Nordic Best Practice Challenge
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Introduction

The Conference of the Nordic Capitals is a biannual meeting that was established in 2002. The first conference took place in Reykjavík in 2003. Thereafter the conference has been held in Stockholm, then Helsinki, Oslo, Copenhagen and in Stockholm again. The other participating cities in this meeting are Mariehamn, Nuuk and Tórshavn.

The main purpose of the conference is for Mayors, City Councillors representing different political parties and Senior Officers – depending on the topic – to share experiences and maintain good relations. The theme of the most recent conference, that took place in Stockholm in 2013, was The Growing City – Opportunities and Challenges with Globalisation and Urbanisation. This year’s conference, which will take place in Reykjavík on May 7–8, will have as its theme Resilient City.

The Nordic capitals share many traits but they are still distinct and unique places. Their conditions and challenges are often similar but the solutions that the cities find may differ. It is therefore prudent that the Nordic capitals share their best practices for the common good of its citizens. At the Conference of the Nordic Capitals in Stockholm in 2013, all the cities present agreed to take on a Nordic Challenge in Best Practice – NBPC. The agreement states that the aim of the NBPC is to achieve better public services at the same, or reduced, cost by increasing the exchange of knowledge between the Nordic capitals. It was agreed that winning one of the four categories would just be a bonus as the main goal of the NBPC is the exchange of solutions for the common good.

The Nordic capitals have been invited to submit four innovative public sector solutions to the NBPC. One for each of the Challenge’s four main areas:

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According to the agreement at the conference in Stockholm in 2013, the contributions could be innovative ideas ready to be applied in the near future, or projects that are already in operation or in the process of implementation. What were asked for were smaller-scale projects and solutions to everyday city problems rather than, for instance, large and complex city planning projects that might be difficult to implement in other cities. In other words, hidden gems; simple yet innovative solutions for public sector operations.

As the Nordic Capitals convene in Reykjavík in May for the conference of 2015, it is time to examine all the entries and crown the winners of the Challenge. Each city mayor has selected a person from their city’s university or other equivalent research facility or college of higher education for the jury. All the nominations to the Challenge have been assessed using the following criteria:

• Reliability and cost effectiveness.
• The implementation of an innovative idea for an activity or practice.
• The implementation of a new innovative approach to an existing activity or practice.
• Clear practical benefits for the citizens.
• Potential lasting impact on the everyday life of the city.
• Transferability of the concept to other Nordic cities.

Seven of the cities – Copenhagen, Helsinki, Oslo, Mariehamn, Reykjavík, Stockholm and Tórshavn – have nominated projects to the Challenge. This folder comprises all the entries to the Nordic Best Practice Challenge, a number of interesting, inspiring and transferable projects for you to examine!
I. Copenhagen

A Better Copenhagen – Communicating Results

Under the headline ‘A Better Copenhagen’, The City of Copenhagen has changed focus in its communication from the city’s decision and investments to its delivered results.

Sharpening the results – a number, a brief headline, and a concise explanation – has produced press stories, made employees hold their heads high – and has helped the organization focus on how we deliver the best results for the citizens of Copenhagen.

A Better Copenhagen publishes news, result and relevant key figures from the Danish capital. The goal is to provide news on the outcome of the political decisions to the citizens, the employees of the City of Copenhagen and journalists. A Better Copenhagen bypasses the political and administrative processes and skips straight to communicating the delivered results from all of the city’s seven departments. In this way, it clarifies what the citizens get in return for their municipal tax and showcases the outcome. The aim is that raising awareness on the city’s results will heighten the level of the public debate on the development of the city.

The editorial process of A Better Copenhagen is a value in itself. The monthly editorial meeting with leaders across the administration helps to sharpen the internal mind-set and puts focus on delivering results. Every month the editor of A Better Copenhagen sends reminder mails to all of the seven communications departments of The City of Copenhagen, which helps build unity in the overall organisation. A Better Copenhagen is one of the few channels in which The City of Copenhagens speaks with one voice.

The news of A Better Copenhagen are accessible on different platforms e.g. the website www.kk.dk/etbedrekbh, an online newsletter, social media, billboards in the city, and posters and electric screens at municipal institutions. In certain periods, the city also advertises A Better Copenhagen on media websites and in public buses.

A recent survey shows that the citizens and employees perceive the news from A Better Copenhagen as positive, relevant and credible and that they would like to see posters and advertisement from A Better Copenhagen in the urban space. Since City of Copenhagen introduced A Better Copenhagen other Danish cities have taken similar initiatives e.g. The City of Aarhus launched similar concept earlier in 2014.

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A Better Copenhagen posters in the city.
II. Helsinki

Open Ahjo – The New Interface Boosting the Transparency of Administration

In 2011, the City of Helsinki started using a data system to support the case management and decision-making of the city (Ahjo). As a follow-up to the city’s strategic decision to function as an open city, in 2013, the city decided to open Ahjo’s open programming interface, through which the decisions are available and exploitable as open data in machine-readable format freely to everyone.

Open Ahjo (http://dev.hel.fi/apis/openahjo) offers a unique chance to utilise the data connected to the city decision-making in different kinds of applications. The applications can be used for making it easier for both the inhabitants of the municipality and the public servants to obtain information, to prepare shared cases or participate in the preparation process.

The open data that is available through Open Ahjo is updated once a day and available as open data, i.e. freely obtainable for anyone to exploit free of charge.

Boosting transparent decision making
The Open Ahjo interface offers an up-to-date view into the decision-making of the city, from the initiation to the implementation. The interface offers fantastic opportunities to create mobile or web applications based on it, which make it easier to follow the decision-making of the city and also to participate in it.

Independent coders have already created several user-friendly applications based on the interface. Examples of these include partner coder Juha Yrjölä’s decisions browser application http://dev.hel.fi/paatokset, by which it is possible to find information using a search word or filtered categories, and application developer Jouni Tiainen’s Ahjo Explorer mobile application http://www.hri.fi/fi/sovellukset/ahjo-explorer/.

Documents in Open Ahjo can be read, downloaded, tipped off and shared to others. The user can initiate propositions and start conversations – which is essential for supporting the citizens in their participation and influencing.

The ability to make different kinds of data sets, such as decision-making data, financial data, population data, geographic information data and environment data interoperable would offer an even more comprehensive view into the city operations and development.

This would, in turn, further knowledge management and offer the inhabitant of the municipality not only a view, but a truly open way to the sundry data foundation, which makes up the basis for the decision-making and service production.
Applicability to other cities

Open Ahjo is a unique data initiative in the world and it has also raised a lot of interest internationally. Open Ahjo has been presented at numerous events and other cities have been encouraged to follow in the footsteps of Helsinki. Other big municipalities in Finland, such as Espoo and Vantaa, ponder and determine the possibilities to open their decision-making data.

In many cities, the problem lies in the old systems, which may prove difficult and expensive to equip with an open interface. The idea however can be duplicated. When the data has been released to the open interface, the developers can access it and provide the inhabitants of the municipality with new kinds of applications.

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III. Mariehamn

Be an Active Part

The overall goal is to get a school building that will satisfy the needs of all concerned as far as possible. In order to achieve that goal students, parents, teachers, janitors, cleaners and administrative staff have been engaged in the planning process, ever since the first drawings were made by the architect. Teachers are represented in the building committee.

Starting point
The city of Mariehamn had two options, to reconstruct an old school building from the 70’s and make it into a modern school, or to build an entirely new school.

Step one
Students got information about the two possibilities at hand and voted for the alternative they preferred. This information was given to all students from grade 1–9 simultaneously. Teachers and other staff got the same information and voted as well. Parents’ organization was also represented at the same information meeting.

Step two
Every class in school gave a report to the building committee with suggestions for the new (reconstructed) school. The building committee and the architect met groups of teachers, cleaners and other groups of staff for discussions in order to get good ideas. The student council and parents had meetings with the building committee and the architect several times. All protocols and plans have been available on the homepage of the city from the start.

Step three
The architect met groups of teachers, for example teachers of chemistry. They were given the possibility to inform the architect about the needs and other practical things that a classroom would benefit from. This was done with all groups of staff.

Step four
During the time of the renovation of the old school, all lessons will be held in other premises. There were two options, one was to hire school modules for all classrooms, the other option was to use another building nearby and rent fewer modules. Students,
parents, teachers and other staff in school had the opportunity to give their opinion on this matter. The student council also voted for one of the solutions. The politicians in the board of education then made the final decision in this matter.

A working group has the assignment to talk to every teacher and make plans of what can be saved from every classroom, what can be renovated, what can be painted and so on. The goal is to recycle as much as possible.

**Reliability and cost effectiveness**
To renovate instead of building a new school would in this specific case save approximately 4 000 000 euros. The school has 240 students. If we would have built a new school a costly demolition would have been nessecary. When renovating the old school everything but concrete elements will be brand new, so the renovated building will last as long as a new one.

**Sustainability**
The renovated building will almost reach the standard of “paasive house”, which would not have been possible if a new building with long glass-corridors would have been choosen. The amount of energy needed will be reduced with more than 50%. Everything that can be kept of the furniture and other equipment from the old school will be renovated and used in the new building. A solar-power system is planned to be used for educational reason but it will provide the corridors with light as well.
Innovative idea
The project has in the planning process involved all concerned in a systematic and ambitious way. A lot of time and effort has been put into the participation of all concerned.

Benefits for the citizen
The school will have better functions due to the participations of all concerned and a lot of discussions have been the result in our local media. The citizens of Mariehamn know a lot about the project.

Impact of everyday life
A modern school that is a good example of what you can do without building a completely new house is something that other schools can see and follow.

Transferability
A lot of old schools in all Nordic cities are due to be renovated and the process of having so many people involved in the planning process will give a better result at the end.

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IV. Oslo

How to Promote the Recycling System in Oslo

In 2006 the City Council of Oslo decided that all of households should start with source separation of plastic packaging and food waste. The Agency for Waste Management was given the task to develop and implement the system, as well as the communication task to the citizens in Oslo. The campaigns started before the system was put in place to prepare the citizens and also to raise awareness about waste treatment.

The system
Since June 2012, all 340,000 households in Oslo may separate their plastic waste into blue bags and their food waste into green bags. The waste is then transported to the largest optical sorting facility in the world. Food waste is turned into bio fertilizer and fuel for buses. Plastic waste is turned into new plastic products, such as toys, chairs and fleece jackets. The residual waste is then incinerated in a system of energy recovery. Source separation and recycling reduces the total amount of waste produced.

The separation at source system for plastic and food waste was introduced as an addition to the already existing separation of waste into paper, glass, metal packaging and hazardous waste – that residents dispose of at designated collection points. Residual waste shall be discarded in plastic bags that are easy to differentiate from the green and blue ones, e.g. plastic bags from grocery stores.

Bags are closed and tied with a double-knot, before they are all put into the same household bin. This takes up less space in urban areas. Keeping the waste in separate bags also ensures that more of the highest quality of discarded plastic and organic material is able to be collected. This is crucial when the material is to be recycled. For example, plastic retailers will only accept very clean plastic and only clean food waste is accepted for the production of fertilizer for organic farming.

Public communication
Introducing the separation at source system in Oslo was a great challenge for the city administration and the citizens. It was vital to ensure that the necessary infrastructure was in place, so that waste could be recycled from day one. This included primarily, a) the distribution of green and blue bags to residents prior to start up, b) the setting up of an efficient separation plant, and c) establishing a recycling facility, and/or down-stream partners, to buy waste for recycling.
The Agency for Waste Management has carried out extensive communication campaigns. Distribution of hundreds of thousands of brochures, advertising campaigns in the media and in public spaces, endorsements by celebrities, education of schoolchildren and information provided to people door to door, have successfully communicated the basics to 99% of Oslo’s population, namely that: Food waste goes in the green bag and plastic packaging in the blue ones.

Analysis conducted during the spring of 2014, shows that increasingly more people separate their waste. However, the potential is still great. In 2013, the separation rate for food waste was 39%, while the equivalent rate for plastic was 21%. Communication with the public on different arenas will therefore continue be important, in order to increase the level of recycling and reduce the amount of residual waste.

At the moment the Agency for Waste Management is conducting three special public communication activities: 1) information door to door 2) monitoring and control of deviations 3) education of schoolchildren
Concerning the first two activities the Agency is working with certain geographical areas in the city for a shorter time span. The Agency is focusing on positive reinforcement with several activities like information leaflets by mail, meetings and visiting people at home to provide information on status and give advice on how to improve their separation of waste at home. When the activities have been conducted the Agency controls whether the activities have made a difference and the results are communicated to the
citizens. Communication campaigns in the same geographical area are vital to support the specific activities conducted.

Measuring the effect of these activities through two quantitative analysis in 40 different housing cooperatives show an increase of 45 percent (weight) in separation of food waste and 37 percent increase when it comes to sorting plastic packaging. This shows that positive reinforcement and visiting people at home providing information and advice over a 2 month period gives remarkable results improving recycling and waste quality.

Concerning point 3 – education of schoolchildren – the Agency for Waste Management established a facility for 4th grade schoolchildren 10 years ago. At this facility the Agency provides education in waste management and recycling to all students from 4th grade and up in Oslo. The teaching program can be adapted to all visitors, but 4th graders are a priority.

The students go on a tour around the optic sorting facility for blue and green bags and also visit the waste-to-energy plant where the residual waste is energy recovered in addition to receiving training in the principles of the waste management hierarchy. In 2014 the Agency had 6 900 visitors for this education program and that was an all-time-high.

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Better Districts: Citizens Prioritizing Projects

Better Districts 2015 is a collaborative project between citizens and administrative authorities for prioritizing and distributing funds for new projects on a smaller scale and projects of maintenance in the districts of Reykjavík. The project is intended to enhance public participation in deliberative democracy and democratic decision making and is based on experience from previous years.

Better Districts has been running since 2012, resulting in hundreds of minor projects that have been executed by the municipality. These projects have started as ideas which individual citizens or groups have submitted online and then voted on in online public elections.

What kind of ideology is Better Districts based on?
The project is based on ideas on deliberative democracy, participatory democracy, participatory budgeting – promoting public participation in democratic discussions and decision making beyond what is normally seen in a representative democracy. The project is a further developed edition of Better Districts 2012. Previous years’ experience is used as a foundation as well as expert services and information from other cities all over the world that have experience with participatory budgeting.

The budget and district distribution
The budget assumes a total of 300 million ISK, which is divided between districts in accordance with a fixed sum on one hand and the number of residents on the other.

What kind of ideas?
The projects in question are projects to enhance the quality of the residents’ surroundings and increase possibilities for recreation and social gatherings, to improve equipment or opportunities for games and leisure, to encourage cycling or improve conditions for pedestrians and public transportation users.

How much can a project cost?
The projects can be small or large but the cost cannot exceed the amount each district has been assigned. A team of experts from the City of Reykjavík’s Environment and Planning Division estimates if projects are practicable and prepares and informs of a cost estimate.
When could ideas be submitted?
Ideas in this cycle could be posted from October 8th to November 7th 2014. The cycle started in October 2014 and will run throughout the year 2015. Citizens can participate in and follow the project on the consultation forum www.betrireykjavik.is, on Facebook: http://www.facebook.com/Betri.Reykjavik or through their district service centres or district committees.

How does the consultation forum work?
Those who want to post ideas on the website must first register as users of citizens portal Better Reykjavik – www.betrireykjavik.is. Ideas are posted on the website under the district chosen. The collaboration includes viewing other users’ ideas, adding comments/arguments and rating ideas. After ideas are posted they can be argued, discussed and rated until January 1st 2015.

District committees organize ideas
After the Environment and Planning Division’s team of experts has finished assessing and discussing ideas, the district committees organize the ideas so that residents can vote on them.
**District voting**
Voting will be done electronically in February/March 2015 on a special website where the Reykjavík’s residents can choose between the projects. All citizens in Reykjavík 16 years of age and older can vote.

**Executing Projects**
When the results of voting are in, the projects chosen will be designed, tenders called for and the projects executed in 2015. An effort will be made to maintain good collaboration with original posters of the ideas and the district committees regarding the execution process.

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VI. Stockholm

Chemical-Smart Preschools

The City District of Skarpnäck has identified a new long-term way of working with sustainability issues at preschools. Sustainable, chemical-smart preschools are being developed through coordination and participation, with a focus on concrete improvement measures.

Our understanding of the effects of chemicals on human health and living environments has improved in recent years. Children are particularly sensitive to these effects, and preschools have a real opportunity to make a difference through chemical-smart choices when buying materials, food and other consumables. The City of Stockholm has carried out well-established environmental work for many years, and has devised a number of programmes and action plans within this field. However, the district council saw a need for a new approach in order to provide preschools with concerted support to help them develop and broaden their environmental work, win long-term support for this and achieve tangible results.

The City District’s preschools have long featured broad environmental commitment, but poor coordination and a lack of an overall perspective meant it was often hard to make use of and disseminate the results. The district has therefore decided to establish a new way of working that includes all environmental issues. This approach will take strong commitment for environmental, economic and social sustainability as its starting point, with flexibility, desire and cooperation as its guiding principles.

This approach has evolved and been developed in stages, in collaboration between preschool head teachers, employees and the administrative department. The work has been coordinated since 2013 by a case manager with environmental expertise within the administrative department’s facilities management and IT team. Coordination with facilities management issues creates a natural platform for cooperation in connection with practical issues at preschools. This means that environmental aspects are highlighted naturally when building and rebuilding premises, and when purchasing items such as consumables, toys, furniture and food.

The process of mapping preschools’ waste management began in January 2013, and each preschool was given the opportunity to sort its waste at source and to sort food waste according to local circumstances. The proportion of food waste collected has now risen from 12 percent to 70 percent, and all preschools sort their waste at source. At the same time, waste management costs have fallen.
The next step was to improve awareness of the environmental impact of food, and preschool cooks were identified early on as key individuals. The meals served to preschool pupils are usually planned based on nutritional content, but the City District also identified food as an excellent basis on which to work with sustainability issues. The preschool cooks were brought together to create a network, and they now meet regularly for inspiration and further training, and to share their experiences. Thanks to increased commitment and improved knowledge, the proportion of organic food served at preschools has risen from 20 percent in 2013 to 40 percent in 2014, without costs increasing. Food quality has also been improved, and more and more food is being prepared from scratch in preschool kitchens.

In spring 2014, the environmental coordinator and the preschool head teachers drew up a local action plan for environmental work at preschools. This action plan is based on the City of Stockholm’s environmental programme and the City District’s environmental action plan, and includes concrete goals and actions in order to create chemical-smart preschools. The City District has 37 municipal preschools, and its Administration is of the opinion that it must be possible to carry out the work in stages, while at the same time it is important that continuous development also takes place. The action plan therefore includes both short-term goals to be achieved by all preschools during the year and more long-term goals in order to shape the continued focus. All work takes place in close cooperation and dialogue with the preschool head teachers, employees and cooks, and there is considerable capacity for staff ideas and development.
Through this new way of working, the City District has succeeded in creating a learning organisation that integrates and coordinates the preschools’ environmental work, while at the same time there is also great scope for staff ideas and development. The environmental coordinator acts as a link between the City District Committee, the City District Administration’s staff and the preschool employees. The experiences gained from the focus on waste management and food preparation show that a greater focus on sustainability does not cost any more, and that knowledge and commitment mean significant improvements can be achieved within existing budgets.

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VII. Tórshavn

Sustainable Population Growth Empowered by Public Communication

Nothing is more important than being able to attract talented and skilled people to a capital. There has, unfortunately, been a population decline in Tórshavn Municipality in recent years. In 2014, however, there has been a shift towards population growth. This is partly a result of hard work and because the Municipality has put a great emphasis on public communication and public relations to attract newcomers. A special website for Faroe Islanders abroad has been a means to reach the overall goal of increasing the population.

In recent years, the population on the Faroe Islands as a whole has declined. This has also been the case for Tórshavn Municipality. The declining population is a challenge of exceptional character. Especially young people move abroad; mostly to get an education. However, only half of the emigrants move back after their final graduation. So how can we make it attractive for these people to move back and use their acquired skills in the country where they initiated their educational path? Recent studies show that a significant proportion of Faroese emigrants living abroad would choose Tórshavn Municipality as their final destination if they were to move back. Tórshavn Municipality represents 41.5 per cent of the total population of the Faroe Islands. In addition, 71 per cent of Faroe Islanders living abroad say that they would settle in Tórshavn if they were to move back. As to enhance the Municipality’s appearance among emigrants, Tórshavn Municipality has made a special website on the Municipality’s official website torshavn.fo, using a so-called IP differentiation. When you enter torshavn.fo outside of the Faroe Islands, the entry page is targeted to give especially emigrants some tangible reasons to move to Tórshavn Municipality.

The purpose is crystal clear. The Municipality would like to attract more people to the capital. The Municipality would like people to move from abroad to join the workforce with new ideas and concepts. A huge part of the solution is job opportunities. And that is the single most popular theme on the website for emigrants. Additionally, they can read useful information about what Tórshavn Municipality has to offer, including everything from childcare to educational opportunities. Larger projects that are currently coming into being in the Capital are also emphasised as these tend to grab the emigrants’ interest. These projects are part of a greater story about growth and opportunities. Furthermore, there is a simple guideline about what to remember when moving to Tórshavn Municipality.
Since the website was launched in late April 2014, there has been a population growth in the Municipality with over 100 inhabitants from 20,153 in ultimo April 2014 to 20,249 half a year later. Together with other initiatives, among others a welcome package to new citizens, this has stimulated an increased attention and awareness among emigrants that Tórshavn Municipality has a genuine interest in increasing the overall population and would very much like to welcoming people from abroad to join the Municipality. Tórshavn Municipality has pushed forward an agenda that has improved public communication towards a target audience that is pivotal for sustainable growth and development in the future.

The total cost for the new initiative has been 25,000 DKK. Tórshavn Municipality would highly recommend other Nordic capitals to differentiate their municipalities’ landing page according to where people are situated. Use one landing page for domestic users and another for people outside the country.

People abroad tend to enter the municipality’s website when they are about to move or have an interest in moving to the place. This is the moment when the municipality has a good opportunity of putting forward relevant and inspiring information so that people make decisions about their future on an informed basis.

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I. Copenhagen

Painted Cycle Lanes Make Cyclists Feel More Safe

Cycle lanes with a parking lane along the outside dividing the cycle and car traffic shows that the bike lane is respected as much as proper cycle tracks. The initiative makes the cyclists feel safer and is cost effective compared to the standard of cycle tracks, with curbs towards car traffic, which is preferred in Copenhagen.

Our experience tells us that cycle lanes divided from car traffic by parked cars are respected as much as proper cycle tracks and therefore are a low cost solution compared to the Copenhagen style cycle tracks. The initiative is paint in the street that can be implemented over night.

The Copenhagen style cycle tracks makes the cyclists feel safer because the cycle track is divided from the car lane and the sidewalk by a curb. The Copenhagen style cycle track is a complete separate area exclusively for cyclists. The cycle lane divided from traffic by parked cars has the same effect. Copenhagen experience shows that the car parking has to be individual because the car drivers often don’t respect the dedicated cycle area if the car parking places isn’t individual.

The price of a 100 m Copenhagen standard cycle track is DKK 750.000 (100.000 Euro). The price of a 100 m cycle lane with parking along the outside is DKK 15.000 (2.000 Euro).

The solution can be implemented where there are existing cycle lanes on the outside of parked cars by swopping car parking to the outside of the cycle lane. This has little or no impact on the capacity of car parking. Where there are no existing bike lanes the bike lane can be put down on the inside of the car parking, this may have an impact on the number of car parking and the remaining space for car traffic.

Where the initiative is implemented in Copenhagen the width of the cycle lane is 2.5 m so that it can be upgraded to cycle track when wanted.

The initiative is an easy and low cost way of bringing safety to cycling. Our experience tells us cycling is safer when more people are cycling.

The city benefits from cycling for example:

- Transferring car transport to cycling results in a netto profit for society of DKK 3.14 (0.40 Euro) per km.
- When asked 67% of the copenhageneres believe that the cycling culture has a positive impact on urban life and the atmosphere.

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Cycle lane divided from car traffic by individual car parking.

Copenhagen style cycle track.
II. Helsinki

KutsuPlus.fi – A Totally New Form of Public Transport

Kutsuplus.fi is a novel form of public transport that complements the current public transport offering. This automated demand responsive public transport service is based on real time bookings. People going in the same direction can be efficiently collected in the same vehicle. The service provides an alternative to private car-rides and multiple transfer trips.

Background
In 2012, some 1.1 million private car trips were made on each working day in the Helsinki metropolitan area. Since 2007, Aalto University took a research project for studying the possibility to develop a new, high-quality and cost-effective mode of public transport service that could provide a competitive alternative for private car trips. The project has been funded by the Helsinki Regional Transport Authority (HSL), the City of Helsinki, the Finnish Funding Agency for Innovation (TEKES) and the Ministry of Transport and Communications. As the research results were promising, a demand responsive public transport pilot program was launched in June 2011 for developing and gradually ramping up the novel public service that is scalable for large audiences in the greater Helsinki area by the beginning of 2016.

Aim and solution
The aim of the new mode of public transport is to have an increasing number of motorists switched to public transport. This could be achieved by providing a comfortable and easy-to-use service that is flexible in time and travel route as well as in terms of service and price level.

The Kutsuplus.fi service is a solution to this objective. It is a new kind of real-time intelligent transport system in which the routes of the vehicles are optimized in real-time by a central unit on the basis of real-time customer-bookings. The passengers can choose the desired level of service and the
The fare they pay is determined on the basis of their selections. Real-time information will be provided. The passengers going roughly in the same direction are picked up in the same vehicle as the central unit optimizes the routing of each vehicle within the time-budgets of the passengers. Reliable estimation of driving time is a critical success factor in a service based on automatically combined trips. Therefore, the central unit should be aware of the traffic situation. Trip-order, payment, driver’s instructions and navigation information all have to happen in real-time to enable efficient and optimized real-time routing of moving vehicles. These are also prerequisites for the service scalability in terms of service area and fleet size.

**Benefits**

The service is convenient for the passengers. It can be a time-saver: no hunting for parking space or clearing the car from ice and snow is needed. The passenger may start the workday near the home door instead of focusing on driving as each Kutsuplus.fi vehicle is equipped with a free Wi-Fi connection, or they can just relax. The new mode of public transport can also be efficiently used in orbiting traffic: door-to-door guided journey between any two bus stops without change of vehicle. It provides individual car-like service, but with a clearly higher efficiency. For example it can offer more passenger kilometers per vehicle kilometer. Automated demand-responsive service can also be efficiently used in conjunction with other public transport by locating the Kutsuplus.fi bus stops near metro, railway stations and airports. The novel service can also be developed to increasingly support traditional public transport.

Kutsuplus.fi passenger numbers are increasing and the level of subsidizing is decreasing. Kutsuplus.fi collects much more ticket income per vehicular hour than any earlier call-center based manually operated responsive services of HSL. Kutsuplus.fi seems to be on its way towards an economically feasible service. Feedback from the clientele, Kutsuplus.fi bus drivers and other interest groups has been encouraging, and passenger studies have shown very good results. These positive trends are expected to continue, provided that sufficient marketing accompanied with sufficient vehicular capacity and service area, will be offered to the customers.

In a more widespread use, the environmental impacts of the system can also be significant due to reduced congestion, traffic accidents, waste of time, land usage for roads and car parks and related maintenance, as well as emissions.

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III. Oslo

The Electric Vehicle Capital of the World – Making EVs the Right Choice

Through a combination of national and local incentives, Oslo municipality has managed to become the most electric vehicle dense city in the world. We make it easy to choose an electric vehicle, and in August 2014, 26% of all new registered cars in Oslo were electric. It is easier to park, cheap to charge and faster in rush traffic if you ride electric. The result is cleaner city air, but also less noise pollution.

There is considerable interest in replacing polluting fossil fuel driven vehicles with cars that run on renewable electricity. The most important environmental benefit of switching to electric vehicles is the reduction in emissions to air, but they are also considerably quieter in use.

Making charging stations more easily accessible can for example encourage people living in apartment buildings without their own garages to switch to electric cars. By the end of 2013, Oslo had established over 500 public on-street charging stations, and a further 400 are to be established by 2015. The Agency for Urban Environment website includes a map and information on each of them, and a mobile app is also available. Oslo also has a scheme that offers grants towards the cost of setting up charging stations, which are available to joint owners of residential buildings, and to various commercial actors such as shopping centers. More than 300 charging points have been established through this scheme.

**Special deals for electric vehicles**

Oslo has taken several steps to increase the proportion of electric vehicles in the city. Electric vehicles:

- can be parked free of charge in municipal car parks
- can charge for free on public charging stations;
- are allowed to use bus files;
- are exempted from charges in the toll ring.

In Norway, electric vehicles are also exempted from the purchase tax and VAT on the purchase price, and are charged a lower rate of vehicle tax.
Oslo will set a good example
Oslo owns a large number of municipal vehicles, which are largely used for short-distance trips within the city. In 2011, the Agency for Urban Environment and Østensjø District took part in a project to test two types of electric vehicles. The aim was to find out how well the vehicles function in day-to-day use for municipal purposes and if it was possible to charge the batteries to 100% between the errands. The project was a huge success and Oslo has now concluded a purchasing agreement for 1000 electric vehicles. The replacement of gasoline and diesel vehicles to pure electric vehicles will be ongoing over the next three years, and the agreement will contribute to reach the municipality goal that the car park should be based on zero emission technology in 2015.

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IV. Reykjavík

Reykjavík Meanwhile Project: ‘Places-in-Waiting’

A ‘place-in-waiting’ is an area of undecided future usage and unused possibilities. Places-in-waiting are allocated to groups/individuals to experiment with. Concerned parties and public are encouraged to partake in sustainable development of the places. The purpose is to create activity in open spaces and parking lots with temporary solutions and open up for discussion about future use.

Reliability and cost effectiveness
Places-in-waiting are temporary projects and thus kept inexpensive. Young designers get project grants and often do projects as summer jobs or besides other work. Grants are not high and designers encouraged to re-use material from other projects. This is a low-cost way to try out design and usage of spaces and avoid expensive mistakes in final designing. In cases where parking lots have been transformed they have been used as additional outside areas for nearby cafés/restaurants and thus become a value-increasing feature.
**Sustainability**

One purpose of the project is to encourage use of more environmental friendly transport. Parking lots are temporarily changed into squares, making people more aware of how space-consuming automobiles are, opening their eyes to the many possibilities available if cars were fewer.

**The implementation of an innovative idea for an activity or practice**

In 2010 three individual groups of young designers took on projects to temporarily re-design spaces in downtown Reykjavík. The groups all received grants from the city. These installations opened citizens’ eyes to new possibilities in city space with more life and activities. The following summer a new project was started with spaces picked by the authorities. Young designers were given opportunity to choose and apply for preferred spaces and receive grants for their re-design. They were also given support and technical assistance. All design projects are presented to the municipal administration before being realized.

Good public cooperation is essential for projects to be successful. Letters with information about projects are sent to all neighbours who can contact project leaders with comments or suggestions. Designers are encouraged to construct everything on location and neighbours to chat and mingle with them when passing, as such communication can be beneficial for both. Small public project meetings have proved beneficial in the designing stage.

**Clear practical benefits for the citizens**

The citizens benefit from a better environment and have their eyes opened up for new and varied possibilities, such as carefully planned activity places instead of empty car parks. Many parking lots in the city are sunny and sheltered and could be better used as squares. In such places it is important to demonstrate other possibilities for use. The final design is supposed to be the outcome of cooperation between designers and the public. The citizens get to try out the design before it is given final form, making it easy to find out what works and what does not. More often than not projects result in increased mingling and interaction of neighbours who use the places for relaxation or recreation.

**Potential lasting impact on the everyday life of the city**

Left over spaces are no longer left over as they have been shown to be applicable for many and varied purposes. A place that was only known to a handful of “bums” is now known as an important square where it is possible to draw in hundreds of people to a market with shelter from wind and with ample sun.

We aim to densify the city and as the city grows denser the need for good public spaces increases. We can no longer waste our valuable land resources in left over spaces. We encourage better use of public spaces while we test different uses without using a lot of physical recourses. The result is an understanding of the space, the trust of the public and better design.
For the past few years we have learned from these projects and now the time has come to permanently re-design some of these spaces. The design of Óðinstorg has been put up for competition. Much material and ideas which have come up through these projects are included in the competition documents and the designers are required to integrate these into their design as that will also be taken into account in the evaluation of the proposals.

**Transferability of the concept to other Nordic cities**

These projects may well be extended other cities. In such a process it is, however, necessary to take each step carefully. It is important to choose each place with care and analyze why they are not in public use and what needs to be involved in their design. In some cases the existing design can be quite adequate but the place’s image in people’s minds not good for some reasons. Young designers have many good and innovative ideas but often need guidance as to what is possible and secure. It is necessary to observe the use of each place during the temporary change of use in order to find out what works well and what not. Also, it is important to leave the place in good order at the closing of the project so that it does not acquire a negative image.

Many towns and cities are designed to adhere to the demands of the automobile or underwent great changes as it appeared. Many of the best areas of big cities are often used for cars. By redesigning these areas in a plain and secure way, it becomes evident that with altered transport habits a city can change to the better and every citizen benefits.

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V. Stockholm

More Effective Coordinated Traffic Signals

Traffic signals require monitoring and adjustments when conditions change. This occurs constantly. There is therefore a significant need for updating, and this need is mostly neglected. Here, we describe a method to make this process easier and more cost-effective.

Background
The City of Stockholm’s traffic signals require monitoring and adjustments when conditions change. This occurs constantly. In order to deal with this, the traffic signals are programmed in accordance with predetermined schedules for various normal predictable variations, such as morning traffic, afternoon traffic, night-time traffic and weekend traffic. It is significantly more difficult to make real-time adaptations in coordinated systems compared with independent equipment. This is time-consuming work, and traffic technology maintenance is normally carried out with such long intervals that it takes place, for example, when replacing the hardware – in some cases an interval of more than ten years. There is therefore a very great need for updating, and the socioeconomic costs in the form of delays, accidents and environmental problems increase dramatically when traffic technology maintenance is neglected.

The concept
The traffic technology alignment of traffic signals that is normally carried out on the street is transferred to a controlled, realistic simulation environment in which different control strategies can be compared effectively. Identifying relatively small differences between different alternatives requires long trial series, but with a calibrated simulation model (Vissim\(^1\)) of an area with coordinated traffic signals, the alignment work is made easier. The connection between Vissim and several real pieces of control equipment also makes the stage out on the street considerably simpler. As a final innovative stage in devising a new form of programming, the optimisation software Transyt is used to create appropriate timing. In this way, traffic technology expertise is combined with computerised support systems in an optimal, cost-effective manner. The developed model is reused in the next update, i.e. within 3–5 years.

The concept has been tested for coordination in central Stockholm, consisting of a central intersection (St Eriks gatan–Torsgatan) surrounded by four more intersections. There was a focus on bus prioritisation and accessibility for all groups of road users, and there were significant effects in the form of time savings. More bus lines could be

\(^1\) Micro-simulation model from PTV Transport Consult GmbH.
prioritised, and the throughput time was reduced in favour of pedestrians and cyclists. The delay for bus and pedestrian/cycle traffic was reduced by 20–30%, while delays for motorists were reduced by 5–10% compared with the original control system that had not been updated for five years. The trial included five signal crossings.

According to the City of Stockholm’s accessibility strategy, space-effective means of transport shall be prioritised. This means prioritising bus traffic. This normally happens at the expense of accessibility for motorists, but this concept brings benefits for all means of transport. If the time savings achieved by road users – and other external effects – are translated into socioeconomic benefits, there is a gain in the order of SEK 15 million per year for a small area with five signals. This figure can be compared with a cost of approximately SEK 0.4 million for building the test environment and alignment. A new alignment should be carried out after 3–5 years, but this will be at around half the cost.

**Conclusions**

Ineffective traffic signals have a major impact on accessibility and the environment in a city. Extensive, efficient public transport – with or without trams – will require significant street works and a reallocation of available capacity. Without effective traffic signals, the inner-city road transport system can quickly collapse. Traffic technology maintenance and updating traffic signal timings are therefore increasingly important. The City of Stockholm has developed a concept with the potential to improve accessibility by around 10% for road users affected by traffic signals. The concept successfully combines traffic technology expertise with modern simulation models, optimised algorithms and realistic test and evaluation environments.

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I. Copenhagen

Tåsinge Plads – Copenhagen’s First Climate-Resilient Urban Space

Tåsinge Plads is Copenhagen’s first climate change-adapted urban space. As a green oasis, the square is able to cope with the rising volumes of rain at street level, while giving the Sankt Kjeld Neighbourhood on Østerbro a distinctive trademark. The project integrates reliable and cost effective technical solutions with significant urban space improvements and lasting impact on everyday life.

Climate change adaptation of Tåsinge Plads entails directing and holding back as much as possible of the rainwater falling around the square. Towards the west the landscape is raised above ground level to provide space for the existing bunkers and create a slope facing the sun, where visitors can go to enjoy a cup of coffee or play games. From here the landscape slopes away towards an area at a lower level, where the storm water gathers. Diverting and percolating storm water from roofs and squares locally keeps the water away from the sewers, and it is ensured that there is capacity in the sewer to cope with the extreme rainfall events of the future.
Clear practical benefits for the citizens

As a result of a number of different temporary projects in dialogue with the population of the neighbourhood Tåsinge Plads has already become a living part of the urban environment. Neighbours can now meet here, take their dog for a walk or test their strength on the activity equipment. This has created a blossoming, creative urban life that helps strengthen familiarity, community and a sense of ownership among the local residents. This engagement provides an ideal basis for the transformation of Tåsinge Plads, so that the neighbours continue to be actively involved in the development of the square.

The implementation of a new innovative approach to an existing activity or practice

The project is based on reliable and cost effective technical measures combined with significant urban space improvements which create and innovative integrated solution with clear practical benefits for the citizens and lasting impact on the everyday life of the city. The process of creating the project has been based on very close corporation with the local citizens and stakeholders. The successful process was initiated by a cooperative venture between the Park and Nature Department, the Integrated Urban Renewal in St. Kjeld’s, Urban Renewal, HOFOR (utility company) and Environmental Centre Østerbro.

Transferability of the concept to other Nordic cities

Copenhagen has 300 climate change adaptation projects planned and Tåsinge Plads acts as the first example of how we implement these kinds of projects and thus create the basis for a new planning practice.
The approach, the combination of solutions and the conceptual framework have a big potential to be transferred to other Nordic cities.

The solution is brand new (official opening: 6 December 2014) and have built on the most recent knowledge in this field.

“We are making Copenhagen more climate-resilient. This demands new ideas and solutions that ensure we make use the rainwater and create new recreational urban spaces. We will get fewer paved areas and more green areas. This approach is exactly what characterizes our work in Skt. Kjelds. It can become a big inspiration for the rest of the city.”

Morten Kabell, Mayor
The Technical and Environmental administration
The City of Copenhagen

**Economy**

The completion of Tåsinge place making Copenhagen a more resilient capital amounts to 3.9 million DKK. If a traditional solution should have been used the budget would have been ca. 9 million DKK.

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II. Helsinki

Personal Panels – Would You Like to Have a Piece of Solar Power Plant?

The energy company Helsingin Energia has launched a new extremely popular service where customers can acquire their own personal solar power panel and the electricity produced by the panel. The panels are installed at a new solar power plant and it is possible to watch the production of one’s own panel in real time on the internet and on a mobile application.

**Background**

Helsingin Energia is building Finland’s biggest solar power plant to Suvilahti. Construction work has started, and the power plant will be completed in spring 2015. The plant will be built on the roof of an existing substation, which is a space that otherwise would have no function. The plant’s 1188 solar panels will produce 275 MWh electricity annually, corresponding to the annual consumption of about 130 one-bedroom apartments.

The project will increase Finland’s solar electricity capacity by over 10 per cent. The big unit size will improve cost effectiveness. Building the solar power plant is the first phase in the new solar power programme of Helsingin Energia. The idea is to increase the production of solar electricity depending on demand. Helsingin Energia’s strategic aim is to have carbon dioxide-neutral energy production. The development of solar energy solutions and new services is a significant part of this strategy.
**Personally designated panels for solar energy**

In connection with the new solar power plant, Helsingin Energia launched a new service where customers can acquire their own personal panel and the electricity produced by the panel for the monthly instalment of 4.40 euros. The production of one panel is at its best 285 W, circa 25 energy saving lights. The electricity produced is compensated from electricity bills without deductions according to the hourly exchange price on the Nord Pool Spot market.

Besides the monthly instalment, no other costs such as initial investment are required. This is the first time apartment dwellers have the chance to produce domestic and renewable solar energy without an investment in panels installed in their own property. The customer has the power to increase the production of domestic and renewable energy and also with their own actions influence on the energy solutions of the future.

The completion of the power plant is observed on social media and it is possible to watch the generating plant via webcam. It is also possible to watch the production of one’s own panel in real time on the internet and on a mobile application.

The personal panels in the Suviлаhti solar power plant were sold out in a couple of days, and now a new power plant is already being planned for.

**Applicability of the project**

The concept is easy to scale and to transfer to other localities. The panels can be located on roofs and suitable land areas. A solar power plant in city environment makes it possible to produce clean energy where energy is consumed. The concept also reduces for example investments made in electrical network and improves energy self-sufficiency. Delivery reliability also increases when the amount of independent production units is increased.

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Building Recycling with Increased Energy Efficiency

A school in Mariehamn was considered outdated and beyond reparation. A new one was planned for 8–11 million €. After a constructive process involving parents, students and teachers it was decided to make the best possible of the old building. By modern thinking and technology it will be converted into the most energy efficient municipality building for only 4 mn €.

Increased energy efficiency

In accordance with directive (2012/27/EU) on energy efficiency all new buildings are supposed to be “close to zero- buildings” when it comes to energy efficiency. Member states are supposed to take measures to make sure that buildings that are renovated are converted into “close to zero- buildings”. For the public sector this will become compulsory per 31.12.2018.

Public sector sets a good example

In order to get one step closer to fulfilling the upcoming criteria for buildings energy effectiveness Mariehamn has chosen to implement a higher standard than required several years in advance. In accordance with Mariehamn’s own policy all new productions and large scale renovations must always result in an energy efficiency that is at least 25 percent better than the official requirements.

The outlines for Mariehamn’s environment work can be found in Mariehamn’s environment policy and five environment goals. These are meant as a guideline in creating a healthy environment and a sustainable development for Mariehamn. In order to implement the policy and the goals in an effective way the town has chosen to build an environment management system that fulfills the international ISO14001 standard. Continual improvement is a key concept in the town’s environment management.

One of the goals is to lower the town’s climate impact with 75 percent per inhabitant between 2002 and 2017. The predominant part of the towns CO₂ emissions are related to heating of buildings. Owners and managers have huge possibilities to improve energy consumption in buildings, no matter if it is new productions or renovated buildings. The public sector has a special responsibility when it comes to promoting and stimulating a redirection of the market towards energy efficient buildings. By being a leading actor and demanding a high energy standard the public sector also contributes to the development of skills among entrepreneurs in the local community which can be expected to have a positive spill over effect on other property owners.
The first project

Övernäs is one out of three schools in Mariehamn. The building has been in need of improvements and renovations for a long time. The school houses 250 students age 13–16 and the building consists of an gross area of 3005 m². In January 2014 a committee was appointed with the mission to make the renovation and extension of Övernäs come true. Today heating the building takes in average 560 000 kWh/year or 185kWh/m²/year in district heating.

If the school is extended and renovated in accordance to the plans the building will be converted into the best isolated house owned by the town. After realizing the project with new walls, windows, additional insulation and heat recovery the energy consumption will be cut by 50 percent. Additionally solar cells are planned to be integrated in the building. The function of the solar cells is to be visualised and integrated in the teaching of students.

The renovation is calculated to lower the heating costs of the building by 32 000 euro/year. To begin with the plan was to replace the building with a new one which would have come out much more expensive.

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IV. Oslo

NoDig - Trenchless House Connections to Main Water Lines (NoDigChallenge)

Oslo Kommune Vann- og avløpsetaten (VAV) in cooperation with The National Suppler Development Program, Norsk Vann and Scandinavian Society for Trenchless Technology is seeking a solution of trenchless house connections to main water lines. In addition to the economic benefit, a new trenchless solution will have several positive social and environmental effects.

Reliability and cost effectiveness
The existing solution for connecting houses to main water lines consists of (among other things) excavating, refilling and surface treatment after work is done. Furthermore, such connections also involve delivering, installing and connecting pipes to existing connection points, and documentation in the form of images and surveying charts. These operations normally require 5 days of work and the costs those five days imply.

Trenchless technology consists of for example preparations, repair, boring, inserting the linings and connectors, pressure testing and documentation. The time anticipated for trenchless operations is 3 days, which will reduce costs compared to standard methods. VAV’s own data and figures from traditional house-to-mains excavation work indicate that a new trenchless solution would allow the city to save approximately 40 percent on the cost of such work. This comes in addition to the time saved, which also amounts to an approximate savings of 40 percent.
The implementation of a new innovative approach to an existing activity or practice

VAV has invested time and effort for many years now exploring trenchless (No-dig) solutions to renovate municipal water pipes. Where connecting houses to the main lines is concerned, the techniques currently in use require each connection point to be dug up and connected to reach the pipes, with all the disadvantages this implies to the environment and the community. VAV wishes to challenge the market to develop trenchless methods to connect houses to the main water lines.

Oslo VAV is currently using the method of a pre commercial procurement to find a solution to cover the need for this trenchless technology.

Potential lasting impact on the everyday life of the city

In addition to the economic benefit, a new trenchless solution would have positive social and environmental effects. The environmental impact and cost of digging in urban areas would change dramatically using a new trenchless solution.

Challenges with detouring traffic, buildings access, noise, dust and disturbances to neighborhoods where work is done are normal consequences of traditional excavation. A trenchless solution would have a positive effect on the environment with regards to less digging, less noise, less dust and disturbances, less transport and storage of rock/soil (both polluted and non-polluted), and it would reduce the urban traffic loads.

If we can find a satisfactory and technologically feasible trenchless solution we could renovate more meters of pipe a week in less time and at lower costs, in addition to the positive effects this would have on the city’s environment.

Transferability of the concept to other Nordic cities

The need for a trenchless solution for connecting houses to main water lines is not limited to Oslo. This need is also present in many other towns and cities in Norway and outside the country’s borders. VAV have been talking to other parties who say this kind of solution would be interesting to them, and that there are similar needs many other places in the Nordic region and beyond.

Clear practical benefits for the citizens

Reduced impact on the existing traffic pattern.

The method will drastically reduce the environmental impact of this type of renovation by involving less digging, less noise, dust and disturbances, less transport and storage of rock/soil (both polluted and non-polluted), and reduced the urban traffic loads.

Higher renovation rate, because of higher efficiency and lower costs, this means better quality of the water supply.

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“Reykjavík – Iðandi af lífi” is a public education project about biodiversity. The project’s goals are to raise awareness and respect for nature in the city, in particular living organisms and ecosystems and to emphasize their value and importance. The project includes production of educational material and various educational events for different target groups.

The project “Reykjavík-Iðandi af lífi” which translates to “Reykjavík-brimming with life” was founded in September 2013. It is a public education project about biodiversity and the nature of the City of Reykjavík casting light on the diverse habitats and ecosystems found within the city borders and the array of organisms that inhabit them.

In addition to providing factual information about ecology and natural history, an important goal is to increase awareness about the value and importance of biodiversity for the citizens of Reykjavík and why it requires protection and nurturing. The project is an important step in achieving goals set by the City Council regarding public communication about environmental affairs and education for sustainability. It will also be a pivotal tool in implementing various goals and actions belonging to the City of Reykjavík Biodiversity Policy which is scheduled to be completed in 2015.

The project consists of two main parts. The first is the production of educational material that varies in content and complexity and caters to different target groups. Examples of material that was produced in the first year of the project include: a brochure introducing the topic of biodiversity; information placards about Icelandic farm animals with emphasis on their taxonomy; outdoor information signs about seashore life and teaching material for school-children on the same topic. Secondly, the project consists of educational events, usually outdoor public events but also private events such as talks at meetings and forums and school visits. The majority of the outdoor events take place in the summertime when the biodiversity is at its most visible and vibrant. Recent events on the 2014 summer schedule include plant identification, bird-watching, visits to nature reserves and more. Some of these events took place in English for foreign tourists. Others such as the trip to the seashore were specifically aimed for children. Events during the wintertime are less frequent but in the autumn of 2013 there were monthly bird-watching tours to the “Tjörnin” freshwater reserve in central Reykjavík.
The project emphasizes cooperation with other educational institutions, in particular city-run institutions like the Reykjavík Botanical Garden, the Reykjavík Farm Zoo and the Reykjavík Public Library. Such cooperation allows for the sharing of ideas, resources and funding and increases the outreach of the project. The events are all free of charge and require minimal cost as they take place within the city and are mostly promoted via leaflets and online including social media. In addition, scientists, bird-guides and others that have assisted with or participated in the educational events have all been volunteers. Production of educational material has been in the hands of staff members in the Division of Parks and Nature, including text and graphic design and print setup while printing and distribution cost is kept as low as possible.

There is great need for increased environmental education for citizens of all ages in Reykjavík. Public communication and education about biodiversity has been limited on behalf of the City of Reykjavík until “Reykjavík-iðandi af lifi” came along. The setup of having multiple individual small-in-scope events and publications provides a regular ongoing flow of information and communication on highly diverse topics that relate to current themes, vary by season, cater to different groups etc. Dialogue with citizens and interested parties is encouraged at all stages using social media such as Facebook (the project site www.facebook.com/reykjavikidandi is regularly updated) has proven helpful for such communication as well as for promoting the project and its topics. The project will continue on for as long as possible and will hopefully grow and diversify in the future with the main goal of reaching more people and opening their eyes to the wonders and value of biodiversity in their hometown.

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VI. Stockholm

Biochar – For a Better City Ecosystem

By turning garden waste into biochar and adding it to the soil, the landscape becomes greener, healthier and carbon is sequestered for millennia. Furthermore, by introducing biochar in the city tree and flower beds, cities can increase local infiltration of storm water which enhances groundwater production and traps pollutants.

We can all see evidence of the damage we are doing to our environment – global warming, soil degradation and water pollution. Citizens are frustrated with not being able to make a difference, to be part of the solution rather than adding to the problem.

Stockholm, the first European Green Capital, has come up with a solution. Together, the city and its residents will produce biochar, an organic substance that increases plant growth, sequesters carbon, and purifies storm water runoff. The city-wide program will activate citizens as front-line change agents to curb the escalating problem of climate change.

By turning garden waste into biochar and adding it to the soil, the landscape becomes greener, healthier and carbon is sequestered for millennia. Biochar is also similar to activated carbon. By introducing biochar in the city tree and flower beds we will substantially increase local infiltration of storm water, which enhances groundwater production and traps pollutants. Moreover, in the process bio-oil and syngas can be extracted, which can be used for bio-fuel production, electricity and district heating.

In Stockholm, the infrastructure is partly in place already. The essential technology is available in Europe. The Stockholm biochar project relies on ancient knowledge, proven modern green technology and existing municipal waste streams, all combined in a totally new concept where public engagement and circular models for energy and material flows are promoted and stimulated.

To replicate the Stockholm idea, a city needs initial financing, access to any type of biomass waste, a need for energy and a desire to improve local environment and combat global climate change. Can you think of one single city that doesn’t have these conditions? This is why the Stockholm biochar project suits everyone.

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I. Copenhagen

The Copenhagen Fire Brigade Youth Fire Corps – with a Social, Crime Prevention and Educational Impact

“The Copenhagen Fire Brigade Youth Fire Corps” offers a recreational activity for the youth from disadvantaged areas in Copenhagen. The benefits include safer rescue missions in all parts of the Capital. The youth learn new skills, which also has a positive effect on their education and life outside the Youth Fire Corps.

The Copenhagen Fire Brigade Youth Fire Corps

In 2011 the Copenhagen Fire Brigade started the project “The Copenhagen Fire Brigade Youth Fire Corps”. The Youth Fire Corps included 13–17 year old boys and girls from disadvantaged areas in Copenhagen.

Issue and purpose

The background for the project was a growing number of conflicts and harassments by young people in the disadvantaged areas in Copenhagen, when the fire brigade arrived at accidents. The project has multiple purposes:

• To ensure safe rescue missions in all parts of the Capital,
• To build bridges between the youth and the fire brigade,
• To offer a recreational activity for the youth at which they could learn about the firefighter profession and also create relations with the firemen.
• To motivate and support the youth in relation to completing elementary school and continuing with a secondary education.

Transferability and innovative approach

The idea for the project was inspired by the Youth Fire Corps in Greve Fire Department (a municipality west of Copenhagen) and can easily be adopted and further developed by other cities and specific needs.

The implementation of a new innovative approach to an existing an activity or practice

The Copenhagen Fire Brigade have chosen to further develop the idea of a Youth Fire Corps. A key difference is that the cadets from the Copenhagen Youth Fire Corps go into an internship in a fire station, where they will be assigned a mentor and nurture close relationships with the firemen. The fire cadets are participating actively in rescue missions. Their presence generates positive interest from other young people that the firemen encounter on their missions and thus helps to build bridges between the young people in the various districts and the fire brigade.
Additionally the Copenhagen Fire Brigade has also added a homework cafe where the fire cadets meet in the afternoon several times a week to carry out their homework, training and exercises. They also teach courses in First Aid and perform fire demonstrations in local districts of Copenhagen where they show what they have learned and appear as role models for other young people.

Since 2011 eight teams of cadets have been trained. Two teams are started each year consisting of 12 cadets each. The young people are recruited in close cooperation with the schools in the different districts of Copenhagen. A fire cadet will as basis have a three months training to obtain fire fighter skills. This is followed by three-month internship at one of the seven fire stations in Copenhagen Fire Brigade, where the young people are assigned a volunteer fireman mentor. After the internship the fire cadets are offered an after-school job for a fixed period at the Copenhagen Fire Brigade. A large part of the fire cadets also choose to continue as volunteers in the Youth Fire Corps team.

**Clear practical benefits for the citizens – the potential lasting impact on the everyday life of the city**

The practical benefit includes safer rescue missions in all parts of the Capital. Further the young people grow with responsibility and their new skills, which also have a positive
effect on their education and life outside the Youth Fire Corps. Whilst providing good relationships between the fire cadets and fire men, the fire men also find that there is a strong and positive interest from young people in the different districts and less harassment impact. This creates a safer working environment for the fire department, which is beneficial for citizens’ safety thus there is less use of the police to conduct interventions at rescue missions.

Based on the results the Youth Fire Corps was in 2013 nominated for the Crime Prevention price as one of three projects selected. The Copenhagen Fire Brigade has continued to develop the project with new educational opportunities for the fire cadets who wish to train to be a lifeguard assistant or instructor in first aid, so that they can educate their peers or residents from e.g. their own neighbourhood in first aid.

**Cost effectiveness**

Youth Fire Corps began as a two-year pilot project and has from 2013 been granted funding from the City of Copenhagen to continue into 2016.

96 cadets have been enrolled from 2011–14 of which approx. 90% complete the process. The prices for educating a cadet amounts to 33,000 DKK (4,400 euro) which has to be compared to the price for e.g. crime prevention, recreational offers for the youth, less need of police interventions at rescue missions etc.

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II. Helsinki

Overall Practice of Virtual Care – Enhancing Elderly Care at Home

The City of Helsinki is developing an efficient overall virtual care system in order to make it possible for elderly people to live longer at home. The care services can be provided 24/7 through two-way audiovisual communication. The virtual care system is very cost-effective and the elderly using the service in pilots felt an increase of social interaction and security.

Background

The rapid ageing of population is a global phenomenon and it affects Finland as well as many other European countries. Law and recommendations emphasize support and services primarily at home for the elderly in order to make it possible for them to live in their homes as long as possible.

In practice, this requires that the resources of home care are increased. At the same time, the number of people working in the care industry is decreasing due to the retirement of old personnel and the fact that less people are gravitated towards the industry and the number of new students is decreasing. In this situation, new operating models and new servicescapes supporting living at home are needed. In the future, technological solutions in elderly care will be a huge thing.

Helsinki City homecare made research on audiovisual carephone connections in two different projects in 2011–2013. As a result, a process description of virtual house calls was made and the City of Helsinki’s public utility Palmia developed e.g. a combined virtual care and carephone service.

Content of the overall practice of virtual care

The service of virtual care is produced as a “full package” that includes equipment, software, connections, an advisory system, support services and the services of a nurse. Palmia uses a centralized management system of contacts and customership, which makes it possible to efficiently produce services to the customer around the clock. The process description of virtual house calls has been created to support the implementation of virtual care.

Virtual care consists of goal-oriented care services provided through two-way audiovisual communications. The virtual care service utilizes reminders and monitoring to assist the customer with daily activities, such as taking medication and eating meals. Virtual care is always joint care provided by home care services and Palmia based on the customer’s needs and in accordance with the treatment plan. The virtual care service
involves Palmia performing virtual house calls at times agreed upon with the home care services and the customer. The customer also has the option to contact the Palmia virtual service around the clock if necessary, enhancing the security of the customer.

Palmia provides the customer with a computer, such as a tablet device, through which the virtual house calls are performed. All other functions besides the virtual care service are removed from the computers and tablets given to customers so that it is easier for them to learn how to use the device. Palmia also provides guidance to the customer.

Benefits
The practice brings new value to the elderly by offering virtual and physical home visits 24/7. These services along with the equipment form a functional entity. From a customer perspective, the service is easy to use and both the connection and the possibility to get help are reliable. Also, the system ensures the patients a continuative service enhanced by treatment and service plans made together by Helsinki City homecare and Palmia using a shared information system. With this entity, costs can be cut back while efficiency and productivity increase.

The average cost of an on-site monitoring visit in Helsinki is about 50 euros and the costs range from 25 euros to many hundreds of euros depending on the length of the visit. In comparison, the cost of a virtual monitoring visit is 3 to 6 euros (depending on the number of the virtual monitoring visits).

Evaluations made about the virtual care service pilot show that a big advantage is that the elderly feel an increase of social interaction. The presence of the cameras and the possibility to call for help at any time also make the elderly feel more secure in their homes.

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Active Ageing Online – Äldreomsorg på Distans

The social and health care sector is strongly influenced by demographic changes. The ageing population, long distances and the possible lack of qualified labour are common challenges in the area. The increasing scarcity of resources makes it essential to develop new social and health care work methods.

The project Äldreomsorg på distans (ÄlDis) aimed to improve the standard of living of elderly people by supporting healthy, safe and socially rich living at home instead of institutionalization. Based on virtual technologies, ÄlDis is using a new service model which benefits senior citizens, their relatives, municipalities and health and social care professionals in the archipelago. The project provides virtual services to elderly people in close cooperation with the participating municipalities.

The project started in May 2013 and will be ending in February 2015. In the project ÄlDi, municipalities, Högskolan på Åland and third sector actors together with the elderly people developed the interactive ÄlDis channel. The project, founded by Ålands Landskapsregering (PAF) are carried out in Åland, the city of Mariehamn is one of the municipalities partners.

The common criteria for the users are that the users is over 65 years old, living alone, and is in some need of home care.

The technology used in the project is supported from Elisa Videra oy in Finland. Elisa Videra Virtual Care is a high-quality and versatile video conferencing solutions designed for health care industry. The easy-to-use solution consists of an interactive touch screen and the data connection with

Virtual Home Care solution ena

The objective of the project is to support the elderly people’s living at home and their social interaction, to improve their
quality of life and to enhance their feeling of security. Loneliness and the feeling of insecurity can be seen as a risk factor that can weaken elderly people’s coping at home and their ability to function.

In their homes several times a week, the elderly involved in the ÄlDis project has a chance to participate in interactive programmes that offered different services. The ÄlDis activities are interactive conversations, information about different walks of life and issues and services – friends, information and entertainment. The role of health promotion plays an integral role in the activities made by the students of health and well-being sciences. Activity content is strongly affected by user feedback and desires.

The activities are divided into themes: health, memory, enhancement and quizzes, culture, current affairs and physical activity. The users can also be in contact with each other outside of the actual program through bilateral or multilateral video calls.

The long-term goal with the project is to connect the virtual services to the municipal service system. The technology is evidently merging into the services of elderly to support independent living at home environment. The home bound elderly due to the limits in the functional capacity are in a situation where the social interaction with peers and relatives is diminished. ÄlDis brings the social network into the homes of the elderly and increases the social interaction and widens the possibilities to social life. On the perspective of municipal services ÄlDis creates new model for service delivery. The health care services for elderly living in rural areas including the archipelago area are more reachable and accessible when delivered virtually. ÄlDis shall not replace the conventional services but is to be an additional way for service delivery.

Through interviews with the elderly participants, it has emerged that the elderly feel less alone, they have gained an increased sense of security, has been given a more stimulating every day and with this they felt healthier. One of the participants expressed himself “after I joined Aldis I haven’t had as much help from the health sector, I feel more healthy now as I always have someone to talk to and have not been in need of care to the same extent as before. I’m sure I can stay longer at home than I otherwise would have done”

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IV. Oslo

Traffic Agent App – Road Safety on the Way to School

The traffic agents app is created to enable school children to map their route to school and register positive and negative spots along the way. This will create a comprehensive dataset that planners and decision makers can use to create safer school roads that promote healthy activities such as everyday walking or biking.

The Agency for Urban Environment in Oslo (BYM) has been commissioned by City Hall to make an inventory of road safety on all school systems in Oslo. One of our main targets is to encourage as many pupils as possible to walk or bike to school, whilst also working towards creating safer roads along these routes. This work is non-profit and initiated by the government.

With the help of an app developer, Oslo municipality first developed an app for a pilot project which took place at two Oslo schools during spring 2014. This app was the precursor to “Trafikkagentene” (traffic agents), enabling primary school pupils to walk with a smartphone or iPad and register their route to school.

The app tracks movements by GPS, and lets the children register positive and negative spots on their way. Each child is given an anonymous “agent number”, and the data is registered to that number.

We then collect the data from the app, and use it to analyze the road safety on the road system in Oslo. This helps us see where we can rectify the roads and to see if and where more effort is needed in giving the pupils in Oslo a safe traffic environment – according to the pupils own feedback.

The app lets school children identify dangerous spots on their route to and from school, as well as more positive features along the route. The app will also log travel data, making it possible to generate aggregated travel pattern data by foot and bicycle for children and to identify children’s traffic flow throughout the city. Such data will in turn be utilized by the municipality to influence children’s route choices by facilitating the safer routes with lighting etc. in order to make them more attractive.

Cooperation with the scientists at Norwegian Centre for Transport Research (TØI) has been established. A research project will use data from the app to calculate risks and to use this information in order to gain experience about user barriers, technological challenges and solutions etc.

The main project is scheduled to take place during the winter and spring of 2015. The main project will consist of all primary schools in Oslo with the ambition that all school pupils provide data on their routes to and from school by the use the mobile app.
With the data obtained we will produce maps over travel patterns as well as aggregate the data to provide exposure data that can be used for risk estimations. This work package will be administered by the municipality of Oslo (BYM) who will be in charge of the practical issues in implementing the app tools to Oslo schools and run this part of the project (Vibeke F. Rørholt). TØI will act as a close collaborator and consultant and provide data analyses.

- Will give the politicians and the Departments an overall summary of needs of facilitating and similar cases can be compared and rated.
- A digital map will be generated. This can be an efficient tool in planning and building new schools or change of use of schools. Ex: changing the age of pupils using the schools, which in Oslo is done in recent years due to changes in the population.
- With one winter/survey and one spring/survey we will see the differences of seasonal variations. A similar survey in all schools in Oslo has never before been done. We have 123 schools.

We have already been contacted by other municipalities and cities about sharing the technical solution. The app and the backend system will be developed so that is easily can be adapted to other areas/ cities and countries. The app-tool can easily be changed to gather information about for example the feeling of safety among people using central areas. If they feel unsecure, they can mark it in the app, and the responsible will get the message with the spot pinpointed in a map.

BBC technology referred to the project here: http://www.bbc.com/news/technology-28159732

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V. Reykjavík

Integration of Hospital Based Acute Care and Home Care: The Case of Older People Diagnosed with III and IV Level Heart Failure, Living at Home

Collaboration between nurses at the National Hospital and Home care services in Reykjavík, aimed at supporting people, (mostly old) suffering from III and IV level heart failure, to live at home. Work methods to identify early deterioration of health and to facilitate self-management were developed. Access to information and consultation provided to home care nurses has enhanced evidence-based practice.

This project is developed in relation to the transfer of home care nursing services in Reykjavík from the community health services to the welfare division of the city. In 2009, a steering group composed of nurses (including a Clinical Nurse Specialists in cardiovascular nursing) at the National Hospital and nurses from the Home care services in Reykjavík was established. The aim of the project was to prevent worsening of symptoms of heart failure, visits to the emergency room and admittance to hospital among patients living at home who had been diagnosed with III and IV level heart failure. This was done by teaching patients and their relatives to monitor their condition and by developing work practices and guidelines for responding to early signs of heart failure. By providing additional treatments, education and support at home, the project’s goal was for people with serious heart failure to be able to live well at home and feel secure.

The steering group holds regular meetings where issues concerning communication and daily work methods are brought up and work methods are reviewed and developed further.

Over a period of three years, the group adopted evidence-based work methods for assessment of signs and symptoms of heart failure, teaching patients self-management, family support and treatment changes. An educational program regarding the care of heart failure patients was developed for the home care staff by the nurses at the outpatient clinic. This course has been conducted yearly, covering symptoms of heart failure, assessment, both physical and laboratory tests, treatments and support. In addition, the main tenets of family nursing have been introduced at meetings. Of even more importance is the contact and collaboration developed between the nurses at the heart failure outpatient clinic and the home care nurses. There is an open line to the clinic, providing an opportunity to discuss changes in condition and treatments. The nurses at both ends know the patients and may have expert knowledge of what might be helpful in the situation.
The nurses at the clinic can review test results and have been authorised to do certain treatment changes. They also have access to the medical specialists responsible for each patient, which facilitates consultation and decision making.

The main benefit of this project is the integration of services between the National Hospital and the Home care services. By developing collective work methods, everyone is speaking the same language and a mutual understanding of what needs to be done has developed. It is understood that home care is general, aimed at all people with all ailments and disabilities. It needs to be backed up by the specialised knowledge at the University Hospital, provided in this project. Therefore, the project is highly advantageous since it allows knowledge and work methods to travel. It also fosters mutual understanding and respect for the work done by the nurses within the respective organisations.

This project has been studied qualitatively, using an ethnographic approach, although the findings have not yet been published. Preliminary findings indicate that patients are relieved to get assistance at home, rather than having to spend many hours at the emergency room. Their relatives are also pleased to have regular contact (either by phone or in person) with a home care nurse who comes to the home and is in contact with the hospital when needed.

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VI. Stockholm

Community Intervention Teams for Young Adults Aged 20–29 with Criminal Behaviour

The City Districts of Rinkeby–Kista and Spånga–Tensta are working together with local police officers in Södra Järva to run a project involving community intervention teams for young adults aged 20–29 with criminal behaviour. The aim is that young adults with criminal lifestyles in the area should leave their former lifestyles behind and lead a socially secure existence through studies or employment.

The City Districts of Rinkeby–Kista and Spånga–Tensta have been running a project since January 2013 that involves community intervention teams for young adults aged 20–29 with criminal behaviour. The initiative was taken jointly by the district councils and the local police in Södra Järva. The project is being carried out in collaboration with the police, the probation service, the Swedish Public Employment Service, the Swedish Enforcement Service, the Swedish Social Insurance Agency, Stockholm County Council and the Labour Market Administration.

The concept of community intervention teams was presented in the report ‘Criminal Gangs: Preventing Recruitment and Making it Easier to Leave’ (SOU 2010:15). Community intervention teams involve key players around an individual coming together to use coordinated, joint forces to support a positive direction for the individual’s life. The project was the first in the City of Stockholm to target this approach towards young adults, following positive experiences from working with under-18s. The aim is that young adults with criminal lifestyles in the area should leave their former lifestyles behind and lead a socially secure existence through studies or employment. In the long term, this approach will help to improve safety for both the target group and citizens as a whole by reducing criminality and recruitment into criminality.

The project aims to develop methods and collaboration in connection with a target group that society has found it very hard to reach with various initiatives. The participants are not in permanent employment, having previously supported themselves primarily through crime and mostly living in poor social conditions. Consent must be obtained for approval to end secrecy between the parties involved. An individual action plan is drawn up and continuously updated, in which actions and goals are monitored, all in accordance with the individual’s needs and wishes. Two project managers and four guides from social services work closely alongside two contact officers from the local police. Together, they decide which individuals should be chosen for inclusion in the project and which individuals should be excluded. The police have a blocking code in their computer system.
that flags up a participant who has been prosecuted for a crime or has otherwise come to the attention of the police. If this happens, guides and project managers are notified immediately. The work covers aspects such as social activities with the aim of creating good routines, improving social skills and building self-confidence. Individual needs are mapped and the players needed in connection with e.g. work, training, accommodation and drug issues are then linked in. The guide coordinates efforts relating to the individual, and continuous motivation work takes place together with the collaborative players to build self-confidence in the new direction for the individual’s life. Participation is voluntary, and motivation and self-drive are needed in order to want to make a break from the current situation.

So far, the project has worked with a total of 75 individuals, 27 of whom have completed the project. There are currently 38 active participants and 52 people on a waiting list. The project’s cooperation with the Labour Market Administration has resulted in studies, vocational training and work for around 30 individuals who have never been in permanent employment before.
The organisation consists of a *steering group* in which all the necessary project decisions are made, a working party that follows up and wins support for the work, and the *community intervention groups* in which the operational work takes place between the individuals and the various players involved. An evaluation is linked to the project, and is being carried out by Stockholm University. Thirty-one of the project’s participants, of which one was female, have been interviewed as part of a progress report. The results suggest that the participants had a number of risk factors for future criminality while growing up. Their criminal careers often began at an early age together with their friends. The participants have now grown tired of their living situations, feel guilty towards their families, want to have children, etc. They want to take part in the project in order to bring about a change in their lives, and want support above all in their contact with the authorities. Overall, the participants say that they are satisfied with the help they receive from the project and that they have made much more progress than they had managed previously themselves in their attempts to break away from crime.

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