



# SAFE NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE NORDIC REGION

Recommendations, Best Practices and Concepts

2-day workshop with 70 participants from 10 Nordic cities

// Mjølnerparken 23-24 August



Nordic Council  
of Ministers



LIGHT ON LIFE

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# INTRODUCTION

On August 23rd-24th, Nordic Safe Cities and the Nordic Council of Ministers invited 70 Danish, Swedish and Norwegian practitioners to Mjølnerparken, Copenhagen. To share knowledge and experience, work with cases, give recommendations and do concept development.

The goal was to strengthen the cities' efforts in creating safe neighbourhoods - with a special focus put on the vulnerable neighbourhoods in the Nordic region.

The participants were given six specific themes to work from: City planning, Narratives, Neighbours, Parents, Residents (18+) and Youth. Within each theme three specific questions were given:

**How can cities help create a feeling of inclusion and safety in the public domain?**

**How can housing associations and the local communities help create commitment and trust between their residents - thereby strengthening the social cohesion?**

**How can civil society participate in the development of safe and inclusive residential areas and local communities?**

The results from the group has been collected in this catalogue for inspiration or as a concrete starting point for efforts in creating secure, trusting, tolerant and resilient Nordic cities.

# RESULTS

## **CITY PLANNING**

### **Main question**

How can urban planning and architecture contribute to the development of safe neighbourhoods?

### **Summary**

With focus on solutions that can be implemented without major organisational, economic and political involvement, the group arrived at a series of recommendations that has the intention of avoiding isolation in the local society – in everyday speech known as the development of parallel societies.

### **Recommendations**

- 1.** The areas must be opened up and there has to be clear connections to the surrounding urban environment.
- 2.** Increase focus on providing quality lighting and create areas with an increased sense of security by utilising intelligent light design.
- 3.** Include unsafe zones in urban life and reduce the threat scenario by making the areas more vibrant.
- 4.** Create a more diverse resident mix by providing more varied housing stock.
- 5.** Add new life to the area through attractions that draws in locals and people from elsewhere alike.

## **PARENTS**

### **Main question**

How can parents in social neighbourhoods contribute to increased safety?

### **Summary**

The group wanted to include the neighbourhood in the work for a safer local environment and established a framework for a concrete concept that can pave the way for successful integration during the transitional periods in a child's life.

### **Concept**

A child is a new opportunity to create a successful citizen. And for every time a child goes through a transition phase – whether it is from nursery to kindergarten or kindergarten to school – we have chance to support parents and child.

We want to do that through increased collaboration between players and increased possibility to activate the parents. Focus should be on the resources already available in the local community and how to transfer them to the parents and the child in the window of opportunity that arises during a transitional period.

# RESULTS

## YOUTH

### Main question

How do you engage young people from the local community in creating a safer, more pleasant neighbourhood?

### Cases

Based on these 3 specific cases the group presented a series of recommendations.

#### Social Co-Creation Innovation

A group of young people did volunteer work with handicapped people, increasing their knowledge, broke down prejudice and reduced preconceptions.

#### Ghetto Tours

Acting as ambassadors, 22 young boys and girls organize city walks in their local community.

#### Barnetråkk

Program that let children tell city planners and legislators how they use the local community and what changes they would like to see.

### Recommendations

1. The economic framework has to be known
2. The outcome has to be measurable
3. The work has to be interdisciplinary  
*With wide support from more players, incl. Police*
4. Include young people and professionals
5. Short and long term sustainable initiatives
6. Build on existing initiatives
7. Economic latitude  
*Support peak times and innovative steps*

## NEIGHBOURS

### Main question

How can the neighbours collaborate on creating a secure and attractive local community?

### Summary

Based on a specific issue - young people hanging around on A&O Hostels property - the group developed a concept and a series of recommendations for their Nordic colleagues.

#### Mjølnerparken Tours

Create a symbiosis between A&O Hostel and the area's young people through collaboration between local and public players, by hiring the young people to do tours in the area for the tourists staying at the hostel. This way the young people will earn money, and be ambassadors of their local community, sharing the pride and joy they have in being from Mjølnerparken.

### Recommendations

1. Understand the wishes of the residents and, not least, the children!
2. Uncover what already exists and works
3. Respect the process  
*Don't make promises that can't be kept*
4. Collaborate with other (Nordic) cities and be open to good ideas
5. The locals are the experts

# RESULTS

## RESIDENTS (18+)

### Main question

How do you engage the adults in creating a more safe and pleasant local community?

### Summary

Communities of interest and value are the key to unleashing the residents' own resources for the residents. Inspired by two specific cases, the recommendations given by the group seeks to build a framework to facilitate that process.

### Cases

#### Cricket club in Tingbjerg

Cricket is important to a lot of residents in Tingbjerg, and having a pitch of their own has been on the wish list for a long time. It was built in a collaboration between residents and a sports project, and has since become largest the cricket club in Denmark.

#### The preparedness of the civil society

The city authorities invited the civil society to a collaboration between residents and local authorities. The purpose was to secure safety and security, creating a joint effort to ensure peace and order.

### Recommendations

1. Create contact and meeting points
2. Varied, open and consistent communication
3. Involvement of local stakeholders and societies
4. Partnerships with local players
5. Ownership and leadership has to be consistent and present

## NARRATIVE

### Main question

How do we enhance the positive narratives about the vulnerable neighbourhood locally and in the public domain?

### Summary

The purpose is to open Mjølnerparken to Copenhagen and Copenhagen to Mjølnerparken. We want to facilitate meetings between people based on joy, common interests and social interactions. We want to do this because you cannot hear a narrative, you cannot learn a narrative; you have to experience it.

### Concept

4 times within the next 12 months the rest of Copenhagen will meet Mjølnerparken.

Building on already established festivals, new venues and events will be created in Mjølnerparken, in collaboration with the residents.

### Goal

2000 people from Copenhagen will meet the residents of Mjølnerparken in Mjølnerparken.

Within 3 years the network between organisers and residents will be so well established that the municipality is able rely solely on facilitating media- and communication training.

### Recommendations

1. Respect the residents  
*Make sure that the deals are final*
2. Replace trials and pilots w. permanent solutions.
3. Give it time  
*The solution is never right in front of you*



# NORDIC SAFE CITIES

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