic organisation with several sustainable aims. Bees have a positive environmental effect by sustaining biodiversity in a city, and furthermore the City Bee Cooperation produces honey locally and ecologically. Urban bees are doing very well compared with their cousins in the country, as bees often get killed by pesticides in rural areas, while the biodiversity in cities is actually quite high. There is a great diversity of flowers in city gardens, parks, roof terraces, balconies and backyards, compared with the monoculture of flowers frequently found in the countryside.



### Social sustainability

Furthermore the project aims to create social involvement and activities for people at the very bottom of urban society, i.e. homeless people in Copenhagen. The organisation has installed the first three million bees in beehives at a closed-down garden centre at Sundholm, Amager in Copenhagen. Sundholm also has an activity centre for marginalised citizens like homeless people, boozers and drug addicts. Some of these people, most of whom are not likely to be integrated into the regular work force, are offered jobs as bee-keeper assistants – which does not acquire any specific

qualifications or language skills – in the protected environment of the project. In addition to the beehives, a ‘city honey’ centre has been established for processing and producing honey locally in Copenhagen. In addition to the ‘city bee centre’ at Sundholm, public institutions and private companies can sponsor the City Bee Cooperation and i.e. have a beehive on their rooftop. In Copenhagen, the European Environment Agency at Kongens Nytorv, the pharmaceutical company Lundbeck, the new city district of Carlsberg and Bella Center, a conference centre, will house the bees with beehives on their rooftops.



Urban bee-keeping exists in several other cities of the world; i.e. New York, Chicago, San Francisco, Tokyo, Hong Kong, London and Paris.

Read more  
<http://bybi.dk/>

## Transition Towns Sustainable bottom-up action



Photo: Line V. Madsen

### A ‘glocal’ citizen initiative

The Transition Town movement is a ‘glocal’ citizen initiative for sustainable and resilient urban planning. The movement is global with initiatives on a local

scale. The active citizens work in local groups to create new forms of local communities centred around a holistic transition of the local communities to be sustainable and resilient. Citizens engage in subgroups working with i.e. food and transportation, and with the long-term aim of producing an ‘energy decent action plan’ for the local community. The movement aims to create cooperation between as many citizens and civic associations and organisations in the local community as possible, as well as with politicians, planners and other local authorities.

An interesting part of the Transition Town movement is that it places a new focus on citizen participation in planning – a participation which, in the citizen initiatives, reaches out of the framework for public involvement, in a bottom-up process initiated by the citizens – and with the perspective of generating roots and ownership in the local community.

### Local community groups

The movement was founded in Great Britain in 2006 and has now spread globally with many initiatives in Europe, North America and Australia, and also a few initiatives in South America, Africa and Asia. In Denmark, around 7-10 active local initiatives are spread across the country – among others at Teglholmen, Nørrebro and Frederiksberg in Copenhagen, Tølløse in West Zealand, Syltemae in South Funen, Ry in Central Jutland and the island of Fejø. Furthermore there is an informal network for spreading ideas and information – ‘Transition Denmark’. In the area of Syltemae, Funen, local citizens have been working on establishing a more sustainable local community since January 2010. This local group was the first official transition group in Denmark and consisted of about 80 members in May 2011. Since January 2010, the group has had film nights and workshops to discuss the future shortage of oil and fossil fuels and visions for the future of the local area, workshops on how to grow food locally, a local action day for the climate planting pear and apple trees, an ‘open-space’ workshop on how to increase the local food production and events at the local market to spread the idea and get more



Photo: Line V. Madsen

local citizens involved. All local citizens have been invited to participate in these events. These initiatives and workshops should, in the longer run, result in a sustainable local 'energy decent action plan' for the Syltemae area, which is initiated by the citizens.

*Read more*

<http://www.syltemae.dk/>

<http://transitiondenmark.ning.com/>

<http://www.transitionnetwork.org/>

## Green roofs in Copenhagen

In 2010 the city council of Copenhagen decided that all new flat roofs (roofs with an incline of 30 degrees



or less) in the Municipality of Copenhagen, as far as possible, should be built as green roofs. This specification will be incorporated into the next municipal plan of 2012 as part of

the Copenhagen Climate Plan with the aim that the city be carbon neutral by 2025. Green roofs are a way of adapting to climate changes, resulting in a warmer and more rainy climate in the city. At the same time, they function as the 'lungs of the city', as recreational spaces for urban citizens and supply a variation in the urban architecture. Roofs planted with specific small plants will absorb 60-80% of rain water falling on the roof, and as such the green roof can reduce and delay the run-off of water and thereby ease the pressure on drains, among other things. Green roofs function as an insulating layer on the roof, which provides more effective insulation against warmth and cold than a regular roof and as a result effectively reduces energy consumption. Furthermore green roofs can be a part of improving local biodiversity as well as reducing the Urban Heat Island Effect (UHI), which is a result of very compact cities. Roof vegetation improves natural cooling processes such as photosynthesis and evapotranspiration and also reduces the UHI by covering some of the hottest surfaces in the city - the roofs.

The green-roof policy has already been incorporated in some district plans, i.e. the district plan of 'Carlsberg City', a new carbon-neutral city district in Copenhagen.



*Read more*

<http://www.kk.dk/Borger/ByOgTrafik/GroenneOmraader/GroenneTage.aspx>

## 'Lærkehaven' - Sustainable social housing in Aarhus

The wooden houses of 'Lærkehaven' represented Aarhus and the SHE (Sustainable Housing in Europe) project at the world exhibition EXPO 2010 in Shanghai. The SHE project ran from 2003-2008 and was a demonstration project supported by the European Commission. It was a collaboration between non-profit housing organisations in Denmark, Italy, Portugal and France with the aim of developing pilot schemes for building affordable sustainable houses.



### Three groups of housing complexes

'Lærkehaven' consists of three different groups of housing complexes of different sizes, architecture and sustainable elements, but all of them wooden constructions built off site. All in all, the housing

complexes save the environment approximately 100 tonnes of CO2 compared with housing complexes built according to the standard requirements of the Danish Building Regulations.

The houses are one- or two-storey terraced houses. Sustainable elements are integrated in the design and concentrated around form, orientation, materials and constructive solutions rather than sophisticated technology. In one of the housing groups, a new district heating concept for low-energy dwellings is tested, which should make it possible to save both energy and money. Another housing group is built as passive housing – the houses are compact with a minimum of surfaces and furthermore with triple-glazed low-energy windows facing south, thick walls with highly efficient insulation and tightness, electrical solar-control glazing on windows, roof towers with light intake and balanced ventilation with

heat recovery, which supplies both fresh air, room heating and domestic hot water.



*Read more*

<http://www.she.coop/>

<http://www.bf-ringgaarden.dk/>

## Green Lighthouse

### Faculty of science at the University of Copenhagen

Copenhagen's first public carbon-neutral building was built in 2009 (and was opened just before COP 15). It was planned and built as a public/private partnership with actors including the university and the Municipality of Copenhagen as well as the Danish Ministry of Science. The Green Lighthouse houses the Faculty of Science of the university; predominantly it houses student services, where the students of the faculty can find information about their studies, exams and future career. Furthermore it houses a faculty club – a meeting place for researchers and others connected with the faculty.

### A sustainable design concept



The design concept of the house contributes to an energy reduction of  $\frac{3}{4}$  compared with current building standards; it involves the optimal use of daylight, an automatic ventilation system and an automatic cooling and heating system. The building



is orientated towards the sun with the roof tilted towards the south in order to get the greatest exposure to the sunlight. Moreover,

the roof is covered with solar cells and solar panels. The green building is constructed according to the active house principle that is, it generates energy. It has its own energy supply, which consists of a combination of solar energy and heat pumps. The building is cylindrical in order to ensure the ideal proportions between a minimum surface and maximum volume. The cylindrical shape and adjustable facade louvers make it possible to ensure the optimal generation of energy from the sun - the sun is the house's main energy source. Furthermore the building allows a lot of daylight to enter, and ensures a healthy indoor climate by means of a natural ventilation system through the upper part of the windows, which open and close automatically in order to allow fresh air to enter. The building as such is cooled by natural ventilation and thermo-active concrete floors that absorb the heat. Moreover, the heated air in the building rises through the atrium in the centre of the building and exits through its skylights. The Green Lighthouse demonstrates how to construct buildings that are climate friendly and functional at the same time.

*Read more*

<http://greenlighthouse.ku.dk/>

## Svendborg is Cittaslow

Svendborg is a town on Funen. It is not a dynamic and trendsetting metropolis or an international financial centre – but instead



the town of Svendborg has decided to make the most of its town qualities by joining the international Cittaslow movement. Since 2008, the Municipality of Svendborg has been a registered part of Cittaslow and for the moment, and for the coming two years, Svendborg will hold the post of chairman for the Nordic Cittaslow towns.

The aim of the Cittaslow movement is to slow down the speed of everyday life – to ‘human speed’ – and to improve the quality of life for its citizens and visitors. For Svendborg, the point is to focus on its

unique town qualities and create life quality for its citizens while benefitting from digital opportunities, and as such make it attractive to live in a town like Svendborg while staying in touch with the dynamic working life of other cities in the country as well as international financial centres. Svendborg is defined by its location by the sea, maritime culture and history, commitment to locally produced food and its pleasant city centre, with a rich cultural and social life. These are the characteristics that Svendborg seeks to sustain and develop in the future by promoting values like quality and sustainability as well as local products. As part of the Cittaslow philosophy, shops, restaurants and other businesses in Svendborg can also be certified ‘Cittaslow’. The municipality is constructing a whole new town district, built on sustainable principles as low-energy apartments and the infrastructure is planned with a focus of cyclists and pedestrians.

*Read more*

<http://www.svendborg.dk/cittaslow>



URBACT II

**URBACT** is a European exchange and learning programme promoting sustainable urban development.

It enables cities to work together to develop solutions to major urban challenges, reaffirming the key role they play in facing increasingly complex societal challenges. It helps them to develop pragmatic solutions that are new and sustainable, and that integrate economic, social and environmental dimensions. It enables cities to share good practices and lessons learned with all professionals involved in urban policy throughout Europe. URBACT is 181 cities, 29 countries, and 5,000 active participants

[www.urbact.eu/project](http://www.urbact.eu/project)



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