



# Collaboration on sustainable urban development in Mistra Urban Futures

The Gothenburg Region Association  
of Local Authorities (GR) 2017

# Contents

How we build knowledge about sustainable urban development .....	3
Highlights from GR's Mistra Urban Futures network in 2017 .....	4
Socially sustainable urban planning and development .....	6
Urban station communities .....	8
The impact of participation .....	10
DIABAHS – Is dialogue and collaboration a way for architects and developers to build sustainable housing for senior citizens? .....	11
Thematic networks within Mistra Urban Futures .....	12
Mistra Urban Futures Open Research School .....	14
Events held by Mistra Urban Futures during the year .....	16
Member municipalities' thoughts on the years ahead at Mistra Urban Futures .....	18

## WHAT IS MISTRA URBAN FUTURES?

Mistra Urban Futures is an international research and knowledge centre for sustainable urban development. We develop and apply knowledge to promote accessible, green and fair cities. Co-creation – jointly defining, developing and applying knowledge across different disciplines and subject areas from both research and practice – is our way of working. The centre was founded in and is managed from Gothenburg, but also has platforms in Skåne (southern Sweden), Stockholm, Sheffield-Manchester (United Kingdom), Kisumu (Kenya) and Cape Town (South Africa).

[www.mistraurbanfutures.org](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org)



This report has been compiled by Sara-Linnea Östervall, GR:s coordinator for Mistra Urban Futures during 2017, and Gunnel Rydberg, Communications Officer for GR's work at Mistra Urban Futures. Report layout by Tony Dahl, GR Info.

# How we build knowledge about sustainable urban development

**GR** has a key role to play in building up knowledge for the future together with its member municipalities and partners. GR is one of several actors involved in Mistra Urban Futures – an international research centre that aims to promote sustainable urban development through knowledge in collaboration with the academic sector and practitioners. The issue that we along with other parties have decided to focus on is how to jointly build fair cities. The centre will help to make a real difference to the environment and to peoples' lives in the metropolitan area.

As of March 2017 there are now a million inhabitants in the Gothenburg region. We have grown by around 150,000 inhabitants since the year 2000, which is equivalent in size to the entire city of Linköping – Sweden's fifth largest city. 2017 continued to be characterised by strong growth, thus providing both opportunities and challenges for our metropolitan area. Eight challenges were defined in GR's multi-annual policy document "How we jointly develop the good life in the Gothenburg region". It is important to adopt a long-term, targeted approach together with our municipalities to address these challenges. It covers:

- Good living conditions and future prospects for children and young people
- An inclusive region providing good living conditions throughout life
- Lifelong learning
- Accommodation and housing
- A functioning labour market
- A sustainable living environment
- The infrastructure for efficient and climate-friendly travel
- Digital development and welfare technology

GR has taken the Gothenburg Region's goals and strategies document "Sustainable growth" as a starting point for its work on developing social perspectives. This starting point is perfectly in line with what was set out at Mistra Urban Futures, where one of the most important challenges is: How can we achieve sustainable urban development so that we stay within the boundaries of what our planet can withstand? Accessible, green and fair cities are the key concepts that guide the centre's



Helena Söderbäck, Executive Director, GR

efforts to highlight what constitutes sustainable urban development.

GR's involvement in a research and knowledge centre that helps to develop and apply knowledge to promote sustainable urban development is of great value to our municipalities. The co-creation working mode in which researchers and practitioners from different disciplines work together on different projects is producing new and critical insights. The strategic plan for 2016-2019 describes the focus of Mistra Urban Futures as the co-creation of knowledge at local and global level to facilitate a transition to fairer, greener and more accessible cities and metropolitan areas.

This report has been published annually since 2011 to provide a status report on the sustainable urban development work undertaken by GR in Mistra Urban Futures. The report is based on the collaboration and knowledge building taking place in GR's Mistra Urban Futures network – which involves all 13 member municipalities to a greater or lesser extent. It is also used to outline the projects GR has been involved in, and to report on what has happened in the course of the year.

The work being undertaken in GR municipalities within the framework of Mistra Urban Futures is urgently required and I am pleased to recommend the annual report outlining these activities to readers.

*Helena Söderbäck*

Executive Director of the Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities (GR)

# Highlights from GR's Mistra Urban Futures network in 2017

GR has a local network linked to Mistra Urban Futures working on:

- Initiating, monitoring and disseminating knowledge on collaborative research and development projects which are of benefit to the entire region and each individual member municipality.
- Ensuring that the process results in usable tools, methods and working modes for the sustainable development of a metropolitan area.
- Helping with employee development by creating an interface.

Both researchers and local community representatives generally report on current issues and results at network meetings. A small selection of the issues raised by the municipalities and GR during the network meetings in 2017 is provided below.

## Listening to burning issues raised by citizens

“In order to bring about a dialogue it’s important for the municipality to make the first move by listening to the wishes and burning issues raised by citizens. Then the commitments made by the municipality will be given a better reception,” says Andreas Benkel who is working on co-creation in Lerum.

Gråbo in Lerum was made a development area since it was viewed as a rather backward area of the municipality – a somewhat drab district, with social unrest and arson in schools. Since new schools were to be built, a new local planning process was put in place for Gråbo Centre.

In the new local planning process several hundred proposals were drawn up through dialogues and workshops. An activity park was created as a result

of dialogue with children and young people, who made drawings of their proposals. This ultimately resulted in broad acceptance by citizens of the proposals in the local development plan and the clear influence of citizens in the design of the square.

A co-creation association has now been formed that receives financial assistance from the municipality.

## How do we use the municipal structure plan for profiling?

Stenungsund undertook profiling of the identity of different districts in its municipal structure plan. Åsa Lindborg, Head of Planning in the municipality explains that the identity of the different districts was described in the form of the four elements – Earth, Air, Fire and Water. The idea was conceived at a network meeting at Mistra Urban Futures during 2016.



Sara-Linnéa Östervall, GR:s coordinator for Mistra Urban Futures during 2017, introduces the program at the last network meeting of the year with the topic Migration.

*Earth* – districts with woodland, lakes and open countryside but with the potential to develop entrepreneurship.

*Air* – districts with the potential for leisure activities, recreation and tourism.

*Fire* – districts with a high growth rate, proximity to the sea and options for commuting.

*Water* – districts with creative inhabitants, bathing, boating and a cultural landscape.

The main town of Stenungsund forms the heart of the area, embodying the profiling, and is entitled *Life*.

## Nearness concepts in the development of new municipal structure plan in Partille

Six nearness concepts are the objectives underlying the municipal structure plan.

Emma Johansson and Johanna Kirudd from the built environment office explain that the six objectives cover closeness to one another, the big city, everyday life, culture, nature and industry and commerce.

Partille is a growing municipality that has a high construction rate. Challenges faced by Partille include issues such as:

- How can we overcome barriers?
- How can we prevent competition between district centres?
- How should we prioritise development between corridors and nodes?
- How do we handle parking issues, especially in the centre?
- How can we build closer to the road?
- How can we ensure prioritisation of modes of transport?

## Challenges for a sustainable Ale

A new sustainability governance and management model has been adopted in Ale. Gunilla Dörner Buskas and Ann-Charlotte Svensson from the municipality explain that the global goals are part of their work programme.

A climate change adaptation plan is being developed as part of a climate strategy for a sustainable society. Ale is in an exposed position between the river and mountain. The railway and its embankment trap the rain water, which needs to be pumped out. Contaminated soil and susceptibility to landslides are also a challenge. The recruitment of wastewater and sewage engineers is another challenge.

## How do we create liveable cities?

“A densely populated city creates the conditions for proximity and accessibility in which you can reach

all destinations,” explains Per Kristersson, GR, when presenting the report “Value-creating urban development”. The report studies the impact of the demand for homes and commercial premises on various qualities of the urban environment. The report was compiled by GR, the City of Gothenburg and the City of Mölndal together with Spacescape and Evidens.

Situational analyses have been undertaken into the qualities of the urban environment for residents of apartment blocks and single-family houses as well as offices, commercial premises and restaurants. What are the variables affecting housing costs?

“There’s been a need to jointly build knowledge and gain empirical evidence of how to create a good urban development. We also want to create high-quality liveable cities,” Kristersson says. ■

### MISTRA URBAN FUTURES NETWORK

The network meets approximately six times per year. During 2017 the topics covered in network meetings were:

- The mixed city – qualities of the urban environment
- Social sustainability – co-creation
- Urban-rural – location marketing
- Mobility/accessibility – development in corridors
- Green and blue – climate change adaptation
- Social sustainability – migration

On each occasion the network was encouraged to invite colleagues who might benefit from and who would like to contribute to the topic concerned. A newsletter was sent out after the meetings, which the contact persons were responsible for disseminating in their own organisation.

#### The network currently includes:

Ale Municipality: Annika Friberg (Environmental Planner) and Magnus Blombergsson (City Architect)  
Alingsås Municipality: no contact person  
Gothenburg City: Pia Borg (Planning Manager)  
Härbyda Municipality: Matilda Svenning (City Architect)  
Kungbacka Municipality: Sofia Wiman and Peter Reneby (Planners)  
Kungälv Municipality: Anna Ulvehed (Urban Planner)  
Lerum municipality: Jonas Edin (Environmental Controller)  
Lilla Edet Municipality: Ilir Musa (Planning Architect)  
Mölndal City: Elisabet Börlin (Municipal Structure Planner)  
Partille Municipality: Maria Gunnarsson (Built Environment Strategist)  
Stenungsund Municipality: Åsa Lindborg (Head of Planning and City Architect)  
Tjörn Municipality: Tinna Harling (Process Manager)  
Öckerö Municipality: Petter Leyman and Max Andersson (Planners)

Read more about the network here:  
[www.grkom.se/mistraurbanfutures](http://www.grkom.se/mistraurbanfutures)

# Socially Sustainable Urban planning and Development

## SOCIALLY SUSTAINABLE URBAN PLANNING AND DEVELOPMENT

**What:** A knowledge overview of socially sustainable urban planning and development.

**Why?** To map knowledge of existing research, practical experiences and methods and to identify knowledge gaps and suitable areas for further work.

**When:** Produced during 2017

**Read more** and download the report:  
[www.grkom.se/socialhallbarhet](http://www.grkom.se/socialhallbarhet)



## The dream of social planning that counteracts segregation and enhances social cohesion

Those of us working on sustainability issues have long heard that “we have to work across sectors more”! Nevertheless it is often extremely difficult to achieve this in practice. But now the heads of social welfare services and the built environment in the Gothenburg region have actually begun working together in a joint social sustainability working group. Why? They

claim that it is not possible to address the complex challenges facing the municipalities with greater housing segregation and differences in living conditions, by each working on their own projects. We are far from achieving a socially sustainable society, characterised by cohesion, trust and inclusion, which we are so fond of talking about in our visions. At the moment, there also seem to be no tools in the planning process to prevent us from going in a socially unsustainable direction. Every now and then construction of a building is stopped because protected species are threatened, but no-one ever presses the stop button on construction that contributes to housing segregation.

### Knowledge overview

What does social sustainability mean in relation to urban planning? And how can the built environment contribute to a more socially sustainable society? Based on the needs identified in GR’s social sustainability working group we have developed a knowledge overview on social sustainability from an urban planning perspective together with a



Lisa Ström and Sanna Isemo.

## *Hello Elisabeth Beijer and Maja Wadstein!*

**Y**ou work in GR Employment Market and Welfare and GR Environment and Regional development respectively and are responsible for GR's social sustainability working group, which is made up of representatives from GR's network of the heads of social welfare services and the built environment. The needs of this working group are the background against which the knowledge overview came into being. How will the working group achieve its results?

The working group will focus on what social sustainability can mean in concrete terms. What is exciting is that Vinnova has just agreed to fund a two-year development project – Social innovation in urban planning – and the working group is now the steering committee for this project. The overall intention is to strengthen social cohesion and reduce residential segregation in the Gothenburg region and increase accessibility to the regional housing market. Five municipalities are taking part: Kungälv,



Elisabeth Beijer and Maja Wadstein.

Lerum, Lilla Edet, Partille and Stenungsund. The knowledge overview will form the basis for the methods and working modes to be tested by the municipalities. This will ensure that the knowledge overview is actually put into practice and can act as a kind of reference book for the project. ■

number of different actors, from both authorities, regions, municipalities, educational institutions and research institutes within Mistra Urban Futures.

We established that social planning is one area of intervention among many that actually plays a part. The built environment affects a number of societal functions and physical structures which are important to people's living conditions, in terms of matters such as health, well-being, participation and trust.

### **Developing social values**

Planning can contribute to maintaining something that we regard as having a high social value, such as a local identity or a certain cultural environment. It is also possible to develop social values that are lacking, such as trust and security, by creating meeting places or lighting dark walkways. However, just as urban planning itself is a process that deals with making compromises and trade-offs between different interests, neither is social sustainability a static condition, but it has more to do with the ability to handle complex problems. Sometimes it may almost be easier to agree on what social sustainability is not and from there to consider what physical interventions could counteract a socially unsustainable direction.

One of several knowledge requirements we

identified in the report deals with transport planning, which has a huge structuring effect and also has an impact on people's everyday life and access to work, home, recreation etc. It is also an area with a traditionally forecast-driven, technical and engineering approach, characterised by how to make the most cost-effective transition from A to B. Therefore, we are now proceeding to launch a knowledge-building process on how to achieve socially sustainable transport planning, probably in the form of a network linked to Mistra Urban Futures. Are you interested in contributing?

Hopefully by joining forces we can create an environment in which in the future somebody in an unnamed authority somewhere in Sweden will say: Stop and check. We cannot authorise this plan because it does not help to reduce segregation and enhance cohesion! And suddenly it happens.

*Lisa Ström*

Regional Planner for Social Sustainability, the Göteborg Region Association of Local Authorities (GR)

# Urban Station Communities

## URBAN STATION COMMUNITIES

**What:** Urban Station Communities – the way to resource-efficient travel. A knowledge process aimed at increasing knowledge about the complexities of planning close to stations and creating the basis for the development of station communities.

**When:** Project period: 2012–2019

**Parties:** These include GR and the municipalities of Ale, Alingsås, Borås, Göteborg, Härryda, Kungälv, Lerum, Partille, Stenungsund, Trollhättan and Varberg.

**Read more:** <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/project/urban-station-communities>

## SamSam – Co-creative urban planning for energy-efficient and sustainable urban station communities

During the year a major new project was launched within “Urban Station Communities”, under the name “Co-creative urban planning for energy-efficient and sustainable urban station communities”. The project manager is Tony Svensson at KTH Royal Institute of Technology.

“We will investigate how to jointly create attractive transport systems and living environments by focusing on the development of station communities. What types of urban forms and specific conditions for station communities need to be developed? What are the opportunities and limitations of using planning

as a means? What models, tools and methods does planning need to work better?” says Svensson.

Researchers from KTH Royal Institute of Technology, the University of Gothenburg, Chalmers University of Technology and Luleå University of Technology are working on the project together with officials from Region Västra Götaland, the municipalities of Borås, Härryda and Stenungsund and further municipalities along two railway corridors in Västra Götaland.

GR is supporting the project through its coordinating role in the Mistra Urban Futures



Tony Svensson during the Mistra Urban Futures Gothenburg conference 2017. Photo: John Magnusson/CFFC



## Hello Anna Gustafsson!

**Y**ou are a regional planner at GR Department of Environment and Regional development and in the course of the year you took over the role of process manager for “Urban Station Communities” from Amie Ramstedt. What is the most important thing that has happened in “Urban Station Communities” this year? What will happen next year?

We have had several enjoyable and rewarding activities, but the highlight was perhaps the start of a major new project – SamSam – which has been described in further detail earlier. Only a few weeks ago Vinnova approved a project on good acoustic environments in communities close to stations, for which RISE Research Institutes of Sweden is responsible. In other words there are a lot of exciting developments in the pipeline! During the spring we will be working together with the municipality of Varberg, which is in the early stages of the development of a new station area in Väröbacka. Anyone who would like to find out more about this can contact me! ■



process “Urban Station Communities”. It was also through “Urban Station Communities” that the idea for the project was initially conceived. Part of the co-creation has involved the development of project descriptions for each case study in a collaboration between researchers and planners.

“The co-creation actually began two years ago in the process of seeking funding for the project, when the project’s purpose, aims and issues were jointly shaped by the participating parties.”

“We would like to know more about the physical characteristics a sustainable station community should have, and the conditions required to operate better planning processes. The potential is there!”

*”We would like to know more about both the physical characteristics a sustainable station community should have, and the conditions required to operate better planning processes. The potential is there!”*

“In that sense this project is really co-creation from square one,” Svensson explains.

Practical work on the project began during the year; this included regional mapping to highlight spatial patterns and relationships in terms of the conditions of life in small and medium-sized station communities some distance from Gothenburg – what values and qualities do these communities have that make them attractive? What are the limitations and opportunities for strengthening these sites and the surrounding area? The project has the ambition to enhance the knowledge, methods and tools available to planners, decision-makers, researchers and teachers as to how to achieve more energy-efficient and sustainable urban and regional development by using station communities as a starting point.

“We would like to know more about both the physical characteristics a sustainable station community should have, and the conditions required to operate better planning processes. And of course, in the future we want this knowledge to be used so that planning actually results in implementation in which urban development becomes more energy-efficient and sustainable. The potential is there!” Svensson concludes. ■

### SUSTAINABLE AND ATTRACTIVE STATION COMMUNITIES

The project “Sustainable and attractive station communities”, which has been working on land use and testing local travel and transport services in Lerum and Nödinge, will soon be concluded. Part of the project involved the submission of proposals on how to make parking more efficient and share it between different categories of users and how to reduce the need for parking spaces if the need for mobility is satisfied by new services. The municipalities are pleased with the parking tool, and the process of creating a shared vision and gaining knowledge about potential approaches has been at least as valuable as the tool itself. For example, the municipality of Lerum has been able to almost halve the number of parking spaces through co-location and local travel and transport services.

# The Impact of Participation

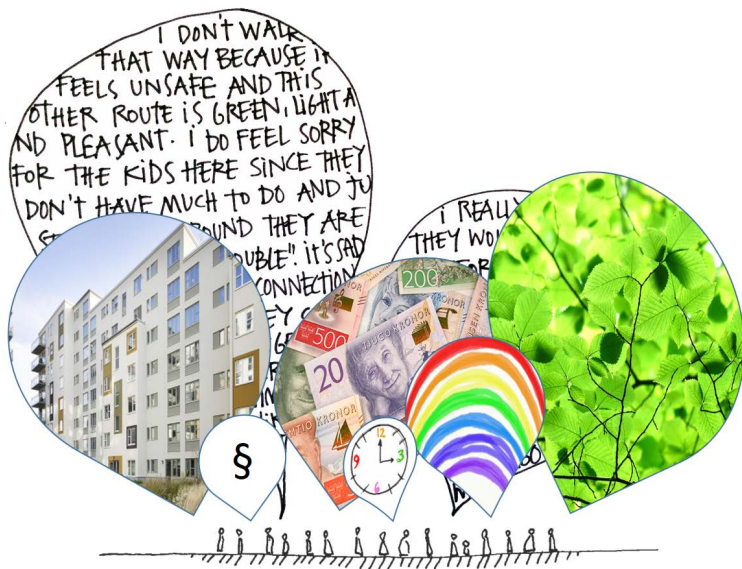


Illustration: Lisa Bomble.

## THE IMPACT OF PARTICIPATION

**What:** The impact of participation – mapping and developing the scope, forms and impacts of the communicative turn in urban planning.

**When:** Project period: 2016–2019

**Parties:** These include the University of Gothenburg, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, the Swedish Transport Administration, the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions (SKL), the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, GR, the City of Gothenburg, Alingsås Municipality, Tjörn Municipality, Lerum Municipality and municipalities in the Malmö and Stockholm regions.

**Read more:**

<https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/project/impact-participation-0>

## Hello Tinna Harling!

**Y**ou are the process manager in Tjörn Municipality and are involved in the project. What is your role?

I collect data about the urban planning dialogues conducted in Tjörn and am responsible for coordination in the municipality when researchers visit Tjörn to conduct interviews, look at material and so on. I have also been involved in and initiated the project, initially through the Mistra Urban Futures project “Citizen dialogues in urban planning”, in which I collected material and arranged seminars etc. I then involved researchers in the work and collaborated with Lisa Ström at GR, Ulrika Lundkvist at the City Planning Office in Gothenburg and others on the submission of a Swedish Research Council (FORMAS) application.

*What has happened during the year?*

We met twice and discussed how best to collect and make use of the material from some of the different dialogue processes that took place. The researchers have started to collect material about the dialogue processes which took place in the municipalities from 2000 to 2015. All of us from the municipalities have submitted reports about the dialogue processes that took place.

*Are any results or indications already available?*

For us in Tjörn it has been valuable to collect material from the dialogue processes we carried out and to consider the impact they had. The compiled material is, however, far too vast to draw any conclusions at this stage, and the collection of data has not yet been completed. For example, the researchers have not yet been to Tjörn.



# DIABAHS – Is dialogue and collaboration a way for architects and developers to build sustainable housing for senior citizens?

## Four examples of collaboration

The project is based on four pilot projects chosen to illustrate different ways and means of collaborating. What all the pilot projects have in common is that the accommodation provided is extra care housing catering for people over the age of 65. The four sites are located in Noltorpshöjd in Alingsås, Lundby Park in Gothenburg, Bifrost in Mölndal and Källekärr in Tjörn.

## What has happened this year?

Plenty of activities have taken place during the year, including:

- A seminar on the theme of extra care housing and extra care housing managers, at the initiative of the project's expert group.
- A study visit to a reference project (Majviken in Gothenburg and Kvarnkullen in Kungälv).
- Survey studies and interview studies with tenants in Mölndal and Alingsås.
- A workshop on the theme of sustainable accommodation for senior citizens.
- Analysis of material from the data collection.
- Interim report and ongoing evaluation in Lundby Park.
- ... and much more besides. Follow developments during 2018 by registering for the project's newsletter! ■



### DIABAHS

**What:** DIABAHS is an ongoing evaluation project aimed at investigating whether dialogue is a way for architects and developers to create a sustainable residential environment for senior citizens.

**When:** Project period: 2016-2019

**Parties:** GR Welfare and Chalmers' Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering are running the project. A number of stakeholders are linked to the project through the four pilot projects in the municipalities of Alingsås, Gothenburg, Mölndal and Tjörn

**Read more:**

[www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/content/diabaHS](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/content/diabaHS)



Bilder från TBAB, Alingsåshem, White och Mölndalsbostäder samt projektet.

# Thematic networks in Mistra Urban Futures

During 2017 Mistra Urban Futures launched thematic networks as a new aspect of its activities. The network is a way for actors from the academic world, public administration and politics, business sector and civil society to meet around a specific theme and complex problems linked to sustainable urban development. Three of the networks that were launched are introduced below. To find out more about these and other networks and find the contacts in order to join the networks, read more here: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/gothenburg/networks>

## Sustainable Urban Mobility Network

The Sustainable Urban Mobility Network brings together practitioners and researchers from different organisations. These currently include the City of Gothenburg, GR, Region Västra Götaland (VGR), the Swedish Transport Administration, IVL Swedish Environmental Research Institute and Sweco. The idea is both to identify knowledge requirements from the processes taking place in the current planning process and to initiate new research projects. This is achieved both through the collection of results from ongoing and completed research projects and by finding links to planning and matters for further investigation.

During 2017 the network focused on the issue of parking, since processes are under way in many cities in relation to changes to parking planning



policy and there is a great need for knowledge. Earlier projects in Mistra Urban Futures found that car ownership and parking charges were interesting instruments for further study, from the perspective of what is required to increase the uptake of public transport. Last autumn the network held a seminar on parking planning and attractive cities, with participants from both Swedish cities and Oslo, and from several different fields of research including architecture and business economics. ■

## Urban Food Network

### *Hello Gunilla Almered Olsson!*

*You are a professor of human ecology at the University of Gothenburg and the head of the Urban Food Network. What is it? What do you do?*



We are a network of researchers, practitioners, politicians and other social actors from not-for-profit associations and small companies with a common interest in urban food. The network addresses food-related challenges in the Gothenburg region, such as urban vulnerability, due to the large dependence on imported food and the global food system, and the lack of ecological and social sustainability through the growing segregation of ethnic and socio-cultural groups in the city, where food and food production

can be a meeting place and a possible path to integration.

The network has several aims. One aim is to initiate and develop research projects on food system activities in city regions, while strengthening the relationship between the city and rural community. Another aim is to promote the knowledge development and coordination of actors involved in challenges in the field of urban food, such as food production on the municipality's agricultural land, integration activities etc., and provide one another with information and market intelligence about food issues. The network also works as a reference group providing inspiration and advice for the work currently being undertaken on a food strategy for Gothenburg.

*Why is this network based in Mistra Urban Futures?*

## Network for learning about sustainable cities and regions (Lär-SUD)



The network for learning about sustainable cities and regions (Lär-SUD) was initiated by GR and the University of Gothenburg within Mistra Urban Futures and is directed towards teachers, educators and academics who are interested in research and training in sustainable urban development. The aim is to help to establish closer contacts between teachers, educators and researchers and to enhance research and teaching on sustainable urban development.

“It means a lot for GR’s ongoing work on learning about sustainable urban development to be involved and to run this network. It is hoped

that it will indicate which aspects of learning about sustainable development are missing from the region’s schools, and where we need to come in and provide support. It will provide a good interface for networking on any future projects”, says Jonas Franzén from GR Training, who has been involved in and started the network.

The network met twice during the autumn. The last meeting was held at GR in December and focused on the exchange of experiences and examples of best practice by teachers dealing with sustainable urban development in the classroom. ■

The complex systems and challenges involved in “Food issues” require both academics and practitioners to address the subject and jointly formulate research questions. Such a working mode is at the core of Mistra Urban Futures. This is a perfect match!

*What do you hope that it will lead to?*

My hope is that “food issues” or food system activities will become a tool for enhancing sustainability and resilience both in Gothenburg and in Västra Götaland through greater local and regional production of food. This will reduce dependence on global food systems, reduce vulnerability and increase food security for the city, while also stimulating rural development through new companies and agricultural activities. A very important dimension is the potential for the integration of newcomers into food system activities. ■



# Urban Futures Open Research School

## *You took part in Mistra Urban Futures Research School – Why?*

### **Fredrik Högberg, Environment Administration, City of Gothenburg**

#### **You took part in the first course at Mistra Urban Futures Research School – Why?**

The short answer is that I thought the subject was interesting. It should be added that in some respects the course tied in well with my normal work at the Environment Administration. It provided good skills development and I nurtured a dream of becoming a researcher somewhere within me.

#### **What did you get out of the course?**

The best thing was that I gained a new perspective on my work and our challenges in the city. The course gave me the chance to look upwards to some extent in my work, but it's difficult to combine a real research perspective with more traditional administrative work. I think it's important to do that but it's not that easy.

#### **Do you see any “wicked” problems in your work which could be solved by co-produced research?**

I am convinced that we could use co-produced research more in the management world. One area that might be of interest is the large gulf between goals or objectives and actual results. This is certainly not anything new under the sun, but in these times of societal challenges, it's very evident that our high ambitions do not have the expected impact on our activities and in reality.

#### **What does it mean to have a research perspective on practical work in a municipality?**

It may mean that new groups of people will find administrative work interesting. I'm not saying that the municipalities lack the right expertise but that a research perspective can highlight an ambition that has historically not been clearly expressed.

#### **Is it important for there to be a research school at Mistra Urban Futures?**

I really think so!



### **Ylva Berglund, Culture Administration, City of Gothenburg**

#### **You took part in the first course at Mistra Urban Futures Research School – Why?**

To gain more knowledge and inspiration. I have worked on several pilot studies linked to culture and the city's transformation processes. I would like to understand more about the field and gain new perspectives.

#### **What did you get out of the course?**

I got to experience the dedication and knowledge of the lecturers and other students – and in particular was able to listen to others and had to express myself in English at an academic level. That's something I never do during a normal working day.

#### **Do you see any “wicked” problems in your work which could be solved by co-produced research?**

As an employee at the Museum of Gothenburg I really see a need to work with the university and various grass-roots movements and citizens' groups. When it comes to the role of culture in urban development, most of the work still has to be done and there are a number of complex problems to resolve. What we have done so far has been pioneering work



### **ABOUT URBAN FUTURES OPEN RESEARCH SCHOOL**

During 2017 Mistra Urban Futures' Gothenburg platform launched an open research school that addresses both practitioners who work with so-called wicked challenges in their daily work and researchers which addresses such challenges in their doctoral studies. In autumn 2017 the first course was held, Co-production in Action – from practice to theory (2x7.5 credits), which was completely full. The course is about co-creation and transdisciplinary research as a way to deal with wicked or complex challenges, which often arise in urban development. These challenges must be solved in cooperation between many disciplines and across research and practice. Read more about the research school here: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/our-research/research-school>

in which we have highlighted a number of cultural values to take into account in order to contribute to the development of a sustainable city. It is absolutely invaluable to view things in a scientific way and to collaborate with the academic world.

**What does it mean to have a research perspective on practical work in a municipality?**

It means a great deal. If we are going to build a sustainable city, break down the segregation and create a more equal Gothenburg with a good service for its citizens, then we need knowledge. I find it hard to believe that this is only the case in the cultural sector.

**Is it important for there to be a research school at Mistra Urban Futures?**

Yes, it is in my opinion. I'm not aware of any other opportunities for a practitioner like me to get involved in this type of collaboration. So to ask a question in return – where else would it take place?

**Eva Stockfelt, Sports and Associations Administration, City of Gothenburg**



**You took part in the first course at Mistra Urban Futures Research School – Why?**

Apart from an interesting and challenging course structure, from practice to theory, that I was interested in taking part in, I think we need to enhance the theoretical training associated with the practical work that I and many other officials undertake in the city. For my part I work on urban development focusing on the long-term planning of sports and health and wellness facilities. It was also tempting because I wanted to gain an understanding of transformation processes and

how they can guide a sustainable city through the complex and rapid transformation work that Gothenburg and its citizens are in the midst of. I think that co-produced research is absolutely necessary to solve the complex and wicked issues associated with societal change.

**What did you get out of the course?**

In-depth knowledge and a greater understanding of the complexity of urban development. Co-produced processes and transdisciplinary theories allow us to gain greater insights into and obtain suitable tools to allow us to work more sustainably at earlier stages and produce good results in the future.

**Do you see any “wicked” problems in your work which could be solved by co-produced research?**

In my role as an operational developer at the Sports and Associations Administration we face issues that could be termed “wicked” problems on a daily basis. For example, urban planning often fails to consider the need to provide space for organisations in civil society – premises for associations’ activities, sports halls and other areas for physical activities, play and games etc. These needs are often set against other needs, for housing, schools and preschools, offices, commercial premises and entertainment areas.

**What does it mean to have a research perspective on practical work in a municipality?**

Systematics and an understanding of what is happening are important insights. In order for understanding and insights to be as sustainable and as robust as possible, these should be anchored and based on research and experiences which are well known and tested.

**Is it important for there to be a research school at Mistra Urban Futures?**

The answer to that question is of course yes. Urban development, people living in Gothenburg and future generations would gain much from the development of long-term collaboration between the City of Gothenburg and Mistra Urban Futures. ■



# Events held by Mistra Urban Futures during the year



## Gothenburg conference 2017: How does a city become fair, green and accessible?

**M**istra Urban Futures Gothenburg conference on 5 October at the Museum of World Culture was packed with around 170 people. The conference was part of EU autumn events in Gothenburg which culminated in the EU Summit in November on fair jobs and growth. It was hoped that the conference would be able to inspire and overturn ingrained thought patterns and ideas and provide new perspectives and inspiration.

Jobs and growth do not exist in a vacuum but are related to all aspects of sustainability and to the cities where jobs are created and growth takes place. So how can a city be fair while also becoming green and accessible? What is a fair city? For whom and from whose perspective?

During the day participants heard Jan Jörnmark, Associate Professor at the School of Business, Economics and Law, University of Gothenburg, talk about forms of transfer, movements and segregation. Director of City Planning Agneta Hammer and the

architect Malin Finlöf talked about how to create sustainable living environments. Tomas Ekberg, Chief Analyst, Region Västra Götaland, spoke about happiness, living conditions and resources and Michael Ivarson, Director, Social Welfare Resource Administration, ended the morning by talking about Equal Gothenburg and what it means from the perspective of fairness. Towards the end of the day Professor David Simon, Director of Mistra Urban Futures, spoke about how to address the challenges we face in creating sustainable cities. Participants also had the opportunity to air their views and discuss how to create fair, green and accessible cities in three themed sessions. GR's Head of Department of Environment and Regional development Maria Sigroth was responsible for one of these themed sessions, with the key issues of "accessibility to what and for whom?"

Read more and see videos from the conference here: [www.mistraurbanfutures.org/sv/event/goteborgskonferens-2017](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/sv/event/goteborgskonferens-2017) ■







## Annual conference in Kenya on Just cities: Learning through comparison

Mistra Urban Futures annual conference – Realising Just Cities – Learning through Comparison – was held from 13 to 15 November at the local platform in Kisumu, Kenya. The conference attracted 130 participants, the majority of whom came from the university, city and region around Kisumu.

Twenty-three people associated with the Gothenburg platform took part. In addition to the conference, participants took part in three study visits linked to the project and nine workshops on comparative projects such as migration, food, waste, participatory cities and global goals over the three days.

Read more about the annual conference here: <https://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/realising-just-cities-learning-through-comparison>

## Mistra Urban Futures' own series of events

In order to disseminate and develop knowledge about sustainable urban development and provide networking opportunities Mistra Urban Futures offers a series of different events aimed at researchers, practitioners, politicians, or anyone interested in the subject.

**Urban Lunch-time** is a lecture and networking lunch aimed at disseminating the results of Mistra Urban Futures' projects or providing an opportunity to listen to a perspective related to sustainable urban development. During 2017, 425 people took part on seven occasions on subjects such as Migration, the role of culture in urban development, SEisMIC – Urban challenges and social innovations, Funktek – Culture and accessibility and a Futures PhD thesis – Designing out waste. Urban Lunch-time is recorded and the videos can be viewed on the website.

**Urban Research** is a form of seminar that begins with an introductory lecture on a specific subject. Then everyone takes part in a discussion on various issues and shares their knowledge. Five seminars were held in 2017 with subjects such as When municipalities set the research agenda and Slumification – BIDs (Business Improvement Districts).

**Urban Lecture** is an in-depth lunch lecture with an internationally known researcher in sustainable urban development.

**Mellanrum** is an evening lecture and subsequent discussion with the public on sustainable urban development with a social focus. It is held in collaboration with the University of Gothenburg, Chalmers' Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering, GR, City of Gothenburg S2020 and the Museum of Gothenburg. Some 642 people took part on nine occasions in 2017.

**Report Seminar** involves the presentation of a report written by members of one of Mistra Urban Futures' projects, followed by a discussion with well-read opponents.

Other events worth mentioning are the Annual Lecture on 31 October on Agenda 2030, lectures in connection with the Science Festival in May and in Almedalen in June, the Failure Lunch on 24 November at which the Gothenburg Award for Sustainable Development was awarded and knowledge dialogues held in the form of platform days in December.

Here are the events: [www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/events-overview](http://www.mistraurbanfutures.org/en/events-overview) ■

# Member municipalities' thoughts on the years ahead at Mistra Urban Futures

In order to give a fresh impetus to Mistra Urban Futures in the years ahead, GR's coordinator Sara-Linnéa Östervall held meetings in ten of the 13 GR municipalities in spring 2017. (Gothenburg which is represented as a partner within the collaboration and Alingsås and Lerum refrained from taking part). The invitation to the meetings was made by the municipality's contact person in GR's Mistra Urban Futures network and was sent to officials in the municipality working in urban planning, environment, social sustainability, culture and business development – at different levels and in various posts depending on the municipality and the judgement of the contact person.

## The benefit of Mistra Urban Futures to the municipalities

During the meetings we discussed how committed the municipalities had so far been to Mistra Urban Futures, and what benefit they had derived from the collaboration. A clear picture emerged here that what the municipalities had most benefited from was GR's Mistra Urban Futures network and the network meetings that are arranged. The meetings have provided good market intelligence and links to new research as well as being a forum for discussions at a different level from those that participants can fit into their everyday life.

The individual project that was of great benefit to most municipalities was “Urban station commu-

nities”. The project provided many of them with good direct access to research and researchers in the field, and the way it was structured with specific cases which they were helped to process gave several municipalities concrete input for their own planning. Other projects have also been useful, especially for the individuals who took part in them, but it is difficult to disseminate experience from projects within the organisation. Some people make use of reports or methods developed at Mistra Urban Futures as tools in their own work, without having taken part in the projects themselves

## Challenges facing municipalities in relation to sustainable urban development

Most of the discussions revolved around the challenges faced by municipalities in their sustainable urban development work, and how these could be handled in Mistra Urban Futures. Ten themes emerged from the discussions. Some themes were brought up by Östervall and adopted on the basis that they are topical issues at the centre, but most came from the municipalities. The following lists provide a brief description of the themes and the views of the municipalities on them. The following matrix summarises which themes are more or less topical (dark or light coloured) in the municipalities visited.

On 8 December GR organised a seminar as a follow-up to the visits to the municipalities to discuss the areas to be pursued and how this should be done. The discussions during the seminar focused on culture and identity in urban development and determined that we should investigate the options for creating a course on methods for working on place creation and place identity.

### Migration and urban development

- Migration as a continuous ongoing normal state. How do cities and communities manage and plan for this?
- How can we benefit from the mobilisation which the municipalities carried out in 2015? How can we adopt a long-term approach to the work?

### Climate change adaptation

- How do we plan and build in a changing climate?
- Several communities are developing climate change adaptation plans. For others it is hard to find the time and strength for strategic work, and the issue is only handled individually in each local plan.



Åsa Lindborg, City Architect in the municipality of Stenungsund, describes how she feels like a flying penguin at network meetings – they allow her to take her feet off the ground and see reality from a different perspective. Lindborg also explains that she got her inspiration for the design of Stenungsund's new municipal structure plan during a Mistra Urban Futures network meeting.

- The county administrative board and other actors are already working on the issue – it is important not to have too many forums. Research is available – it needs to be implemented.

### Urban food production

- Can food production in or near cities contribute to sustainability and greater stability?
- A municipality has a political mandate to develop the field, for others it arises in connection with ongoing business development.
- Aquaculture and fish farming are interesting aspects, as is urban farming. Methods for evaluating agricultural land for food production versus new developments are sought by several municipalities.

### Segregation – mixed housing

- How do we create mixed city districts where different people can meet? How do we build housing for everyone?
- Residential mobility as a generator of supply throughout the housing chain is a theory that does not work. What do we do instead?
- Is self-build – building your own home – a solution?

### Local provision for the municipality's requirements

- Where there is high pressure for development – how do we obtain premises for preschools, schools and housing in the right places? How do we create the economic space to build?
- Several municipalities lack strategic planning, or have difficulty in achieving internal collaboration and obtaining good forecasts. Others have gone further and have knowledge they can share.
- Is Mistra Urban Futures the right forum? Perhaps this not an area in which research is required?

### Identity

- How do we maintain a district's identity in urban development? Or change its identity to adapt to a new reality?

- Transformation from outer suburb to mixed city/ inner suburb, or from rural community to city. What community should we be? The role of the car in the outer suburb versus the inner suburb?
- How do you create an identity in a completely new city?

### Mobility

- How can public transport be provided across barriers such as rivers and the sea?
- How can you establish sustainable travel habits from the outset, in a place that is built from nothing and over time?
- Targeted versus forecast-driven planning.

### Densification in the balance

- How do we ensure smart densification? Where and how should we build everything that needs to be built? How can green spaces, agricultural land and cultural environments be protected where there is a high pressure for development?
- Flows and corridors, space syntax – what are the dividing lines? How are analyses implemented in practice? How are flows created?

### Governance and management

- How do we manage and follow up on all three sustainability goals? How can you ensure that something other than the financial aspect is evaluated?
- How do we achieve collaboration between administrations?
- How many strategies can you have? Should they be narrow or broad? What is effective? How can they be widely anchored in the organisation

### Culture in urban planning

- How can we plan for a lively cultural life? How can culture be brought into the planning process?
- How can you use culture as a basis for building a new city? ■

Themes that were specified as being more or less topical in the member municipalities visited.

	Ale	Härryda	Kungsbacka	Kungälv	Lilla Edet	Mölnadal	Partille	Stenungsund	Tjörn	Öckerö
Migration and urban development	●			●		●		●	●	
Climate change adaptation	●		●	●	●	●	●	●		●
Urban food production	●	●		●	●	●		●	●	
Segregation – mixed housing	●	●	●	●		●	●		●	
Local provision for the municipality's requirements	●		●		●			●	●	●
Identity		●	●		●		●	●	●	●
Mobility		●	●	●	●		●		●	●
Densification		●	●	●		●	●			
Governance and management	●	●		●		●	●		●	
Culture in urban planning	●	●					●		●	



The Gothenburg Region Association of Local Authorities

---

**Visitors address:** Anders Personsgatan 8, Göteborg, Sweden

**P.O.** Box 5073, 402 22 Göteborg, Sweden

**Phone:** +46 31-335 50 00 • **e-post:** [gr@grkom.se](mailto:gr@grkom.se) • **www:** [www.grkom.se](http://www.grkom.se)