

## **HOLISTIC METHOD FOR URBAN REGENERATION – MUNICIPALITY OF AALBORG, 31.3.2017**

### **GOOD PRACTICE SUMMARY**

#### **The problems and proposed solutions**

This 'good practice' addresses neighbourhoods in large and medium-sized cities with several kinds of problems. They are situated outside the areas of dynamic urban development growth and often with problems concerning reputation and identity. This means that the areas are not usually seen as attractive residential areas. These areas need special attention and drive from the municipality. Some of them were planned in the post-war era, where the main focus was to separate functions and mobility forms. Now they are challenged by outdated and unsustainable structures for retail and mobility and a lack of attractive meeting points and urban spaces. Main roads are dividing the areas into more or less isolated and monofunctional fragments. The neighbourhoods can be characterised by social vulnerability and a great number of cultural backgrounds in the population, and often they are characterised by a lack of inclusion and ownership to the community and a lack of common identity connected to the physical surroundings.

#### **Timeframe, dates, important milestones**

The two projects which are presented here, are Skalborg and Tornhøj.

The planning process in Skalborg started in 2014 with registrations and dialogue with citizens, partners and investors. Workshops, meetings and guided walking and cycling tours in the area was held during 2015. Temporary activities (for example painting the tunnel by the school under the main road Hobrovej) happened in 2015 and 2016, and a land use plan has been developed and adopted in 2016. Right now several development projects are under way, and the project manager is busy trying to keep up with the communication effort parallel and integrated with the local planning.

The planning process in Tornhøj started in 2012 with the suburban competition 'City in Between' held by Aalborg Municipality and Realdania Foundation in cooperation – as a part of the campaign by Realdania: 'Suburbs for the future' with the ambition of finding strategies for sustainable urban regeneration. In 2014 a preliminary examination took place where the project was developed. In 2015 and 2016 the commitment process and citizen involvement, events and several temporary activities have taken place parallel with the local planning process. Right now in 2017 the construction projects have started, but the planning and citizen involvement process goes on.

#### **Link to the commitment strategy in Tornhøj**

The document where the commitment strategy is explained in details (in danish but with very good illustrations) is here – the headline is 'Aalborg East, densification of neighbourhood centre and upgrading of tunnel connection':

[http://www.aalborg.dk/media/6268313/forundersoegelsesrapport\\_med-commitmentproces.pdf](http://www.aalborg.dk/media/6268313/forundersoegelsesrapport_med-commitmentproces.pdf)

#### **The main outputs for achieving objective, innovative elements**

Strategic plans focused on visions and action plans including investments and partnerships are main outputs of the practice. This has been developed through a 'rethinking' process including both physical environments, local network and cohesion and storytelling and identity. Local and political ownership and partnerships with trustful relations between the municipality and local stakeholders and investors have been developed, and this has brought security for investors which is very important for the sustainable regeneration process.

In Tornhøj the most important innovative outputs are:

- Rethinking of Tornhøj area into an inclusive and diverse neighbourhood with urban life
- Turning a tunnel into an attractive urban space
- Turning an existing 'backside path' Astrupstien into the main street in the neighbourhood with public transport (a driverless bus which will connect north and south), urban spaces and meeting places. New functions turn their entrance to Astrupstien and existing function develop and rebuild their facilities.
- Different housing types – densification which will support urban life and feeling of security

In Skalborg the most important innovative outputs are:

- Rethinking of Skalborg have led to an inclusive strategic plan for the future which is attractive for the citizens and gives security and trust for the investors.
- New collaborations and a positive energy in the neighbourhood
- Two housing projects under development – spots of importance to fulfil the new vision of Skalborg
- Painting of the tunnel was a small investment with a large impact, it means a lot for the image and identity of Skalborg
- A new local centre which will connect different parts in Skalborg is under development

### **Results achieved, monitoring**

No monitoring process have been going on yet, but it is discussed right now to do an evaluation of the Tornhøj commitment process.

### **Potential for re-use and improvement**

The model could be interesting for many other European cities with similar or corresponding kinds of neighbourhoods. First of all the overall goal to create synergy using existing, limited, resources and to attract interest from investors is shared by many cities. But also the approach and focus on special identities and storytelling in the neighbourhoods is involving for citizens.

The model can be adjusted and modified to different urban situations, kinds of actors and the available resources.

### **PHOTOS**

The two attached photos show examples of temporary activities used strategically in the planning and commitment processes in Skalborg and Tornhøj Area.

1. The opening of the tunnel in Skalborg, painted by hundreds of school children together with a street artist, on a workshop October 22. 2015
2. Visualisation of the tunnel turned into a bridge – used as basis for the commitment process and citizen involvement. October 31. 2016

## **OTHER MATERIAL**

<http://www.tv2nord.dk/nyheder/29-10-2015/1930/farverig-forvandling?autoplay=1#player>

English summary to the link above: a feature in the local tv-station TV-Nord about the workshop in Skalborg on October 22. 2015 where hundreds of school children painted the tunnel under the main road and barrier through the neighbourhood Hobrovej. The headline of the feature is 'Urban Regeneration with graffiti'. The project manager explains the project and the context and how this is a new way of democracy because of the way where people get directly involved in the regeneration. We see some of the painting going on. Some of the happy and very committed school children are interviewed – they underline how funny it is to paint the tunnel and that they will be reminded of this every day when they walk through. A girl says that she and her friends have had the habit to hold their noses when they were running through the tunnel because it was so murky. The children expresses that they now find it inviting and 'cosy'. Also the artist is interviewed in the feature. He pinpoints that the wildness and bustle of the design is what creates positive life. He is also explaining how the children proudly show their parents exactly which part they painted in the tunnel.