



Kristianstads
kommun



Urban Community Development Näsby

Annual Activity Report 2024

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Urban Community Development Näsby

The Municipal Executive Committee of Kristianstad initiated in 2019 the project of developing the urban neighborhood Näsby. The project is a long-term mission which aims to transform Näsby into a model for sustainable urban development by the year 2037.

Urban Community Development Näsby is based on the following long-term goals, defined by the municipality's master plan for urban development:

- A city for everyone – We want to break the patterns of segregation and create a Näsby for everyone.
- A green and blue city – We want to show our faith in Näsby by creating a model neighborhood for sustainable urban development.
- An attractive city – We want to increase Näsby's attractiveness so that the neighborhood's potential will be optimized by education, enterprises and innovation.

Urban Community Development Näsby is led by the Municipal Executive Office together with an interdisciplinary committee of about 25 employees who in turn work for 11 different departments and public companies.

It is important to involve the whole of the municipality's organization as well as residents, NGO's and businesses, in order to achieve the long-term goals.

Method and factors of success

Urban Community Development Näsby deploys a variety of activities and sub-projects with the intention to include as many local stakeholders as possible in the local transformation. Whenever a new activity is organized it is always with the goal of creating long-term impact so that successful activities can continue to grow even after the project moves on to work on new initiatives. A factor of success is to include different departments, municipal companies, civil society as well as local businesses from the planning stage so they can take over and continue the work.

The purpose of this approach is to implement successful activities, methods and tools in the ordinary activities of various collaborating partners, creating long-term impact through collaborative development. In this way, the project is able to start more local initiatives, adapt to new needs and avoid short-term solutions.

Summary of Completed Activities 2024

Urban Community Development Näsby works with a mix of development of public spaces, social activities and local collaboration networks. Following are just a few summaries of some of the different projects and activities completed within the scope of Urban Community Development Näsby in 2024.

Development of public spaces



Drop-in dialogue forum

Urban Community Development Näsby is founded on the notion that the development process should be carried out through dialog with residents, non-profits and businesses. Since 2022 the project has held drop-in dialogue in Gamlegården's center on Thursday afternoons, offering citizens the opportunity to talk directly with

members of the municipal committee.

In 2024, the project focused on increasing the participation of Näsby's youth. Residents were encouraged to discuss local development and make suggestions using a "dialogue mailbox". Over 150 suggestions were collected from residents through this method. Many suggestions have been incorporated into development initiatives, for example improvements to the Näsby sports field, new spots of shade at the outdoor swimming pool and new spaces areas for playing in nature.

Urban Development Community Näsby's continuous dialogue is the foundation to the neighborhood's strategic development as well as the key to involving Näsby's residents in the process. Dialogue forms the basis for virtually all activities presented in this summary.



Public art and new lighting on the pedestrian bridge and underpass

Through dialogue, the bridge and underpass used by pedestrians and cyclists to travel between Näsby and the city center was noted as dark and unsafe. This dialogue ignited the process to improve safety. During the autumn of 2024, a public art commission including seven steel

sculptures with LED-lighting incased within were installed on 'Bangårdsbron', the pedestrian bridge and overpass.

The public art commission, created by Danish artist Karoline Larsen, is called "Stadens Puls/The City's Pulse" and was chosen by knowledgeable public officials together with a citizen jury which was invited to join the public procurement process. At night the sculptures light up to create a safer passage. The bridge was also renovated with new asphalt and improved lighting. Citizens celebrated the inauguration in the fall of 2024. The citizen jury was responsible for cutting the ribbon to the newly renovated bridge.



The underpass just after the pedestrian bridge was also repainted and new LED-lighting was installed. The underpass is now fitted with motion sensors that detect approaching pedestrians and brighten the tunnel, as well as dim lighting which is always on when it is dark.

This public art commission was co-financed by Urban Community Development Näsby, the Department of Culture and Leisure through private art grants and the Department of Technical Services.



Hjärtebackes park's outdoor stage and ecosystem services

In collaboration with the Department of Technical Services, Urban Development Näsby worked on several improvements in Hjärtebackes park, located in the heart of Näsby. Based on dialogue suggestions from residents, a new outdoor stage was built to provide the community with a meeting place

as well as shelter from bad weather.

The newly built outdoor stage was inaugurated with the help of over a dozen local NGOs in the spring of 2024. During the celebration around 150 visitors from the local community could try all kinds of different activities held by the local NGOs as a way to reach out to new groups. The new outdoor stage provides community events, as well as functioning as a form av outdoor classroom for local schools and preschools. A portable sound system with microphones was purchased for the inauguration, which is now available to rent for free for local community activities.



In order to ensure the new outdoor stage would be used for community events for the whole community, the project organized a series of free drop-in activities held by local NGOs each weekend for the next three months. This was a way to introduce residents to the many ways this new public space can be used, improving safety.

In addition to building the outdoor stage, the project also focused on improving local ecosystem services in the park. This includes the installation of bird- and bat houses built by local students, as well as a series of educational illustrated signs with information about ecosystem services citizens can find within the park.



Gamlegården's park and participatory art project "Impressions"

Through dialogue, Näsby's youth requested a new meeting place in Gamlegården's park, which was built in 2024. This sub-project was developed by the public construction company in collaboration with Urban Community Development Näsby.

The meeting place is well lit and was designed partly by Näsby's youth who, through dialogue chose the outdoor furniture and its placement. The outdoor lighting includes a system where the lights can be changed to all different colors, for instance for special events. The meeting place is a complement to the large playground for children and the sport fields which fill the rest of Gamlegården's park.



In the after-school project "Impressions", children between the ages 8-12 made stepping-stones which were later installed as a permanent part of the construction of the new meeting place.

The stepping-stones were made in recycled buckets from local restaurants using leftover concrete from the local company 'Starka Betong', a concrete manufacturer.

The children made patterns in the stones through a series of workshops, using

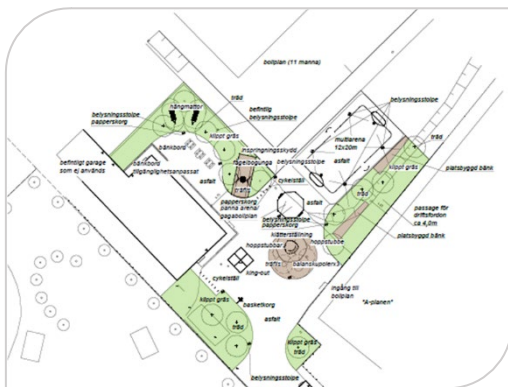


toys, local flora and their own hands to make impressions. The name of the art project “Impressions” mirrors both the methods used by children as well as the permanent impression their artwork made on the public space.

The process of creating stepping-stones was documented and incorporated in an exhibition of Kristianstad’s contemporary history, on display at the regional museum in Kristianstad’s city center. The new meeting place was inaugurated together with around 70 residents in the fall of 2024. Youth from the neighborhood were in charge of planning the inauguration activities and children that participated in the art project gave short speeches.

Näsby’s sport field

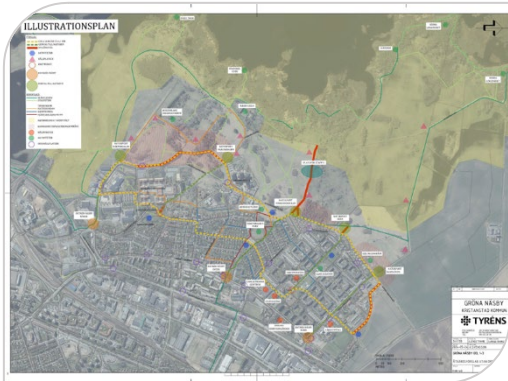
Early on in the project, residents of Näsby pointed out that Näsby’s sport field needed renovation. Urban Community Development Näsby discussed the needs of the field with the children and adolescents of local sports teams and started the development process.



A few youth leaders helped identify the needs of the field during a site visit. The sport field needed an area dedicated to spontaneous activity, bleachers for audiences, more bicycle parking and better lighting. This formed the base of the first drafts for development.

About 15 children and adolescents were then given the chance to review the first sketch and make suggestions on how to adjust the planned improvements to the sports field. This sketch, along with the suggestions of Näsby’s youth, was later used as a point of departure in the planning and design of a new activity area next to the sport field.

A multisport arena, climbing equipment, outdoor seating, tables, planted trees and outdoor lighting for increased safety is planned for construction taking place during 2025.



Green Näsby

During 2024, the municipal committee worked on a master plan for the development of Näsby's green spaces, aimed at connecting the residential areas of Näsby with the bordering nature preserve 'Näsby fält'. The master plan "Green Näsby" provides an overview and comprehensive development plan with the goal of making

green spaces more accessible for residents.

The study includes a long-term plan for the development and improvements of pathways, signs, entryways, new public activities and visitor destinations with Näsby's nature in focus. The proposed improvements aim to attract more residents to green areas by focusing on making it easy to find your way to nature, both for amateurs and nature enthusiasts.



Neighborhood safety walks

Taking care of the outdoor environments is important in terms of ensuring residents feel safe when they are in public spaces. The project therefore organized neighborhood safety walks. Safety walks aim to identify public environments that feel unsafe for residents and propose ways to improve the public spaces.

Neighborhood safety walks are carried out in small groups with participants from the municipality, local NGOs and residents. During the evening, these groups systematically divided the neighborhood into sub-sections and documented areas in public spaces that feel unsafe with pictures and suggestions to improve the situation. After the safety walks, the results were compiled into a list of local improvements, later delegated to the different responsible property owners and municipal departments in a collaborative effort to improve safety.



URBACT Good Practice

Urban Community Development Näsby has been elected as one of 116 “URBACT Good Practice” in Europe and one of only two projects in Sweden during 2024. URBACT Good practice is a stamp of quality which elevates initiatives and methods of sustainable urban development.

URBACT’s jury as impactful, participatory, integrated and applicable in other EU countries. The jury consists of representatives from different EU Countries with various competences of sustainable urban development, architecture and design.

This acknowledgment is awarded to initiatives which are judged by

Social activities and local networks



Näsby’s NGO network

During the summer of 2022 Urban Community Development Näsby organized the first network meeting for non-governmental organizations (NGOs) active in Näsby neighborhood. Näsby’s NGO network is now an established forum for collaboration with over 20 participating organizations and regular meetings.

The intention of the network is to strengthen collaboration between the public sector and civil society as well as between different organizations active in Näsby.

Several guests have been invited to the network meetings, following requests from participating organizations. Invited guests has served to open new contacts for NGOs and the local community of Näsby. The police, Gamlegården’s library, the youth social work team, and the Regional Administrative Board are some examples of guest that have participated in local NGO network meetings during 2024.

The NGO network was also supported in the start-up process of an umbrella organization which is dedicated to the development of Näsby and Gamlegården. The umbrella organization is now established, focusing on the following local challenges: unemployment, education, sport, crime and segregation. The elected committee consists of various organizations representing a wide range of NGOs.

The umbrella organization is independent from the municipality, but also an important future partner of Urban Community Development Näsby.



Näsby's local business network

In 2024 Urban Community Development Näsby began the formation of a network of local business as a forum for collaboration with and between local business. About 15 companies were represented in the first network meeting, and new companies have joined meetings thereafter.

At the first network meeting companies were informed about Urban Community Development Näsby and dialogue was initiated regarding the potential structure of a local business network. Topics discussed included neighborhood attractiveness, matching local the workforce to job markets and increased public safety.

Näsby's local business network will continue to develop during 2025 based on the companies' aspirations for collaboration.



Partnership with high school construction/building program

Urban Community Development Näsby began collaborating with the Näsby's local high school 'Praktiska Gymnasiet' construction/building program during 2024. After dialogue with mentors, teachers and students, a three-year partnership was initiated.

Through the partnership high-school students receive different building tasks that aim to develop public spaces in Näsby. The municipal committee and residents help identify local needs and propose new building projects to improve parks and meeting places. Students then receive an order for the project, calculate material costs, produce blueprints for construction and then build projects. The students projects are later placed in public spaces for all residents to use.

This method has been a good way to involve local youth in the development process in a hands-on way, as most students at the high school live in Näsby. In this way, youth are given a meaningful task as part of their education, and at the same time the opportunity to improve public spaces in their own neighborhood. The students that receive these tasks are those that do not have an internship at a local



company, so providing this opportunity to also get to know municipal employees can later help students when looking for jobs after high school.

Through this collaboration students have so far built 60 bat and bird houses to the nature preserve 'Näsby fält', new outdoor seating to Hjärtebackes park, frames for educational signs about ecosystem services, new benches to a local meeting place for NGO's as well as planters and bike stands.



Partnership with Youngstival "More Näsby"

Urban Development Näsby has entered into a partnership with the non-profit organization Youngstival with the goal of promoting integration and decreasing unemployment rates in Näsby.

The focus has been on bridging the gap between the unemployed, local business and authorities through different preparational efforts. Participation is voluntary but aims to elevate and develop the participants' skills in order to guide as many as possible to employment or educational opportunities.

The efforts showed positive results during 2024 according to the evaluation of group activities and individual support which were offered to the participants. "More Näsby" has created new methods and channels of communication which have led to concrete results where participants have managed to secure either employment opportunities or begin studying.



A key factor of success has been the "language support crew" made up of young volunteers who have offered support to the participants regarding language barriers during various events. This has increased the trust of the participants and led new individuals to take advantage of the support offered by the municipality.

A total of 72 individuals participated in the program, 50 of which were recurring participants. The program involved a variety of activities and courses, including workshops, local job fairs, computer courses and how to write a CV as well as Swedish language courses. After the program, 16 participants secured employment or an internship, 9 participants began studying or completed their education, 12 participants received support from local authorities and one participant started their own business.



Day Camp Adventure summer camp with Scouts

As part of a collaboration with three national NGO's, Sweden's Scout organization, 'Friluftsförbundet' promoting outdoor activity and Mentor Sweden, Näsby neighborhood was chosen as one of three cities for a project called "Outdoor Activities for Future Leaders". The project takes place

2023-2027 and is financed with private funding from 'Postkodslotteriet'. The project aims to provide children and youth from vulnerable neighborhoods with the opportunity to enjoy meaningful activities outdoors with supportive adults.

Over the summer of 2024, 15 youth between the ages of 17-18 received leadership education and a summer job opportunity as activity leaders for Day Camp Adventure. The youth activity leaders, together with municipal mentors and scout leaders, held a summer camp for 50 local children between the ages of 8-12 years.



Together, the youth leaders and children had the opportunity to try different outdoor activities, cooked lunch daily on open fire and camping stoves and learned to build wind shelters. Day Camp Adventure became very popular and all spots for summer jobs and day camp participants were filled almost immediately.

In addition to Day Camp Adventure, scouting activities were also launched in the primary and secondary schools in Näsby, with the help of school staff. For the students in the secondary school the opportunity to participate in group mentor programs organizing weekend activities with adult mentors was also started and plans to launch during 2025.



"Joy of Reading" program

Local residents, NGO's and school staff brought to the attention av Urban Development Näsby that many children need additional support to succeed in school. Many students have parents that lack education or language skills needed to help their children with homework. As a result of this, the project initiated a local program called "Joy of Reading" in collaboration with Kristianstad University's teacher program, a local integration organization, and staff from local library and schools.

The Joy of Reading program provides drop-in story reading and structured discussions for small children together with their parents, with the aim of inspiring children to read and improving language skills. A pilot program was launched providing drop-in activities two evenings a week during the first half year. The program uses volunteers who read for small groups and the selection of the books is provided by local library staff.

The pilot program was well visited and appreciated by both children and parents, leading to a continuation of the program through public grants which enabled the employment of a coordinator within the municipality. The coordinator was then able to focus on further development and implementation of this program so the project could reach more children and parents.



Biking and swimming courses for women

Since 2023 Urban Development Näsby has held courses to teach women how to ride a bike in collaboration with a local NGO for immigrant women. In the first two years of the program over 160 women have learned to ride a bike, an important skill for daily life as well as an important step for many women in the cultural integration process.

In addition to the bike courses held two evenings a week during spring, summer and fall, women are also provided with job skills and information from municipal services with the aim of increasing integration in the work force. Many of the participants now bike to studies, work and leisure activities, benefiting both the environment and gender equality. Women who have learned to bike through the course now teach other women as new participants arrive.



Inspired by the success of the bike course, during 2024 a course for women to learn to swim was launched. The swimming course was held at the local swimming pool together with municipal swim teachers as well as a cultural interpreter from the local NGO. In the first swimming course 20 women learned to swim.

Spots for participants were quickly filled as many women from the neighborhood are unable to swim and do not use the public facilities to the same degree as other groups. The popularity and success of the swimming course led to further collaboration with a local sports organization who now provide financial support to the local women's organization for the course.

Aside from the importance in terms of societal integration, many participants felt the course provided a place for healing, as many of the women had recently arrived to Sweden from war ridden countries. The swimming courses also provided a place for relaxation and social integration.



Senior Sport School Näsby

Senior Sport School is a program for older residents who are given the opportunity to test different kinds of physical activity and go to lectures about a healthy lifestyle during a ten week long program. Senior Sport School exists in other areas of the city, but due to language and cultural barriers had not been launched in Näsby earlier. In

2024, in collaboration with several local municipal services, the local hospital and NGOs the program was curated to local needs and implemented in Näsby.

In order to ensure the participation of Näsby residents, a cultural liaison provided support to ordinary staff during the whole program. Though the courses and activities were held in Swedish, residents were able to ask questions in their mother tongues. Participants were also introduced to a range of NGOs who held different activities throughout the program. Roughly 20 seniors participated in the program and the method of using a cultural liaison proved to be a successful way to reach new groups in the neighborhood and increase immigrants' participation in social programs.



Swedish Language Cafe in City Hall

During a study visit to the Näsby neighborhood, local politicians were invited to participate in a weekly Swedish language café held by a local women's organization. During this visit local politicians invited the participants to come to the City Hall building for a tour and language café in the offices where civil servants and politicians

in the municipality work.

During the visit around 25 women from Näsby were given a guided tour of City Hall, accompanied by the top politicians in Kristianstad. After the tour a Swedish language cafe was held in where residents were given the opportunity to have direct contact with decision makers in the city.



Biannual flea market and trash clean-up day

The popular biannual flea market in Näsby is the largest outdoor second-hand market in the region. It is organized by Urban Community Development Näsby twice a year, once in the spring and once in the autumn. Residents gather in Gamlegården's park to sell second-hand goods out of their

car trunks.

In 2024, the flea market attracted about 250–280 local sellers and 5 000–7 000 visitors to Gamlegården on each occasion. The market offers second bargains, food trucks and activities. The intention of the flea market is to create a sustainable event in Näsby which can benefit the whole city. The market is advertised widely

and attracts participants and visitors from the whole region. The goal is to become the largest car-trunk flea market in Sweden.



The flea market is a collaboration between the public waste management company, the public housing company, the tenants' association, local NGO Youngstival and Näsby homeowner's association.



A trash clean-up day was organized in collaboration with Näsby's local NGOs during the summer of 2024. Roughly 140 residents and NGO members participated, most of which were children, along with sports team leaders and parents.

The participants collected about 60 kilograms of garbage. An outdoor pizza party was organized in the evening to celebrate the collaborative effort of cleaning up the neighborhood.



International United Nations Day

International United Nations Day is held yearly on the 24th of October. In 2024 United Nations Day was held in Näsby at the local secondary school. United Nations Day celebrates the creation of the UN and important topics from Agenda 2030 such as democracy, peace, poverty and children's rights are discussed.

During this evening event for the community there were speeches, a poetry slam, a concert by local youth and a participatory workshop where children collaboratively painted a flag. The lunchroom at the local secondary school was filled with roughly 140 visitors, providing a forum for both celebration and debate to raise awareness for important societal issues.



Toy exchange at the local library

One of the most frequent suggestions from residents for neighborhood activities is a way for children to borrow free toys. During the fall break from school the project arranged a second-hand toy exchange activity at the local library.

The toy exchange provided local families with the chance to bring used toys they no longer needed and exchange them for other used toys. The purpose was to create an environmentally friendly and socially accessible way for kids in the neighborhood to renew their toys boxes. Around 20 families took advantage of the activity and were additionally provided with information about Fritidsbanken, a local service where residents can loan sports equipment for free.

For more information

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