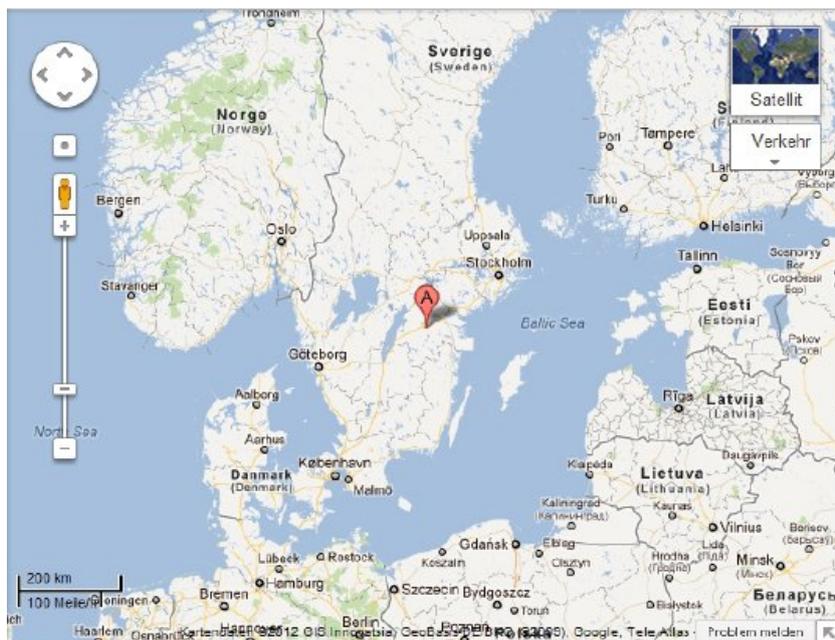


## 1. Introduction to Linköping

Linköping is Sweden's fifth largest municipality with approximately 145,000 inhabitants. The municipalities of Linköping and Norrköping, together with the areas surrounding these cities, constitute the fourth largest metropolitan region. Linköping is situated in the county of Östergötland, south of Stockholm, Sweden's capital city. The municipality has a university hospital, a university and high-tech industry headed by Saab AB in the field of aerospace. This is a prosperous region that demonstrates steady growth.



The Municipality has ambitious plans and, in the next few years, will invest even more in improving the infrastructure and in linking up the city's residential areas with each other. Active work is being done on environment programmes and green corridors as well as on the development and improvement of the city's waterways. The Municipality is a major employer, with almost 9,000 employees.



## The Green City

Linköping is one of the greenest cities in Sweden, but far from all of the green areas are usable or are actively used by the citizens. The city's total parks area is almost 2,000 ha. There is an average of 136.2 m<sup>2</sup> of park area per inhabitant. By making more parkland usable and useful, people's sense of freedom can be increased considerably. Linköping Municipality puts considerable work into maintaining and developing the green areas in its remit. The municipal goals state: "Everyone must feel that Linköping is characterized by a vibrant, varied landscape with parks and green areas that are well cared for. Everyone should feel involved and responsible."

A well-frequented public park generates social, economic and ecological sustainability

One of Linköping's most popular parks is a public park dating back more than one hundred and fifty years (the Garden Society Park). It was established as a garden society and urban park to encourage citizens to grow their own vegetables. Since its inception, this park has been the hub of the city and an important meeting place for its residents. In addition to the park having taught people about gardening, there are a restaurant, areas for sporting activities and lawns for picnics.



Every summer there are concerts, an outdoor cinema, gardening and art installations, and many events with market stalls and handicrafts. The park is one of two remaining garden

societies in Sweden and, with its attractive layout and well-filled programme of activities, holds an appeal for the town's own citizens as well as for visitors and tourists. The park provides Linköping with added social, economic and ecological value, all invaluable as regards health, recreation and opportunities for social contact, creating in the citizens a real sense of involvement and pride.

#### Reduce social exclusion in the city districts

Linköping's Environment and Community Development Department works intensively on strategic action plans to improve and reinforce the urban development policy. In a statement of intent that the city has signed together with the government, the following goals should be met in the work on developing district plans:

- Fewer marginalized people in the districts marked by social exclusion
- Fewer city districts marked by social exclusion
- More city districts and larger towns in the region, to be characterized by economic growth and sustainable development, in order to become more competitive.



## 2. Development of new district park to support the regeneration of Skäggetorp housing area

### Basic development strategies for changes in districts

The Skäggetorp residential area outside the centre of Linköping is today characterized by a poor living environment, social exclusion, high unemployment and ill-health. The estate was developed in the 1960s, when many similar kinds of large housing estates were built in Sweden. These districts are now in a state of disrepair, in great need of development and modernization. A number of fundamental development strategies have been drawn up in the improvement plans for Skäggetorp.

Entirety - Skäggetorp should be an integrated part of the Municipality and of the fourth metropolitan region. District development has its focus on Skäggetorp, with the whole of Linköping and neighbouring areas as a resource. This is one stage in developing the whole of Linköping into a more inclusive community. The municipal development process includes exchanges of experience and interplay with other development areas in Linköping and with Norrköping.

Empowerment - The work should be a process in which individuals are given the chance to transform their feeling of powerlessness into empowerment. This is based on belief in people's abilities which, in the longer term, means that they can take control over their own lives. Empowerment means that, together, people can develop strategies in order to promote their own interests. Development is achieved together with people, not for people. To create sustainability in a community, the citizens have to be included in the creation of the solutions. Independent players and projects can only facilitate and encourage this by offering tools and by supporting people in their current circumstances. The work involves developing Skäggetorp together with the people who live and work there.

In the endorsement process among the people of Skäggetorp, a desire emerged for greater participation and better interplay in the most immediate vicinity - the stairwell. People want to get

to know their neighbours. Increased involvement can start with what is closest at hand, the most ordinary.

Self-powered activities - many initiatives that have been highlighted are based on being able in the long term to be run by the residents, the social economy, or companies in Skäggetorp.

Gender perspective - Girls and boys, men and women all have different needs and pre-requisites, which must be considered when implementing the proposed initiatives.

People with disabilities - all initiatives for children, youths and adults must take into consideration any special needs of people with different types of disabilities.

Long-term approach - The development initiatives selected are expected to have long-term effects, not least as a result of the empowerment perspective.

Economic viability - A fundamental problem in Skäggetorp is an extremely low level of employment. The development work will give high priority to initiatives that can lead to increased employment for residents of Skäggetorp and economic viability for the district.

Creation of new district park with help from residents

As with the development of an active, educative park right at the centre of Linköping one hundred and fifty years ago, the ambition now is to have the same goals and intentions for the new district park in Skäggetorp. Backed by the adopted development strategies and with the positive experience from the work with the Gardening Society, the aim is now to get the residents of Skäggetorp involved and to start a dialogue with them.

After an initial stage in 2009-2010, a dialogue was held in the area, with societies, church, school and municipality creating a forum at which the residents' wishes were highlighted. This resulted in the development of an activity arena for spontaneous sports, which is now located within the area.

## Prerequisites for change

At the heart of Skäggetorp there is a long, narrow, open green area stretching over more than 6 ha. The centre of the park now boasts an arena for spontaneous sports and this is very popular, not least with the young people of the area. Just as The Garden Society Park has its role in the city centre, work now is on developing the rest of the park into an active district park. The district park should be able to contribute to employment, to offer social meeting places and be a centre for events for the local residents as well as



for visitors from other areas. The goal is now to develop a district park that is attractive and will instil involvement and pride in the area. This means committing the residents of Skäggetorp to the cause, with an active dialogue preceding the planning of the new park.

Members of the municipal staff as well as different associations and organisations in Skäggetorp have expressed a wish to develop a creative, active park that will provide spontaneous meeting places and the opportunity for recreation and health-promoting activities for residents of the area and of nearby areas.

Breaking the low employment trend in Skäggetorp must be a priority. Activities that can be run by the residents should be encouraged and supported. Future development initiatives must have the goal of generally increasing the economic viability of the whole district. The involvement of the residents in their neighbourhood will increase the interest of property

owners and managers who can see the benefits of reducing relocation and vandalization and of increasing wellbeing, social protection and a sense of purpose among the people.

### 3. Goals for regeneration of the park

#### Attractive city

The aim of the project is to develop the area into an attractive, vibrant district park with a clear-cut garden identity. The park is to be developed into a year-round meeting place, with its overall perspective striving to unit architecture and design with environmental awareness and horticulture. The general structure of the district park should be obvious, but still with a good variety of interesting, attractive, individual elements. The transformation of the district park into something unique and of value for the citizens of Linköping will contribute to the city's sustainable profile.



#### Economic sustainability

An important goal is to strengthen garden tourism in the region, creating a positive economic flow. The nearby shopping centre, regarded as one of the largest in the country, can have significance from a regional tourism perspective. Breaking the low employment trend is a goal that has priority. The ambition of developing a new park with clear user involvement is one element in the effort to stop social isolation and also an active attempt to create work in the form of a cooperative for gardening, a restaurant and other projects that result in activity and social interaction. We at Linköping Municipality believe

that the new park can provide new employment, thus contributing to sustainable economic development in the district.

#### Social sustainability

The general intention of the park's development is to create a new attraction that will increase Skäggetorp's appeal as a housing area. Residents' participation will increase their sense of empowerment and the development initiatives are expected to have long-term effects. With its new content, the district park will be a place that will accommodate activities and events. A place for social interaction at every level.

#### 4. Skäggetorp and Hybrid Parks

Parks are of great importance as meeting places, creating considerable added value in a city or region. Against the background of the positive effects generated by the established park, The Garden Society, in the centre of Linköping, we now want to develop a new district park in Linköping for future generations, with the same content and ambition as were involved one hundred and fifty years ago.

The chief goal is, in dialogue with the residents, to create a modern park that promotes horticulture, social interaction, jobs and eco-friendly education. We believe that there is a significant need for an exchange of knowledge as regards the innovative development of district parks. We therefore want to share the process we are undergoing of building up a lasting, vibrant dialogue with the residents of the district. Linköping's Environment and Community Development wishes both to contribute to and to discuss user involvement within the framework of the INTERREG IV C project Hybrid Parks. There are numerous people who have a great deal of knowledge and expertise in this field and it is our ambition to gather and make use of a wide spectre of related competence. This will give us excellent prerequisites for succeeding with our ambition to create a modern socially, economically and ecologically sustainable park.

More information about Hybrid Parks and INTERREG IVC  
[www.hybridparks.eu](http://www.hybridparks.eu)