

'Quality maintenance of public and private space' and 'Street furniture'

LIVEABLE CITY

Report
**Transnational
Workshop**

Interreg. IIIB
Liveable City

Odense
25th—26th
September 2003





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Intro

Intro

The 25th – 26th September 2003 Odense arranged a transnational workshop for the partner cities in The Liveable City: Trondheim, Norwich, Lincoln, Emden, Gent and Odense.

The theme of the workshop was:

‘Quality maintenance of public and private space’
and ‘Street furniture’



Helle Baker
Alaine Ottens
Kristina Edrén
Lisa Meisner
Ole Steen Sørensen
(Ib Doktor, Kaj Brinkmann
John Hager, Kurt Kiilerich Frederiksen)



Mike Loveday
Grenville Ireland
George Ishmael



Andrew Mindham
John Cairns



Jo De Coninck
Bruno Minnebo



Johannes Amman
Ulrich Fortmann



Per-Arne Tefre

'Quality maintenance of public and private space' and 'Street furniture'

LIVEABLE CITY

Thursday
25th September

Introduction to the urban design
policy in Odense presented
by Helle Baker

Walking tour of the city centre

Group discussions



The urban design policy in Odense

On Thursday, 25th September 2003 we met at Odense Castle. Helle Baker, the Project Manager of the Liveable City in Odense, presented the urban design policy in Odense.

The presentation described the last years' strategies and policies, which have been used as supplementary tools in the development of Odense city centre. These are:

- A pedestrian research 'City space and city life'
- The District Plan
- The Traffic Plan
- The Illumination Plan
- Design Manual
- Paving Strategy (presently being prepared)

With the objective of achieving an even better city:
The Liveable City

After the introduction to the design policy in Odense presented by Helle Baker, the project manager of the Liveable City in Odense, we went for a walking tour in the city centre of Odense. See the description of the tour on the following pages. The route is shown on the enclosed map.



Flower festival at Flakhaven



New paving at the pedestrian street Vestergade.



Well cover designed by artist Sonja Brandes. Shows the eight-legged horse Sleipner of the Norse mythology. The well cover is to be placed in Vestergade



Walking tour

Walking tour



1:

Skulkenborg

A small parking space situated off Th.B. Thriges Gade. Recently renovated with cycle path and street furniture.

2:

Fisketorvet

The old market place for selling fish. Here we saw examples of safe bike parking plus a bicycle counter.

Ozone Bicycle Rack: An urban analogy to leaning your bike against a tree in the forest, addressing the problem of theft at the same time with a built-in bike locking system.

Safe House: Park your bike here to avoid bad weather and the risk of theft. You can also leave heavy bags etc. with the bike.

3:

Flakhaven (town hall square) and Klingenberg (central urban square) At Flakhaven we saw the town hall and the cathedral, and Klingenberg, which has recently been renovated with new paving, lighting and street furniture.

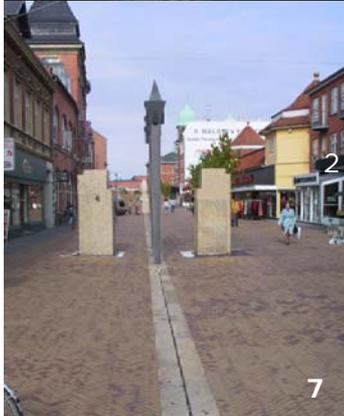


Walking tour

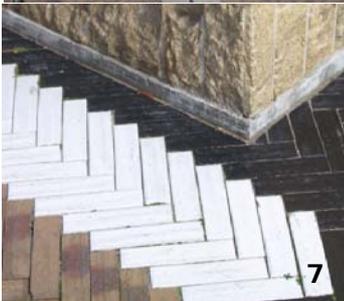
Walking tour ... continued



4:
Vestergade
The main pedestrian street in Odense is presently being renewed with new tiles and street furniture.



5:
Kino Pladsen
At Kino Pladsen we saw yet an example of bike parking, where people can leave their bikes sheltered from the rain. We also had a look at the fountain.



6:
Vintapperstræde
Vintapperstræde is a privately owned passage for pedestrians only. Several shops and restaurants are situated in this street.



7:
Kongensgade
We visited the renovated part of the pedestrian street Kongensgade. We looked at the new paving, street furniture and a sculpture made by artist Mogens Møller. Water runs from the sculpture to reduce traffic noise.

8:
The Railway station
From Kongensgade we went to the railway station. We saw the old as well as the new station. We travelled by train from Odense to Fruens Bøge (a forest south of the city), which gave us the opportunity to look at some of the graffiti along the railway line.



Group 1: **The importance of the clean city**

Ulrich Fortmann (Emden)
Kurt Kiillerich Frederiksen (Odense)
Bruno Minnebo (Gent)
John Hager (Odense)
Kaj Brinkmann (Odense)
Alaine Ottens (Odense)

Group 2: **Keeping the city clean – how to include interested**

Jo De Coninck (Gent)
George Ishmael (Norwich)
Ib Doktor (Odense)
Lisa Meisner (Odense)

Group 3: **The identity of the city expressed through choice of street furniture**

Grenville Ireland (Norwich)
Mike Loveday (Norwich)
Johannes Amman (Emden)
John Cairns (Lincoln)
Andrew Mindham (Lincoln)
Per-Arne Tefre (Trondheim)
Ole Steen Sørensen (Odense)
Helle Baker (Odense)
Kristina Edrén (Odense)



Group discussions

Group 1

The importance of a clean city

Ulrich Fortmann (Emden)
Kurt Kiilerich Frederiksen (Odense)
Bruno Minnebo (Gent)
John Hager (Odense)
Kaj Brinkmann (Odense)
Alaine Ottens (Odense)

We discussed the importance of a clean city and decided to concentrate on four main reasons for keeping the city clean:

Safety
Promotion (attract tourists)
Health
Improve life quality

We also discussed HOW to keep the city clean and listed some ideas:

Fighting graffiti
Keeping the city clean
Maintaining public (green) space
Safety

Fighting Graffiti

Preventive campaigns ctr. Art campaigns (legalize via art)
Odense and Gent approach the problem in 2 different ways. See more details in Group 2.

Keeping the city clean

Early morning cleaning
Odense has work forces out every morning to clean litter, etc. from the city centre.

Posters
Special poster pillars, places for hanging up posters (free of charge)

Anti pyramid plastic cover on transformers, providing a surface to prevent posters from hanging

Rules for hanging up posters in public space



Group discussions

Group

1

... continued

Maintaining public (green) space

Grass instead of bushes (easy maintenance)

Emden has had to cut back on its green spaces due to lack of money, and thereby lack of maintenance.

Black permeable carpet

Gent uses this solution in its green spaces, where the carpet is placed over the earth, thus preventing weeds. Plants are placed in small holes, cut in the carpet. The carpet allows rainwater through, appears like soil, and does not rot.

Competition: I.e. the most beautiful house front

Gent's competition entails e.g. planting a creeper adjacent to the house front. The creeper is paid by the council, and is maintained by the houseowner.

Dog droppings

Some have introduced bag campaigns, for dog-owners to clean up after the dog, others provide actual spaces as dog toilets. The problem still remains.

Emden mentioned a negative side to the above points concerning a clean environment, in that some citizens feel that the council should maintain the spaces (they pay taxes !) rather than the houseowners. There is an attitude problem.

Safety

Alcohol misusers and drug addicts

Drug problem – needles etc. (no solution!). The problem still remains.



Group discussions

Group 2

How to include interested parties

Jo De Coninck (Gent)
George Ishmael (Norwich)
Ib Doktor (Odense)
Lisa Meisner (Odense)

In this group we discussed how to include interested parties when working for a clean city. We found out that the procedures are very different in Odense, Norwich and Gent. For instance in Odense graffiti is looked upon as vandalism and therefore the solutions here are different to those in Gent and Norwich.

Graffiti

Shared database

Ib Doktor told about the shared database being developed in Odense. The shared database contains photos of graffiti for the police to recognize the graffiti makers. People from all over the country report graffiti to the database and thereby create a solid starting point for the police to work with when chasing the graffiti makers.

Removing signatures

Graffiti makers sign their graffiti to show off to other graffiti makers. Removing the name tag/the signature from the graffiti is effective because it leaves the graffiti worthless. Taking away the signature means taking away the "identity" from the graffiti. With no signature the graffiti is anonymous and therefore of no value.

Graff-off team

George Ishmael told about the Graff-off team solution in Norwich. The graff-off team removes graffiti as fast as possible to avoid new "graffiti-attacks", thus removing the graffiti with the same speed as it is made

Special places for graffiti

Jo De Coninck explained that in Gent they have special places for graffiti. Sort of an "if-you-can't-beat-them-join-them"-solution, as Jo said. Having special places for graffiti is a way of controlling it and trying to reduce graffiti to a few places. Having a place where graffiti makers can be creative and live out their graffiti-dreams might prevent them from making graffiti other places in town, where it would ruin public buildings etc.



Group 2 ... continued

Group discussions

Clean city

Action clean neighbourhood

George Ishmael told about "Action clean neighbourhood". Involving the citizens in keeping the city clean creates a certain responsibility and commitment among the inhabitants. Making people proud of their neighbourhood by creating a certain identity as a community, saying "WE" care for our neighbourhood, improves the surroundings. Experience shows that people take great interest in keeping their neighbourhood clean. A clean neighbourhood attracts people, makes people stay and makes them feel safe.

City guards

Jo De Coninck told about the city guards. In Gent the city guards are elderly people who work on a volunteer basis in town. They wear uniforms and are therefore recognisable elements in the street. Their job is to help people and look out for the city. They don't have the authority to arrest people – they are not to be looked upon as police men – but they can address people and ask them to pick up the litter they just threw on the street, give parking tickets etc. The city guards have a preventive function in the city centre plus gives people a feeling of safety.

Competitions

In the group we agreed that it is a good idea to involve people through competitions. Competitions make people take an interest in a subject they maybe wouldn't think about otherwise. George experienced in Norwich how for instance school children took great interest in a "clean city"-competition, and how they worked with the subject in school because of the competition. Hereby you have the chance to influence the children to keep the city clean – and not only by telling them, but by making them understand the importance of a clean city.

Database with questions about public domain

Jo told about a database in Gent with questions and remarks about the public domain from the citizens. The idea is that citizens can point out problem areas in town. They can be the eyes and the ears of the public domain. By having the citizens point out problem areas in town the people working with this area are becoming aware of where to set in. The policy is to either take care of the problem or respond to the sender within a period of 30 days. The database involves the citizens and makes them take an interest in their surroundings. Taking an interest in your surroundings creates an awareness and is the first step to a clean city.



Group discussions

Group 3

The identity of the city expressed through choice of street furniture

Grenville Ireland (Norwich)
Mike Loveday (Norwich)
John Cairns (Lincoln)
Andrew Mindham (Lincoln)
Johannes Amman (Emden)
Per-Arne Tefre (Trondheim)
Ole Steen Sørensen (Odense)
Helle Baker (Odense)
Kristina Edrén (Odense)

We discussed the identity of the city expressed through choice of street furniture. The discussion was creative and at times almost philosophic. We mostly talked about uniqueness, identity and quality of cities.

Uniqueness

- The unique city differs from other cities. I.e. through street furniture and public art. In Odense we use cast iron in a new way to create unique street furniture. Cast iron is an old but yet timeless material.
- Why unique design? You are selling a dream to the citizens. And you are branding the city.
- Costs – it is sometimes more expensive to choose the unique design compared with shelf-design. In the long run quality pays off both in proportion to maintenance as well as uniqueness. Uniqueness as in selling the dream of a special city, differing from other cities, pleasing both citizens and tourists.

Identity

- We raised the question: Should we use the same design overall?
- Uniform streets prevent creativity and signal lack of initiatives. Uniform streets also give the impression that one city copies the other.
- The identity of the city can be expressed through street furniture especially made for the city. This prevents the use of mass produced items.
- Certain areas within one city may have its own identity.

Quality

- Quality pays off.
- But is it necessary to have a high standard overall – or should we be concentrating on one place or area? When the initiatives are spread all over they are difficult to see.
- We shortly discussed the advantages of using street furniture and design from 'the shelves'. It is an advantage that the city can replace destroyed street furniture at a lower cost/price.



Group discussions

Group 3

... continued

Communication

- The importance of communication – it is important to let the citizens know what is going on in their city. Focusing on the positive stories.
- Communication involves the citizens.

Politicians

- We discussed how politicians influence the work going on in the city. It may at times be difficult for people working with public space to carry out their ideas. They are dependent on the politicians as regards their economic, political conviction and the politicians' persuasion.
- In the group we compared the public space with private shopping centres. In the shopping centre the owner can decorate the space in a way that will please the customers. Our possibilities are limited when it comes to carrying out the ideas.

Policy (guidelines) or politics (instructions)

- We also discussed policy versus politics.
- A design policy or guidelines for design may be a solution when working with street furniture and public art. The design policy guides you and leaves room for creative thinking. (Design policy – the language of the city)
- A politic of design however limits the creativity. It may result in conformed streets.

Presenting the work

After the group discussions each group presented their work.



Per-Arne Tefre, Mike Loveday and John Cairns working in group 1



Mike Loveday presents the work of group 1

'Quality maintenance of public and private space' and 'Street furniture'

LIVEABLE CITY

Friday
26th September

GH Form
(iron foundry in Holbæk)

Roskilde University Center
(RUC)

Albertslund bus station



GH Form

GH
Form

www.ghform.dk



On Friday 26th September we travelled by bus from Odense to Holbæk (Zealand) to visit the cast iron foundry **GH Form**. GH Form was founded in 1918 and develops, produces and promotes street furniture primarily in cast iron.

Since 1995 GH Form has developed street furniture in co-operation with designers and architects such as: Nanna Ditzel, Knud Holcher, Henning Larsen and Vilhelm Lauritzen. Their overall aim is to interpret the cast iron in a new and modern way when it comes to design and function. The objective is to make the products of cast iron as beautiful and acknowledged as Danish Design in general.

While looking at the outdoor exhibition of street furniture we were met by the owners of the factory Per Wolff-Petersen and Christian Wolff-Petersen. We were divided into two groups and went on a guided tour around the



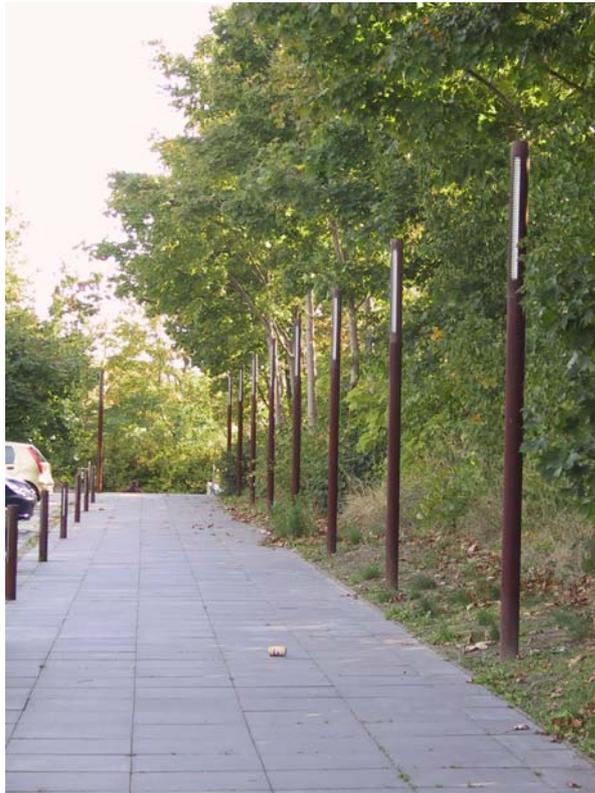
John Hager is paying attention while Per Wolff-Petersen shows one of the first steps towards a Nanna Ditzel bench.



*Alaine Ottens
Mike Loveday
George Ishmael
Grenville Ireland
Per Wolff-Petersen*

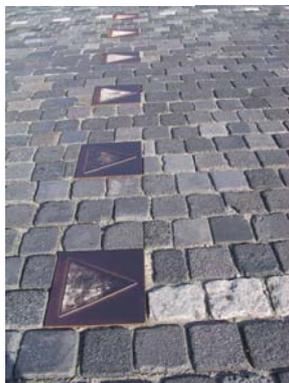


GH Form
... continued



Street furniture

After visiting the foundry Christian and Per Wolff-Petersen joined us for the rest of the day. We travelled to Roskilde University Center and to the bus station in Albertslund and saw example of GH Form street furniture in use.



*Cast iron
shark 's teeth*



Drain



*Navigation for blind
people*



Cast iron



Stone

The paving at the bus station in Albertslund consists of only two materials