



Beyond the Trend

Understanding perceived qualities of apartments over decades and design suggestion on future developments.

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Abstract

Over the last centuries the way apartments are designed has changed along with the rest of society. While some effects of this are easily measured, like square meters and production costs, research has shown that certain values are much harder to quantify. A look into these immeasurable values highlights things like daylight, openness, materials, details, flexibility, and movement, etc. Previous studies have been made that explores the extent on which architects focus on these values while designing apartments today. Looking at the span over the eras is not as common.

Through conversation with residents in apartments built over the course of the last 140 years, this thesis aims to shed light on the subjective preferences of the intended customer of the architect, which is always the person using the designed space. Interviews have been made in the homes of people with no architectural background, to see how they describe their apartments based on questions about these features. Here the discussion has been centred around these immeasurable values, and finding out whether the change in style over the years has made any difference in the advantages from these values.

As one might guess, the different styles and fashions over the years have made a change in how many of these values are focused on, as well as advancements in technology has changed the necessity of some features. Overall, however, it seems as if the preferences of residents remain rather unchanged when it does come down to these specifics. They do not always focus on the presented values, but often they do. Daylight is something all interviewees mentioned as important, but reaching a room from several access points is only talked about if brought up as a topic. A resulting design suggestion has been made based on the appreciated historical features, and on the lived reality of everyday people that use these homes without any professional knowledge in the field of architecture.

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Reading instructions

This booklet is divided into six parts, spanning the theoretical background, interviews, and finally design suggestions.

1. Introduction

Here the background and context are explained. The method, aim, delimitations, and purpose are described. As well as introducing the research questions.

2. Theory

The two main sources of background theory are explained. This gives the reader a good foundation to understand the content to come.

3. Interviews

This is the largest part of the thesis, a series of interviews containing description of apartments and the opinions of their residents on some architectural elements in them.

4. Interview conclusions

Here a brief analysis is made of the interviews, both from a architecture historical perspective and a more general viewpoint.

5. Design suggestions

With the previous parts in mind, here follows the designs made based on the interviews and theory, and the analysis of them.

6. Final thoughts

A quick final discussion on the results, and a collecting of thoughts at the end of a long master thesis.

If nothing else is stated images and diagrams are made by the author.

Dictionary

Apartment – one or several parts of a house exclusively purposed and used for living.

Architecture – According to Vitruvius, “buildings should have three attributes: firmitas, utilitas, and venustas ("strength", "utility", and "beauty")”. (Marconi C Steiner D., 2015)

Architectural features – specific details of a building that can be recognised as having a purpose, whether practical or aesthetic. Often linked in style to a distinct design period. For example; a servant’s entrance is a feature often seen in turn of the century architecture, and open plan is very typical of modern apartments.

Arkitekturupproret – a movement of people in Sweden that dislike modern style architecture. (arkitekturupproret, 2023)

Design era/ Design period – a time period where the style of architecture can be observed to follow the same patterns.

Public vs Private space – the difference in areas you are exposed to others and where you can expect privacy. Spaces can be semi-private on different levels, such as a private garden, the stairwell of an apartment building, or the parts of a home where guests are entertained.

Sustainability – the durability of resources. Something that is hardy in its environment. There are three main types of sustainability, social, economic, and ecological, all three focus on the durability of their respective field. The United Nations defines it as “meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”. (United Nations n.d.)

U-value – the level of insulation of a material.

Introduction:

Purpose/exploration

The purpose of this thesis is to explore how the architectural features and elements of apartments has changed over time and see the preferences of the current resident who most often is not an architect.

The goals of the thesis are to find if there are a certain type of features that future architects should focus on while designing apartments, as well as providing knowledge on whether there are some elements of the design that the final customer dislikes and would rather not have in their home.

The way this is done is reading existing literature and exploring the current discourse within the field of architecture and combine that with interviews with people that aren't architects who can then provide an outsider's perspective on these questions. These interviewees are selected based on a variation of apartments they live in, to provide a wide spectrum of context. This is later concluded in a set of new design suggestions for apartments based on the existing research and interviews to create a hypothetical guide for apartment design with its base in a combination of professional and layman opinions.

The main focus for the final designs is the interviews, since the goal is to find features appealing to people who are not architects and therefore might not see things from the same perspective as a professional architect would. The existing research is the basis for the interviews and a foundation for the design in areas where the interviews had inconclusive results. A bonus of the thesis is seeing the development of the skills one gains from the architecture education.

Thesis questions and objectives

The thesis questions the author will be exploring in the master thesis are:

- What does people living in apartments from different design eras find to be good and bad design choices?
- Are there design choices that have fallen away or been added over the decades that are especially liked or disliked by the residents?
- What views does people living in apartments today have on the immeasurable values defined by Kjell Forshed and Ola Nylander?
- How could a future apartment design look like based on these conclusions?

Background

There is a shortage of homes in Sweden's larger cities, and the number of built apartments does not match the population and has not done so for several years, which has led to a large backlog in houses being built compared to the number of apartments needed. (Boverket, 2018). Just as in the middle of the last century where over 400 000 people needed apartments. At that time the Swedish government granted loans to construction companies to create 1 000 000 new homes over a 10-year period. ("Nationalencyklopedin, miljonprogrammet," n.d.) This was called the "million homes program" by the masses, and the homes built during that time are still a large part of the total number of apartments in Sweden today.

The need for new homes is big, but however the nation decides to tackle it this time it is important to focus on the using customer, the residents of the buildings. There always have been voices raised that complain about houses built throughout the years. From the people talking about the uniformity and monotony of the "million home program", to the old turn of the century apartments that were deemed "a miserable place to live" by politicians of the time. (Wahlgren, 1999). Even more modern buildings have faced their fair share of criticism. In the recent article "De nya bostädernas köksvarianter är oroväckande" (2023) Ola Nylander and Kaj Granath, both researchers in architecture at Chalmers University of technology in Gothenburg, raise concerns on how the development of kitchens over the past few years are leading to small and narrow spaces that are often part of the communication in the apartments. How sometimes the kitchen is the corridor leading from the entrance to the living room.

Is it even possible to design apartments where there are no complaints? Probably not. People like different things and are drawn to different aesthetics. Our lives change and something that used to be perfect is now suddenly wrong. As the Swedish saying goes, "Personal taste is like the bottom, divided" However, when conducting interviews and mentioning the research question of this thesis, the reactions have been overwhelmingly positive. In the society of today there seems to be a notion that architects do not care about the final customer. Groups such as "arkitekturupproret" rage over the modern architects and claim that next to nothing good has been designed over the last 90 years. (arkitekturupproret, 2023)

Thankfully, this is not true. The aforementioned researchers at Chalmers are part of CBA, Centrum för Boendets Arkitektur, or the Centre for Housing Architecture, an organisation that focuses on collaboration between academia and the housing industry. Alongside doing their own research in the field, other companies contact them for help with projects that are either private or government issued. The researchers are often teachers and lecturers at Chalmers university, and there teach the next generation of architects. They also grant awards to projects that are of a particularly high standard when it comes to housing architecture. (CBA. 2023)

The view of "good architecture" is also shown to change depending on the life situation of the people asked. According to the study on Perceived quality of housing standards by Inga Britt Werner, the final customer has often different things they are looking for depending on age, family status, and work and social circumstances. Younger people often want a more modern home with convenience at its centre, and older people prefer a place with a good social community within the building. (Werner, 2003). Werner has done several other studies about lived experience and perceived quality, for example the final customers assessment on

newly produced houses in 2008, and the research project qualities in architecture and city planning. (Johansson, Rönn, & Werner, 2005), (Werner, 2008).

While the research is being done, and homes are being built, the laymen still complain about their wishes not being granted. Some, like those in arkitekturupproret, say “it was better in the good old days”, but is it really that simple? Are there good features that are present only in the turn of the century homes, or has the grand old houses just played their part? Does some of the design choices from functionalism simply not keep up with modern demands on an apartment? The “million homes” buildings are accused of being monotonous, but do they have characteristics that can’t be found today? Run of the mill modern apartments are sometimes blamed for sacrificing everything to keep the cost down in production and utilize the square meterage to the breaking point, but do they have features that put the turn of the century houses to shame?

As architects the most important person is always the eventual resident. They might not always pay us directly, but they are the people whose lives we affect. Therefore, it is important to know what they really like!

Method

Research

The study has been primarily rooted in empirical research, particularly in its initial stages. Comprehensive literature analyses were undertaken with the objective of enhancing comprehension of the existing body of knowledge within the field. This involved getting theoretical bases and exploring exemplars of prior work within the field of architecture. Through this systematic inquiry, the primary intention was to cultivate an acute understanding, enabling the effective communication of ideas and the creation of methodological constructs integral to the final thesis discussion. This phase of scholarly inquiry constituted a fundamental component of the research endeavour.

In addition to the scholarly investigation encompassing the subject matter and pertinent reference materials, a substantial side of the research entailed the carrying out of interviews with residents, alongside visits to their apartments. These interviews have served as the principal source of new insights strengthening the conclusions of the thesis. The design and execution of these interviews have been informed by and subjected to analysis through the lens of existing theoretical structures identified in the course of the literature review.

Finally, the theoretical studies and the interviews culminate in the final step, research by design. A methodology where research activities are integrated into the design process itself. The key idea is that research and design are not separate stages but are interconnected throughout the entire process. The research aspect can involve various methods, including interviews, observations, user studies, literature reviews, and more. The goal is to create designs that are not only aesthetically pleasing but also functional, user-centred, and grounded in empirical understanding. Through designing, testing, and gathering data, a set of apartments were suggested that encompass the results of the previous research done.

Applying research

Once there is understanding and inspiration for methods, the ideas were turned in to a design suggestion for a few different sized apartments that ideally caters to the buyers' opinions. These apartments were chosen because they were designed by the author in their second year of the program, and therefore provides the added bonus of showing development in combination with further research.

Applying this study has been a process of research in itself; it has given understanding on how styles are used and why some might have been changed over the course of history, what styles would exclude each other, and which can be united, which ones succeed in different aspects and how they could work together to generate an overall design as a result.

Developing method

The final stage was about grasping the gathered information and results, evaluating and structuring conclusions into one general method that theoretically considers the entire architectural process of designing an apartment based on perceived qualities.

The thesis is, for the scientific approach, introduced with a hypothesis—speculations about what results the research will end in, based on this author's previous insight in the subject, both as a civilian and as a student of architecture. This has then been compared with the finished results to see whether the research has provided any further insights.

Master thesis relevance to the Housing question:

The thesis focuses on buildings and spaces created for living, while the houses might contain retail space or similar, those are not the focus of this work. For future housing architects this research would be useful in the design of spaces for living.

Delimitations

As previously mentioned, the location for the research will be in Gothenburg, Sweden, and therefore the study is influenced by the local culture. The ages of researched apartments span apartments in use in Gothenburg and is limited to buildings from the late-1800s and onwards. While the apartments in this study will be of different ages and styles the aim is not to find the existing ideal apartment, but rather details spanning different styles that are more appreciated to create something new. The size of apartments also will be mixed in the research as not to exclude qualities from either large or small homes.

The research is to a large extent based on opinions from the residents of apartments but combined with research done in the field on architectural features, the conclusions are drawn by the author. One thing to keep in mind is that these apartments are looked at because the residents wanted their apartments looked at, which means that there is a possibility they have a special interest in architecture or their specific building, and might because of that have a subjectively favourable idea of their home.

As mentioned, the reason people would like their apartments would also be affected by their situation in life. Young people might like to have modern apartments with more amenities and older people might prefer to have a strong community within the house. (Werner, 2003)

The questions included in the interviews are focused mainly on Forshed and Nylander's work on the immeasurable values. While Forshed and Nylander also include the location of the home in the urban space as a value, this is not included in the interviews since this thesis focuses on the internal architecture of a home. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)

Location and context

The result of this thesis is specific to Gothenburg where the interviews have taken place, and Sweden in general as the architectural style, and societal culture is generally the same. The opinions stated in the interviews might be shared with people outside of Sweden, because even if the style of architecture is different, how we experience certain values might be the same.

The apartments chosen for the redesign are designed by the author in the first place, but in their second year of the education. This context gives both a way to develop something that has a lot of potential, and also a way to show growth when combining further research in both literary and qualitative fields.

Background

Trends and laws regarding apartment building in Sweden have changed drastically over time. The first attempt of creating a standardised law took place in 1874. Due to industrialisation more people moved to the cities, and issues with illnesses, hygiene, fire risks, and crowded living spaces forced the government to find solutions. Albert Lindhagen was the leader of this work in the Stockholm region, but since the statues he brought forward were not mandatory to follow by private landowners it was hard to get the wanted results. Already in 1880 there were demands on a new law to combat these issues.

Around the turn of the last century there were a large difference in apartments between the upper, middle, and working classes. The city dwelling upper classes lived in large stone houses with tall ceilings and servant quarters, and they sometimes had cold water on tap in the kitchen. The middle class often lived in smaller apartments with a communal water pump in the yard and more people in an apartment than was intended or even healthy. Often renting out bed space to help cover rent. The lower classes lived in older houses; a new production was not affordable for a working-class family. (Sekelskifte. n.d.)

In 1907 the new law was put in place regarding how land could be divided and gave the state the power to design streets, squares, and house sites. Some conflict sometimes still remained between the city architect and the land-surveyor, but this was rectified in the later amendment to the law in 1926 that said the division of land could not stop the continuation of the planning. Also in 1907, a revision of the older statues about housing was made. Regulating, among other things, the allowed height of buildings, and the role of the local building committee, although it would be another 40 years until this had a proper solution. An important factor around this time was “the movement for private homes” (egnahemsrörelsen), that helped less wealthy people with money to build their own small houses, both in the city and the countryside. Until the 30’s the lack of rent regulations and government lead initiatives for housing left both the houses and the renters at the mercy of the market.

Reaching the 30’s the style of functionalism became all the rage. It trickled down from the continental masters such as Le Corbusier, via the Stockholm exhibition in 1930, to the everyday homes of people all over Sweden. A style where function and simple beauty was the ideal and modern technology allowed for things like large glass panes and curved windows. Geometric shapes were the inspiration, and the goal was to give everyone a hygienic and modern home to be proud of. (Historiska Hem. n.d.)

The laws regarding apartment buildings during this time were mostly about providing good housing for elderly, families, and people with limited means. Many apartments were built to supply workers with housing within commuting distance to their jobs, and to give areas with jobs and no workers incitement for people to move there and work. An investigation into the standards of living prompted the government to legislate the standard to provide better housing for specific groups that were extra exposed. There were also laws created that standardized the rights and obligations for renters.

"The housing issue" took on various forms before it evolved into housing policy after the second world war. At the turn of the century, it was seen as a hygiene and health problem in cities and poor living conditions in rural areas. During the first world war, soaring construction costs and rents led to a housing crisis. In the 1920s, housing was primarily seen

as a market problem. In the 1930s, it became an employment issue and a way to stimulate the economy.

In the mid-1930s, housing standards became an issue for state policy, not only the housing shortages. During the second world war, the challenge was meeting increased production and credit costs for housing construction.

Post-war housing policy - four different stages of problem identification

1946-1974: Lack of apartments with adequate standards

The housing policy focused on the lack of apartments with good standards due to urbanization and outdated housing stock. The construction industry was slow to invest, and the differences between rents in new and existing buildings hindered demand.

1975-1986: Development and management of housing and living environment.

The focus was on developing and managing the housing stock and living environment. The housing shortage turned into a surplus, and counter-urbanization was observed. Energy and production costs increased during the 1973 oil crisis.

1987-1996: Housing finance

The 1980s saw an overheated economic boom with high employment and interest rates. Housing finance was seen as a separate problem. The need for apartments for young people became a central housing policy concern.

1997-2006: From housing surplus to housing shortage

The period was characterized by an economic recovery, but a divided housing market emerged. In growth regions, there was a shortage of housing and rising property prices. In other parts of the country, there was a housing surplus, particularly affecting public housing companies. There were challenges in increasing housing construction due to various factors, including slow planning processes, high land prices, and limited capital supply for housing in areas with limited growth.

During this period, the issue of renewing the housing stock was increasingly linked to energy efficiency. While ethnic housing segregation was recognized as a problem, but it was not considered a central housing policy issue. (Boverket. 2007)

For architects there are and have for a long time been laws to follow on how to design apartments. In 1947 the first collection of laws controlling design came out and they stated things such as the minimum floor area of a room designed for living, 10sqm, and the minimum ceiling height of an apartment, 258 cm. It also said that kitchens needed windows that could be opened to the open air and that buildings needed to be built with sanitation and comfort in mind. (Boverket. 1947)

In 1959 the next set of laws came out, changing the minimum measurements to 7 sqm for a room and 250 cm ceiling height. It did however add that an apartment needed a space to store food and access to a place to do laundry. (Boverket. 1959)

The next instalment came out in 1967. Here the laws were looked at in more detail, such as the width of stairs depending on the angle they turned, and measurements for bathrooms, bathrooms for wheelchair bound people, and laundry rooms. (Boverket. 1967)

The laws in 1975 stated among other things that a bedroom could not be the only passage to another room, and that any home should be built so that “people with handicaps” could use them. A living room needed to have a width of at least 360 cm, and a bedroom 195 for a single and 250 for a double, 270 for a double if there are other bedrooms in the apartment. The minimum ceiling height is now written as 240 cm. (Boverket. 1975)

In 1989 a new set of laws were introduced that had sections on child safety, such as where windows could be opened, and on how to build to avoid pests. Here the laws on wheelchair accessibility were expanded and the room organisation more controlled. (Boverket. 1989)

The most well-known set of laws today in Sweden were the BBR (Boverkets ByggRegler) that were active from 1994 to 2011. They were amended a few times over the years but the first set stated the laws on space for standard apartments, for apartments for elderly, and apartments for students. (Boverket. 1993)

In 2011 the laws were changed more thoroughly to match European standards. All definitions are explained in a concise way and the laws are updated continuously rather than publishing a new law every time. The demands on measurements are not changed since 1975. (Boverket. 2011)

Theory

The theory of the thesis is based mostly on two types of sources. The first is previous research done by Kjell Forshed and Ola Nylander and their work on the immeasurable values and qualities of a home, in combination with the studies by Inga Britt Werner, together with other researchers at KTH University of technology in Stockholm. The other source is interviews with residents in apartments built during different periods of time, specifically: turn of the century, functionalism, the “million homes program”, and new constructions. The interviews have been conducted in Swedish, and later translated to English by the author.

The reason these periods were chosen was because they each have a very distinct style, and different ideals. The turn of the century (1885-1915) is among the oldest available for research in Gothenburg where people still live. The era of functionalism (1930-1945) was very prominent in the city but took its expression in different ways, this was a time when the city expanded a lot, and many houses were built. The million-home program period (1960-1975) was another one of those building booms when the need for new housing was immense, and focus was put on efficiency. The houses built since 2015 are relevant for the current perspective.

Some other sources are used mainly to explain the theory and background to give the reader the same background knowledge the author has amassed over the years at university and from the architecture debate.

The *immeasurable values*, by Ola Nylander and Kjell Forshed:

Materials and details

In this chapter Forshed and Nylander discusses the importance of choosing high-quality materials and paying attention to details in home construction. In a previous study by Nylander from 1999, he mentions how throughout history, homes have been a symbol of status and passed down through generations, and the appearance of the home reflects the residents' relationship with it. (Forshed and Nylander 2011) continues with the observation that today, choices of materials or features are often made based on production benefits rather than the final customer's wishes for function or beauty. How you are met by high quality craftsmanship and materials when entering a home makes for a significant difference in experience. These aspects contribute to why it is so important to choose materials and details with care.



Figure 1 Materials and details that might be commented on during an interview. Original floors marked in brown, marble floors and countertop in blue/grey, a stained-glass window in green, and the oval chimneypiece in orange.

The authors argue that natural materials such as stone, wood, brick, and metal have sustainable abilities that last a long time with minimal upkeep, and also a perceived beauty and quality by the residents. To achieve the desired level of quality in materials and details,

the architect should take a stand on these things early on in the project, focusing on the future lived quality and sustainability of the project.

Enclosure and openness

This chapter discusses the balance between enclosure and openness in home design. This relationship has changed a lot over time. During the modernist era, an open and visually connected layout between public spaces like the living and dining rooms and kitchen was desired, while private spaces were more closed off. There was also an emphasis on creating a seamless connection between the outside and inside. This balance between outside landscapes and inside rooms is highly sought after. (Nylander, 1999).

Forshed and Nylander says “It is a quality if the home has rooms that are decidedly enclosed as well as decidedly open. Private rooms, intimacy as well as rooms that are open with an airy and spacious feeling that connects inside and outside.” A balance between enclosed and open rooms is essential, with soft zones like windows with mullions serving as points of contact between the public outside and private inside. The choice between view and transparency must be made early in the project, and it's important to hide disturbing elements from outside and enhance intimacy within the home both day and night.



Figure 2 A diagram showing the difference in closed vs open areas of a plan, open areas have large or no doorways, closed areas are narrow or secluded.

Daylight

The light entering the home is an important aspect in how its qualities are perceived, and in the architectural formation. This is of even greater importance on the northern part of the planet, due to long and dark winters. The amount of daylight needed for our wellbeing has been quantified on several occasions, to ensure we get enough of it. Results have shown that that daylight enters the home at all is as important as how it does it. The direction and movement of a space changes with light, as it is a natural focus for these movements and necessary for the emotional feeling of openness. The directional flow of light and its character is created by how the windows are shaped and designed. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)

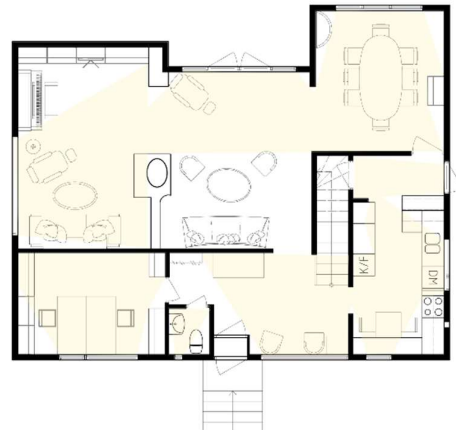


Figure 3 Where does daylight enter the home? What areas remain darker?

The technical advancement over time has changed the way light reaches the home. Windows and openings of the building's façade have been developed as the technical prerequisites have changed. From a hole in the ceiling, to the panoramic views of the 1940s. During the 1970s focus on energy efficiency the window was viewed as a heat thief, and the total area of windows was regulated against the area of floors. During the early 1990s the question was raised of the immeasurable values of daylight in the home. Studies were made regarding the experienceable qualities of windows, and at the same time the U-value was improved. Forshed and Nylander notes that these results are seen even today in architecture with generous admission of light.

Generality and flexibility

Forshed and Nylander argue that in order for a room to be flexible and have a general character, it should be accessible through several entrances, and the size of the room should be 3600 by 3600 mm. Historically, the size and shape of a room has been limited by what was technically possible. For example, the length of a room was determined by the dimensions of materials for beams. With the rise of functionalism, the function of the room would determine the layout, and practical solutions were preferred. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)

Architects like Le Corbusier used engineered solutions to streamline the area of a home, and functional measurements were determined alongside minimum dimensions for certain rooms. Today, these measurements are used as standards to cut down on production costs. However, a recent trend has been to return to more open and flexible floor plans that allow for mixed-function rooms. While studies show that the possibility of moving walls around is rarely used, the flexibility it generates creates



Figure 4 Blue indicates a more general useability, and orange a very specific one. the bottom left room is marked as a bedroom on the plan, but is used as an office. The top left room has mixed use as a TV room, music room and library.

a very democratic living space that is sustainable in the long run. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)
One example of research being done on this is Adaptable housing A quantitative study of contemporary apartment layouts that have been rearranged by end-users. (Femenias & Geromel, 2020).

Axiality

The axiality of a home is all about the views through the rooms. Sightlines are determined lines of vision that connects two points and any rooms it passes through. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011). The effect is determined by the shaping and clarity, alongside the attractiveness of the endpoints. This line is often created by the use of light, either as the viewpoint, or by lighting the way. A line with the starting point by the front door can lead a person into the home, and along the way the line is crossed by other lines leading into different rooms of the apartment.

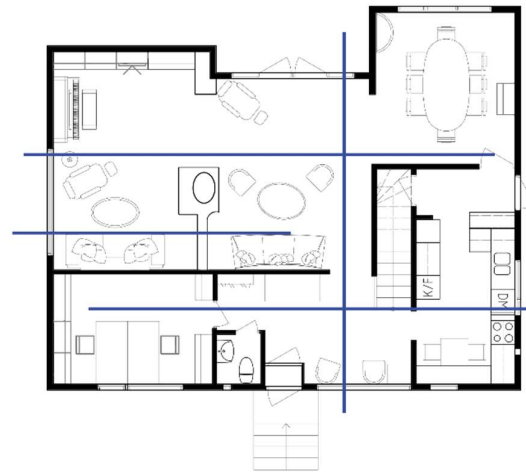


Figure 5 Axiality shown between rooms and windows with blue lines.

A typical example of axiality is often found in churches, where a clear direction is marked towards the altar. Architecture can like this can move us emotionally and create a reality check or a sense of wonder, shared with other artforms such as music or poetry. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)

Movement

The flow of the home is determined by several different factors, such as how openings between rooms invite movement, the rhythm between them, if any room invites you to stop, and if rooms can be reached through several openings. Forshed and Nylander writes about how the number of doors is an important decision early in planning a design, due to its large effect on the movements through the home.

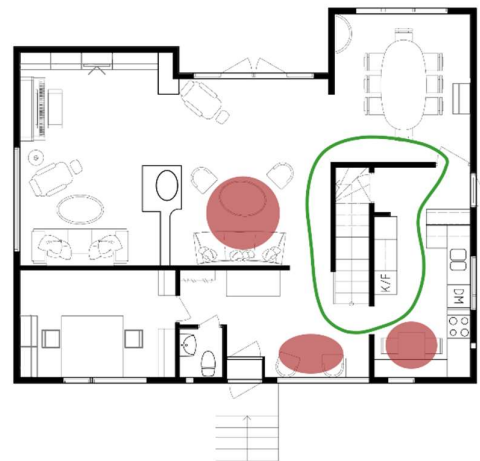


Figure 6 Movement through a space illustrated by the green loop, and natural spots for stopping are marked in red.

Moving through an apartment contributes to discovering the larger picture of the architecture. The rhythm of this movement is affected by the attractiveness of a room, a smaller room might just be passed through while a larger room becomes more of a destination, with more to discover. If the main stairs and entrance hallway of the home is located in the dark centre of the building, the movement naturally leads towards the outer rooms with natural light. If you also have the possibility to reach rooms from several points, this movement will be freer and with a sense of airiness. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)

Room organisation

The organization of rooms within an apartment has a significant impact on the sense of security and personal territory within the home. The transition from the public space of the street to the private bedrooms creates a feeling of safety and personal space, which is important for residents. The design of the floor plan also affects the organization of the rooms and the interactions between them.

There have been several common floor plans throughout history, such as the central room plan, function divided plan, corridor plan, dark centre plan, and zoned plan. Each of these plans has unique qualities that relate to factors like enclosure-openness, daylight, generality-flexibility, axiality, and movement. The choice of floor plan can significantly impact the overall feel and functionality of the apartment.

Furthermore, the authors speculate that people tend to prefer older buildings because they feel more familiar and traditional. However, new materials and techniques have allowed for greater possibilities in apartment design since the industrial revolution. Ultimately, the organization of rooms within an apartment has a significant impact on the resident's sense of security, privacy, and comfort. (Forshed & Nylander, 2011)



Figure 7 the division of public and private spaces are clear, as are the more connected rooms. dark = more private, light = less private.

The quality of architecture by Inga Britt Werner et al.

The combined article “quality in architecture and urban planning” covers how architectural qualities are measured ranking buildings, the work on quality in the construction sector, and how architecture is critiqued in the press. All these to formulate a language that is useful for anyone interested in architectural qualities. This article is co-written by Rolf Johansson, Magnus Rönn and Inga Britt Werner, who all have different backgrounds in the field of architectural research.

The paper written by Werner and her colleagues lands in five theories:

- The term architectural quality is vague, maybe intentionally so that architects’ voices have the most weight in the discourse.
- The value put on knowledge is large, you might only be allowed to judge quality if you have plenty of experience in the field.
- Different professions within the building sector use it to mean different things, aesthetic values, cost effectiveness, or within security aspect for instance.
- The term is vague, but people still use it to hold specific values, in discourse and in professional judgements.
- Several of the larger newspapers present a very uniform picture of “ideal architecture” and offers little to no debate.

People who judge architecture for awards have been interviewed, and some of their view of quality was answered as following; “quality as design is something that is nice to look at”, “quality is achieved when the architecture contributes to the realisation of goals and accomplish the desired usage and experience”. Quality is a concept defined by the combination of the object, the norm, and the viewer, and only through experiencing the object does its qualities become relevant to the observer.

In the context of this paper the author has let the interviewed people be the ones who decide what architectural qualities mean to them, however practicality and aesthetic features have generally been focused on.

In the article “Preferenser betröffande bostadskvaliteter: olika konsumentgruppers bostadsval”, Werner talks about the different types of homes that different types of people need or want. How a family with smaller children would most prefer a detached house over an apartment, especially if they get a second child. Where a single educated woman would like to live close to cultural events, and a single educated man within a convenient distance of commuting spots. While older people generally want to live close to water.

All these factors tell us where we should build and what type of residents we can expect in a specific new area. Her research also talks about who buys from who, depending on economic and life circumstances, and who wants to rent vs purchase. For people who are downsizing, i.e., elderly, newly single, or empty nesters, a newly produced apartment might be too expensive, and they stay in their unnecessary large houses out of monetary needs. While expanding families (with new children, pets, or partners) therefore can’t get those larger homes they need. Creating affordable housing, especially rental properties, is essential.

In this paper Werner also interviews people on what their ideal home would look like if they could design it themselves from scratch. The students interviewed wanted affordable and

suitable for their respective personalities, a two rooms and large kitchen in the inner city, or something with plenty of land for private use. Families with small children wanted space, large kitchens and social areas. A recently single person might want an apartment with a more personal touch to signify their new individuality, one interviewed person spoke about having a older home with plenty of character. People in the later stages of life tend to want something easy to maintain and a difference from what they've had before out of necessity.

A few things seemed to pop up several times no matter who was asked. Airiness, daylight, tall ceilings, and fireplaces are features of interest to most groups, no matter age, civil status, or gender. Another article by Werner, "Bostadskvalitet idag - en utvärdering av nybyggda bostäder, ur kundens synvinkel" explores the purchasing customers of newly produced apartments opinions on their homes. That article is relevant for this study, to give some extra input on whether interviews conducted for this work is representative of a larger picture.

For the kitchens the people interviewed spoke of good cooking possibilities, but lacking in storage and countertop space, and many had issues with parquet floors in the kitchen because of their impracticality. In the living room the opinions were generally positive. People feel as if that's the nicest room to spend time in. Those living in apartments with an open solution between kitchen and living room do often reflect on the lack of walls to put your furniture against, especially bookcases. The bedroom was the name given to all undefined rooms in the apartments, and regarding them the people interviewed were of the general opinion that if a bedroom is smaller than 8.5 sqm it is generally harder to furnish, especially for a two-person bed, but even so, a smaller bedroom is better than having a smaller living space. For those with their own laundry machine in their apartment, more space for hanging the laundry was often needed, but otherwise the rooms were appreciated.

For many of those immeasurable values mentioned above people tended to experience plenty of daylight in their new homes, and while the daylight is well liked, the large windows are sometimes hard to clean. Another downside with large windows is the heat they let in and some of the excess sunlight on late summer evenings and early mornings. Openness between kitchen and living room is something the interviewed people usually liked, especially for the sake of overview and light. Some mention the downsides of needing to clean up the kitchen before having guests over instead of just closing the door, or it being impossible to contain odours of cooking to just one room. The visual connection seems to be the main positive thing about the open situation according to the article.

Interviews

The structure of the interviews

The choice of interviewees came from the year the apartment was built. The design eras were chosen initially, and then matched with apartments. The question on interest in participation has been sent out, either through the authors personal network, or to the boards of suitable condominium associations. Since the interviews are more in-depth, the choice was made to have fewer interviewees. This gives a deeper understanding of the question but limits the number of differing views. The results are therefore just an indication of a preference, and not conclusive of the population in general.

The interviews conducted for this thesis have been structured in the following way. The question on interest in participation has been sent out, either through the authors personal network, or to the boards of suitable condominium associations. Once the project had been described to the participants a time was decided for a in home interview by the author. These interviews were most often started with a tour of the apartment to get a good overview. Already here the participants might discuss things relevant to the study. After the tour, the author and participant/s would sit down and go through the prepared questions. While there have been specific questions asked in all interviews, they have been conducted more like conversations to let the participants freely associate to the queries.

Before the interview the author has downloaded the original plans of each apartment from the Gothenburg city's data bank on city planning and construction. These plans have been analysed and the author has been able to make some initial assumptions about the home. Based on the plans a primary opinion has been allowed to be formed, to later be either reinforced or changed based on the physical visit and the conversation with the residents.

First every participant has been asked about some basic information about their apartment, such as when it was built, how long they've lived there, the size of the apartment and number of rooms, and whether there have been any major renovations done to the home to their knowledge. After that the immeasurable values have been explained to the interviewees and then they have been asked to describe their home from the perspective of these values. All values described in detail earlier have been included. After this discussion, the next part of the interview has been going through the apartment room by room so that the interviewees have been able to point out and mention their favourite and least favourite thing about each room. Finally, the residents have been asked what their favourite and least favourite thing in total is with the whole apartment, and how they would rank their own apartment on a scale from 1-10, both subjectively as their personal home, and as an apartment in general as objectively as possible.

In most apartments the author has also taken a few photographs, with the permission of the resident, to capture specific features pointed out as extra good or bad.

The questions

The questions asked were the following:

For how long have you lived in your apartment?

Are you planning on some day moving from this apartment?

How do you feel about the materials and details in your apartment?

How do you feel about the enclosure and openness in your apartment?

How do you feel about the daylight in your apartment?

How do you feel about the generality and flexibility in your apartment?

How do you feel about the axiality in your apartment?

How do you feel about the movement in your apartment?

How do you feel about the room organisation in your apartment?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the bedroom?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the living room?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the kitchen?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the bathroom?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the entrance hall?

What's your most and least favourite thing about the *insert specific room the apartment has, such as dining room, library, home office etc*?

Statistics

<i>Apartment</i>	<i>1</i>	<i>2</i>	<i>3</i>	<i>4</i>	<i>5</i>	<i>6</i>	<i>7</i>	<i>8</i>	<i>9</i>	<i>10</i>
<i>Year built</i>	1916	1972	1908	1889	2020	1939	1931	1967	2019	2020
<i>Sqm</i>	100	140	143	116	54	68	143	87	50	89
<i>Number of rooms</i>	3	6	5	5	3	4	6	5	2	5
<i>Number of residents</i>	4	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	2	2
<i>Own or rent</i>	Own	Own	Own	Own	Rent	Own	Rent	Rent	Rent	Own
<i>Structural changes</i>	Yes	Yes	Yes	Yes	No	Yes	Yes	No	No	No

Home 1

Year of construction: 1916

Size of apartment: 100sqm

Number of rooms: 3 on main floor (including kitchen), converted attic and basement has added three extra rooms that are not included in the sqm.

Number of residents: 2 adults, 2 children aged 11 and 13.

People the interview was conducted with: 1, mother of the family.

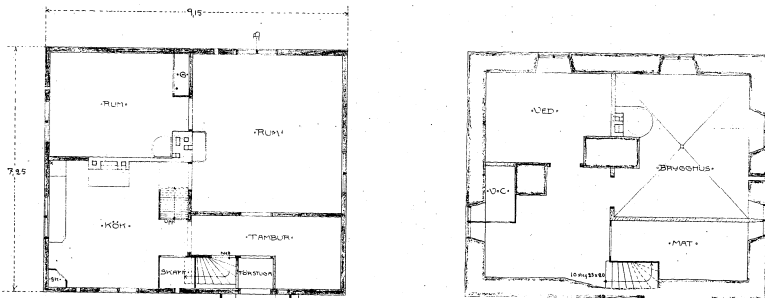


Figure 8 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

This home is a small house built for working class families with many children in the early 20th century. However, it is a good example on when older solutions are no longer practical, and also when older solutions feel very contemporary.

Summary interview 1

When it comes to materials the floors are original throughout except for the living room, hallway and basement. The ceilings are original throughout. The ceiling height is 240 cm throughout the main floor, slanted ceilings in the attic, and around 195 cm in the basement. The largest changes made is the addition of a stairway to the attic and the moving of the stairway downstairs, these stairs are now situated in the southwestern corner of the building. The attic consists of two small rooms that the children use, this was added by the previous owner. A wetroom with bathtub and WC has been added to the basement. The green circle indicates the only place in the house where you're able to access the rooms from more than one direction, but while this is practical in this space, the family does not miss it in the rest of the home.

Having clear purposes for every room is appreciated by the family, this has made planning their home easy. It might not be flexible, but it is practical. The family does prefer this divided plan for privacy



Figure 9 The home is not very flexible, nor open, most of the living space is very public, but the bedroom and basement more private. There is quite a lot of light despite the windows being of normal size.

purposes, in a larger home an open plan might be nicer, but here it is important that everyone gets their own private space. Having a not so very sound insulated home has been good when the children are young though, you can leave them in a different room and still hear that they're fine. The discussion on privacy extends outside the home too, the family has had to put privacy screens in their kitchen windows since it is a very short distance from house to road outside.

The windows are relatively small, which gives a filtered light in the house. The kitchen facing northwest is often light, as well as the living room facing southeast. The bedroom and entrance hall are both dark with few windows. From the entrance hallway to the living room window is a clear line of sight that draws you into the home. The resident confirms that this makes the living room a very natural destination for guests. However, her and her husband's bedroom always feels very private, even if it is in direct connection to the living room. The light rooms are the natural destinations of the home.

Some things the residents found extra nice.

The visible structure, such as how the underside of the stairs is visible in the living room, and the deep basement walls with its little windows. The remains on the floors in all rooms of the old wood burners that were used to heat the house. The remaining wood burner in the living room that is so efficient at heating that when the interview took place it was still warm, after being used about 20 hours earlier. The relatively large kitchen. The large entrance hall that is very useful for a family with children.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

That so much has been changed structurally, it would have been nice to see how it looked originally. That it only has one bathroom, impractical when guests are over, and as the children become older. It is expensive to heat when the price on electricity is high since the house isn't very well insulated. The placement of the windows allows people passing by to look straight into the home. The bedroom is very dark and closed off from the rest of the home. The open stairwell is aesthetically nice, but very impractical with clumsy children.

A quote from the interview: "oh, I give this home a 10/10, it is such a cute home, we have exactly what we need, and nothing more".

In conclusion.

This home has had plenty of renovations done to suit the modern family. A hundred years ago, having several children sharing a room would not have been seen as a problem, but today it is more desirable to give everyone their own space. It is good to have an eye or ear on smaller children, but teenagers need more space to themselves. When the electricity is expensive it can become very costly to live in an apartment with subpar insulation. For this family, having old wood burner that still works help keep your heating bill down, but cheap firewood is not accessible to most households. Original features are valued highly by people living in older homes, but when it comes to having an indoor bathroom, modern solutions win. (Sundin Andersson. C, personal communication, 2023-02-24)



Figure 10 The stairs leading to the attic are visible in the living room.



Figure 11 The kitchen has tall original ceilings, old floors and large windows.



Figure 12 The basement has thick walls and small windows that still let in a lot of light.

Home 2

Year of construction: 1972

Size of apartment: 140sqm

Number of rooms: 5+two bathrooms, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults

People the interview was conducted with: 2

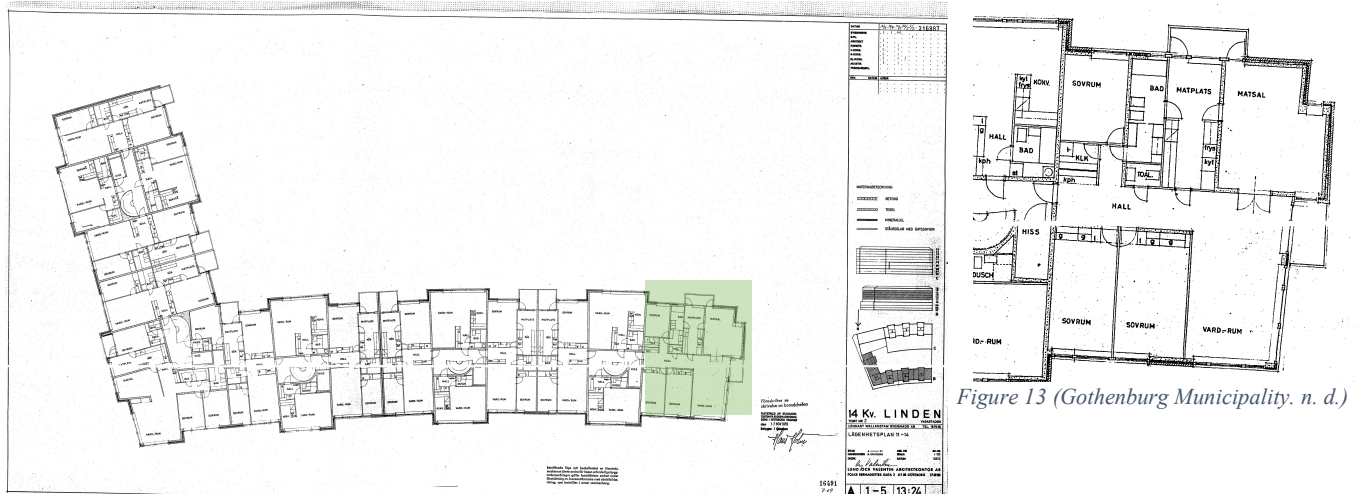


Figure 14 This apartment has a clear axuality, plenty of daylight and apparent zoning. The amount of daylight is the best thing about the apartment according to the residents.

Summary interview 2

The original design of this apartment is mostly unchanged. Except the door between the bathroom and kitchen that has been closed off, no structural changes have been made. The other changes made have all been cosmetrical or practical, a modern kitchen and bathroom, and new lists since the old plastic ones had turned yellow.

The plan is flexible, and moderately open. When the couple moved in, they had first planned to remove the wall between the kitchen and dining room to create a more open space. The

wall was load bearing however, and after all they are very happy with being able to close the door on the kitchen when having friends or family over. The main feature and value of the home mentioned by the residents is the amount of daylight that it gets. The kitchen and dining room faces south, making the balcony there warm and bright as soon as the sun is out. The living room faces northwest, but despite the direction, the size of the windows let plenty of light into the room. The second balcony however is so shaded that it is only ever used for storage. Even the family bathroom has a large window, which the wife mentions as one of her favourite things about the whole apartment.

There is a circular motion available through the kitchen, living room and dining room. This is practical especially since the kitchen is narrow, if someone is standing in your way fixing food you can go around. It is also good for the balcony since it too is narrow and once you have any furniture there you have to go around to access both sides. The other rooms are about the same size, making them useable for many things. However, here they are used for the traditional bedrooms and home office. If anything, the kitchen is quite small and bedrooms rather large, so maybe the square meterage could have been used better.

The light in the home really contributes to the axiality, which is very prominent. There are sight lines drawn through living room, dining room, and kitchen from any of these rooms you feel as if you have a good overview over the apartment. The bedrooms are the first thing you pass when entering the apartment, but they are also in the more shaded part of the home. Despite them being by the door they feel private. There is also a guest bathroom, so they don't have to share their private bathroom if they don't want to. The windows are very big which would not have been as private on the first floor, but here it is good, albeit a bit noisy when the school next door has recess.

The residents mention several times that apart from the daylight the best part about the apartment is its accessibility. There are no high thresholds in the home, and the elevator outside the door goes all the way down to the garage. This makes them feel as if they would never have to move, whatever happens to them health wise.

Some things the residents found extra nice.

The amount of daylight, all rooms with an exterior wall have large windows allowing for light in the entire home throughout the day. The window in the larger bathroom. The view through the huge living room windows. The flexible floor plan. The tall ceilings (250 cm) throughout the entire apartment. No dust-collecting features, such as strange nooks and crannies or ceiling roses. The kitchen balcony facing south. That the kitchen has more than one entrance point. Great with two bathrooms. Generally, very airy rooms. There is space for entertaining. The apartment is very accessible, and a place where the couple feel they can grow old in.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The kitchen is small, and the bedrooms a bit on the bigger side, so the square meters could be used more efficiently. It is also not possible to cook together with friends. The space around the toilet is narrow. It is hard to wash the windows due to their size and weight. The balcony facing west is so dark it can't be used for anything but storage. The living room is facing northwest making it relatively dark despite large windows. The dining room was hard to

furnish and define, strange shape. There are too few sockets in the bedrooms. The entrance hall is quite small.

A quote from the interview: “Hardly any part of the exterior wall is not a window!”.

They give this apartment a 10/10. They feel they can grow old here and never move.

In conclusion.

Sometimes you think you want to change your apartment when you have just moved in, but after some time you get used to it and feel content. A narrow space, like a kitchen or balcony, still works if there is more than one access point. Living in a darker country, the amount of daylight our homes get is something we notice, even in a room such as the bathroom.

Balconies are nice, but pointless if they are situated in a direction with no direct light. Feeling secure in your choice of home for the future removes a lot of stress, feeling as if you never need to go home hunting again is nice.

(Ragnerius. P-O & A, personal communication, 2023-03-01)

Home 3

Year of construction: 1908

Size of apartment: 143sqm

Number of rooms: 4+bathroom, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults, 1 cat

People the interview was conducted with: 1

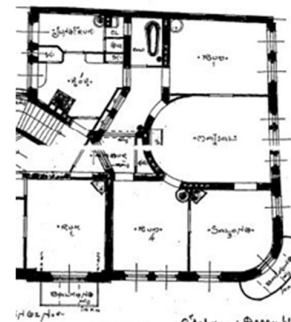


Figure 15 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

A home in Art Nouveau style with interesting angles and tall ceilings. Where practicality is found in the aesthetically pleasing.



Figure 16 This apartment has more flexibility in the rooms, but the plan is still closed. The central hallway is very dark, but provides several access points and connections between the rooms. All the doors make the division of public and private easy.

Summary interview 3

The materials in this apartment have been left mostly untouched or made to replicate the originals. The big changes are as expected in a house of this age the bathroom and the kitchen. Many details have been left untouched. For example, two of the original five wood burners, the large pantry (although this has gotten an additional door), the firewood storage in the kitchen, the deep windowsill in the kitchen, and the ceiling rosettes and stucco. The ceiling height is around 330 cm, except for in the hallway where it's slightly lower.

It is a very enclosed plan with walls and doors to every room. The central hallway has 11 doors in total. A few of them are not used for passage, but rather as storage since the walls are deep. The kitchen is recently redone, and the old maid's room is the new kitchen and the old kitchen is the dining area. The door here has been widened up to create openness between them. One downside of the closed plan is that the hallway is quite dark, something that Michael also noted during the interview.

Apart from the hallway there is enough light in the apartment. The windows are narrow but tall and plentiful. The apartment faces north, south, and east, with the kitchen towards south, living room and office towards north and bedroom towards the east. The corner room has windows towards both north and east, and a balcony in between. The use of the rooms is very much up to the residents, the rooms along the outer wall are of about the same size and are accessible from multiple directions, all of them from the hallway and from the next rooms over. The main users of this flowing plan is the couple's grandchildren that love to run around it.

The sightlines between the rooms are clear and some of the rooms have features that also draw the eye, such as the fireplaces that according to the couple are lit almost every night. All rooms but the hallway have the ability to be private since none of them need to be used as a passage. The apartment is not really efficient in the use of square meterage according to the residents. The corner room for instance is rarely used for anything but a fancier dining area, but for a bigger family this space might have been needed.

For the residents, the main thing that spoke to them has always been the craftsmanship and beauty of the apartment. Having the original details and matching the furnishings to the apartment is important. Michael mentions how in his time on the board of the house several requests for changing layout and features of apartments have been denied, and he says that if the style of house doesn't suit your situation it's better to find something that does rather than change a house like this.

Some things the residents found extra nice.

The beauty of the apartment. The height of the ceilings. The fireplaces. To be able to see all the old craftsmanship. Everything is at least slightly uneven which stimulates the eye. The deep windowsill and the cold pantry in the kitchen. All old features, like the cupboard in the kitchen for firewood, or all of the funky built in storage. The bedroom facing the park which is relatively quiet most of the year and without any neighbours that can look in directly. Having a room that doubles as guest bedroom and home office, the extra space is nice when the family stays over. The way it's possible for the grandchildren to run through the rooms. Accessing the rooms from several directions adds to a sense of freedom of movement.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The small bathroom, and only having one. The dark hallway. The crooked walls make furnishing the space harder. The old windows make the rooms cold and draughty in the winter. It can be slightly noisy in the summer since the house is located in a very bar-heavy area and right next to a park where people stop and chat in the middle of the night on their way home. The houses on the other side of the street feel very close and on display.

A quote from the interview: “When something is appealing to the eye you feel good at heart”. They give this apartment a 10/10. This apartment made the transition from a large house easy.

In conclusion.

The residents find a house of this age is special and that it should be treated with respect. However, accommodations must be met for a modern way of living, the kitchen and bathroom is proof of this. If walls aren't straight, large rooms are good so you can fit furnishings anyway. Original features can get an updated or reaffirmed use over time. If there are three doors into your bedroom and you only use two, fitting your laundry basket in the third opening to keep it out of the way is practical. (Möller. M, personal communication 2023-03-15)



Figure 17 The large windows that provide plenty of light.



Figure 18 Different flooring has been added to make the entrance more practical.



Figure 19 One of the original fireplaces in the bedroom

Home 4

Year of construction: 1889

Size of apartment: 116sqm

Number of rooms: 4+2 bathrooms, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 1 adult, one more about to move in

People the interview was conducted with: 1

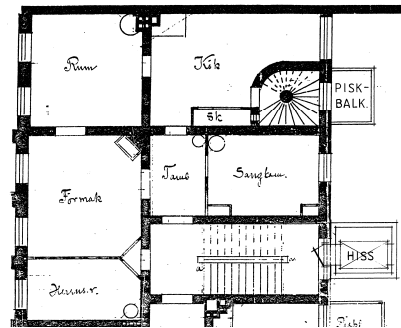
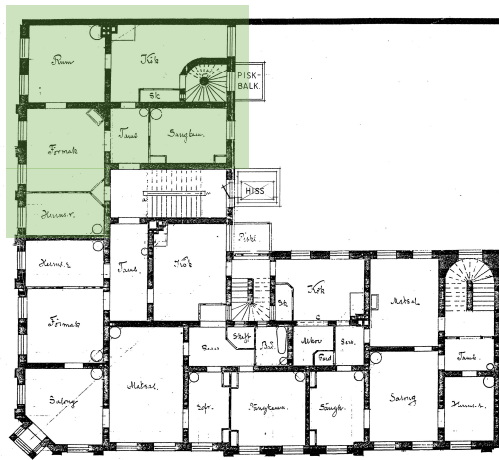


Figure 20 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

The oldest home in this study, built in the 19th century. When practicality was prioritised for the staff.

PLAN AV 3:de VÅNINGEN

BYGGNADSLÖVSHANDLING

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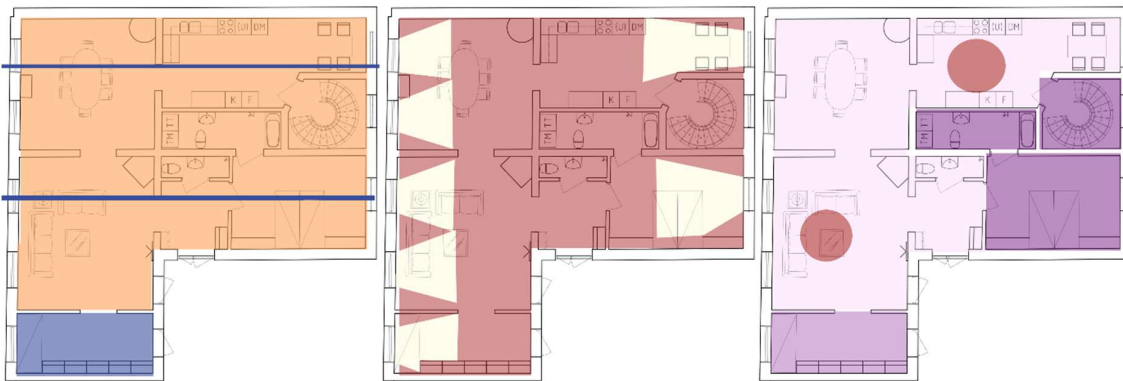


Figure 21 Here the traditional circular movement of the turn of the century has been blocked by reconstruction done by the resident. The enclosed plan does provide clear private areas, and the tall ceilings with matching windows result in plentiful daylight.

Summary interview 4

This apartment has had quite a lot of changes done over the past few years. The kitchen was completely redone in 2009, removing the pantry and adding modern features like spotlights in the ceiling. Even more recently the door between the kitchen and entrance hall was closed off, changing the layout of the bathroom (previously there had been a shower on one side of the door and the toilet on the other, both on the hallway side of the doorway), and another bathroom has been built where the old pantry had been with entrance from the bedroom.

The v-shaped door situation between the living room and office has also been changed. Both rooms now have exits to the stairwell and a simple doorway connecting them, aligned with the door to the dining room. The dining room and living room both have their wood burners, the others have been removed over the years. The floors are original, but the parquet floor that used to cover it is gone. It can be seen in some of the other apartments in the house. One original feature the resident misses is the inner doors towards the stairwell. The hinges show where they have been, and without them the home gets a bit noisy and draughty.

One of the best features of the apartment according to the resident is the tall ceilings. They are 360 cm in height, and this allows the windows to be very large and let in plenty of daylight. The apartment faces east and west, with kitchen and bedroom towards the east and the inner yard, and living room, dining room and office/guest room facing west and the street. This ensures darkness and silence in the evening when going to bed, despite the house being in the centre of town.

With the addition of the bathroom and closing of the door between kitchen and entrance hall, the apartment has a very restricted pattern of movement. This is not at all a problem according to the resident, who says it just makes the home feel larger when you need to walk through more of it to get from one end to the other. Maybe it is impractical when getting groceries to the kitchen, but worst-case scenario there is the old staff entrance for that. While the rooms are of general size, it doesn't feel as if they can be of general use. Every room has a clear purpose.

The sightlines between kitchen and dining room, dining room through living room to office, and from living room to bedroom are clear. From the living room you have a clear view over most of the apartment. This does not mean that it can not be private. Both the office/guest room and bedroom is possible to shut doors to. Especially the situation of the guest room off to the side is commented on by the resident as one of the perks, to give their guests proper privacy.

The distribution of space feels good according to the resident, it is better to have smaller bedrooms and large social spaces. If anything is missing from the apartment it is sufficient built in storage and a balcony. Storage is easy enough to fix by yourself, but a private balcony would have been nice. The balcony in the plan is the old servant's textile whipping balcony, practical but not private as it is shared between the apartments on this side of the house.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The height of the ceilings, this is the absolute favourite thing. The gas stove. Large kitchen. Two bathrooms. Plenty of visual elements that create interest, such as the doors, the ceiling rosettes and trimmings. The fireplaces. The bedroom faces east and the private courtyard, so it is very dark and quiet in the evenings. Having a private bathroom connected to the bedroom. That the home office/guest room is off to the side, creating a very private space. It is a very good place to have guests, plenty of space in both the dining room and the kitchen. The dining room is grand, giving opportunity to have a large and interesting light fixture over the table.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

That the old kitchen and floorings have been renovated away. Not much space to sit in the kitchen. The bathroom is too small to fit a drying rack in. the living room and the office hard to furnish in an efficient way. The amount of storage used to be inadequate until she added a lot herself, which has removed some of the period charm. The exterior door is not original, nor is it modern, so it is both uninsulated and not very pretty, lacking the original details such as glass panels, nice handles, or the pretty hinges. This would not be too bad if it was a proper "security door" with good insulation from noise and draughts.

A quote from the interview: "If I should ever move, the new place would need to have all of this, and a balcony!"

She gives this apartment a 10/10. Having left a "perfect" apartment that she had done a lot of work on herself, this was a nervous change, but here she feels as if both herself and her style has found its home.

In conclusion.

The practicality built into this apartment was made for the servants, but today that type of employee is unusual, and some changes have here been made to suit the needs of a modern household. When hosting overnight guests it is nice to be able to give them a private space, and having a guest bathroom is very appreciated. Some things are easier to fix yourself, like additional storage, even if it is not done in the original style of the apartment, others are harder, like adding your own balcony. (Janson. P, personal communication, 2023-03-21)



Figure 22 The door is neither modern nor original.



Figure 23 The ceilings are very tall and have intricate details.



Figure 24 You can see where the fireplace in the bedroom has been.

Home 5

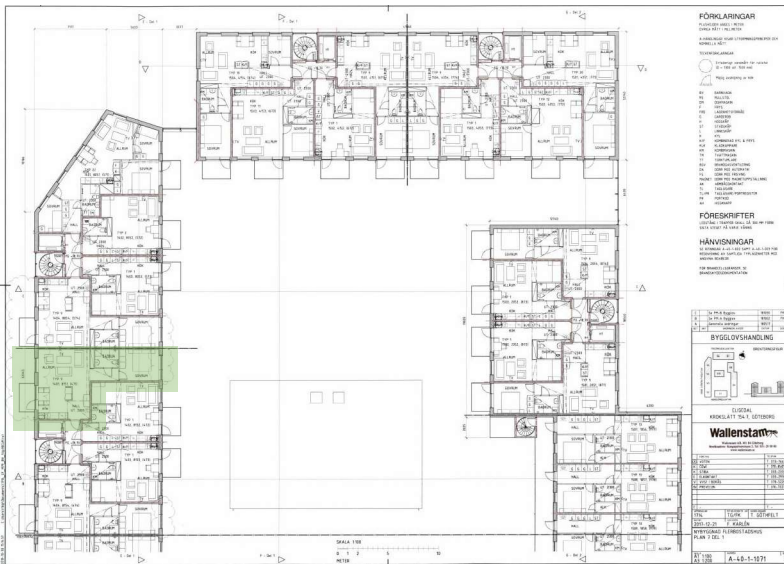
Year of construction: 2020

Size of apartment: 54sqm

Number of rooms: 2 + bathroom, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults

People the interview was conducted with: 1.



One of the newer apartments studied in this thesis. A temporary home, suitable for one specific lifestyle.

Figure 25 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

Summary interview 5

The only change made to this apartment since its construction is a repainting of the walls. When it comes to materials in the apartment, the resident likes the oak parquet floor and the stone windowsills, but really dislikes the grey plastic looking kitchen countertop. The large windows are pointed out as a nice detail, especially with the very low windowsills. This is remarked upon as being nice when living on the fifth floor, but wouldn't have been so nice on the ground floor for privacy reasons. One detail the resident did not like at all is the apparent lack of care taken by the constructors of the apartment. This is not necessarily the fault of the architecture, but something important to note, nonetheless. Light switches being mounted loose and crooked, and gaps between lists and walls in the corner are some things mentioned.

Another downside is the lack of storage in the kitchen. There is no specific pantry, and generally a lack of shelving. The residents have themselves added a kitchen island to accommodate for the extra needed space. On a more positive note, the pillar in the middle of the room with the fridge and freezer and broom cupboard greatest a very nice feeling of flow in the movements of the apartment.

The bedroom is facing east while the living room and kitchen faces west. The balcony is accessed from the kitchen out towards the road,



Figure 26 In this modern apartment we see a clear open plan between kitchen and living room, large windows that provide daylight and unblocked sightlines. The increase of privacy from entrance to bedroom is clear. The plan is not general nor flexible.

which makes the residents unsure if they will ever use it due to noise and privacy issues. While the bedroom is quiet and dark, they have had problems furnishing it, both of them cannot have a bedside table, even with a smaller bed, without it being too narrow between bed and window. The bedroom windows also start higher on the wall than those in the living room. This in combination with having other buildings in close proximity creates a very dark room even during the day.

The windows might be large, but they are well insulated. When opening the windows, you hear how noisy the road is, and the residents have not needed to turn on the heat the entire winter. Noise from neighbours is also almost eliminated, they say they have only heard their neighbours a few times since moving in in September. The apartment having only two rooms and it being open between kitchen and living room, there is no flexibility in usage of the rooms. When entering the apartment, the eye is drawn towards the kitchen and windows to the left, but the line of sight is obstructed by the central fridge pillar. However, the apartment divides private and public in a good way, when having friends over, everyone stays in the living room.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The entrance is spacious with plenty of storage, the door is robust and makes you feel secure. The kitchen's connection to the living room creates a social space, the kitchen island is great! The daylight through the large windows, and the fact you can still see out the windows when sitting due to the low windowsills. The shower is large, and having a washer/dryer pillar is way better than having them next to each other. Rather have a too small than a too large bedroom.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The fixed storage in the apartment is really ugly. The kitchen and bathroom need much more storage. Would rather have a common laundry room than their own machines since they take up space and are ineffective. The bedroom is dark and very inflexible for furnishing.

A quote from the interview: "An architect that creates something ugly is committing an assault on the society".

She gives this apartment an 8/10. This is a great apartment for the lifestyle they currently have and they have no plans of moving in the next few years, but it is not a forever home. This is also evident on the others living in this complex, plenty of young people recently graduated with well paying jobs who can afford the high rent and want to live close to town. The apartments have a high turnaround though, they are themselves the third residents since the house was built in 2020.

In conclusion.

When living in a new apartment you might lose charm and patina, but you gain some practicality. Especially when it comes to insulation and security. Daylight will always be a big factor if something feels pleasant, if the house has shade from being built close to other houses, it is something you notice. (Hansson. E, personal communication, 2023-03-29)



Figure 27 The residents found a lack of care taken to details in construction. Gaps between skirting boards and wall being one of them.



Figure 29 The windows are large and start close to the floor, this ensures plenty of light in the apartment. However, the windowsills are narrow, it would be nice to fit larger items on them.



Figure 28 The resident hates the countertops, and finds the kitchen lacking in storage space.

Home 6

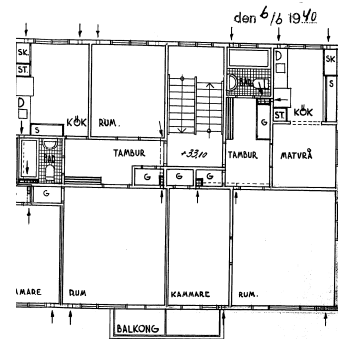
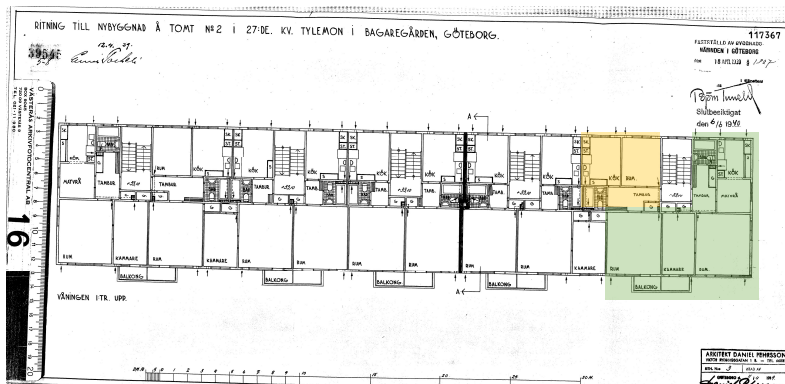
Year of construction: 1939

Size of apartment: 68 sqm

Number of rooms: 3 + bathroom, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 1 adult

People the interview was conducted with: 1



This apartment is conforming to the standards of functionalism in a very clear way, is it still functional?

Figure 30 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)



Figure 31 Functionalism has clear division between spaces, but airiness and clear sightlines. This apartment has no circular motion, but very clear private and public spaces, with some middle ground between.

Summary interview 6

Here is an example of an apartment that has seen quite many changes since being built. Currently the resident is using the rooms marked in green on the original plan, but the apartment consists of both the green and yellow part on the lease. When the resident had young children at home and were still living with their father, the larger number of rooms were preferable, but when the father and later the children moved out, she redid the apartment and is now renting out the yellow part, which is closed off and has its own entrance. Initially those were two separate apartments of more equal size.

The kitchen and bathroom of the three-room apartment were renovated in the 70's, but the floors in the living room are original, as well as the radiators. The windows and doors were changed around 2010 to a more modern standard. When asked if there were any materials or

details she wished were still original that have been changed, the resident answers “all of them! But not the door, it feels better having a proper safety door, and I suppose it is better for the energy bill to have modern windows.” The windows are of average size and the transition between inside and out feels gradual thanks to the mullions and windowsills with plenty of plants on them.

Since the apartment has windows in three directions, and none of them being north, there is always plenty of daylight in the apartment. No room feels dark, even the hallway feels bright as you face one of the windows in the kitchen when entering. A downside is the placement of the radiators and doors making it harder to furnish against the walls, there seems to be very few stretches of uninterrupted wall. Most of the rooms are not very flexible, however the smaller room is currently used as a dining room, but has been both a bedroom and a playroom for the children before. The dining room is somewhat a passage room, since you have to walk through it to get to the bedroom. This does make the bedroom a very private space, but it is far to walk to get to the bathroom in the middle of the night.

The privacy is somewhat similar regarding inside and outside. The bedroom, dining room, and living room faces the west and lawn behind the house, while the kitchen faces east and the street.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The light and airiness of every room. There is quite a lot of storage. The kitchen has a separate dining area for a smaller table, very nice for more informal meals and nice and light in the mornings. A window in the bathroom is great for airing out damp air and smells. Having the smaller room creates a very practical extra space that can be whatever you need. The bedroom is private, quiet, and large, it is easy to add a lot of storage.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The entrance is lacking in space for guests to hang clothes. After the renovation the kitchen has very boring cabinets. The radiators along almost all walls make it harder to furnish. The bathroom is tiny. Having to walk through the dining room to get to the bedroom is a bit impractical. The balcony railing ends in the middle of the bedroom window so it is impossible to open the window.

A quote from the interview: “with an open plan you don't have any walls to furnish against”.

She gives this apartment a 7/10.

In conclusion.

If an apartment has good foundation, it is easy to create a space that works for you. Having light in all rooms makes the apartment appealing. Safety is something that is prioritized for many people and often trumps aesthetics. Privacy is not only within the apartment, if your private space faces a very public area outside it will decrease the feeling of privacy even within.

(Eriksson. M, personal communication, 2023-04-05)

Home 7

Year of construction: 1931

Size of apartment: 143 sqm

Number of rooms: 4 + bathroom, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults + 1 cat

People the interview was conducted with: 1

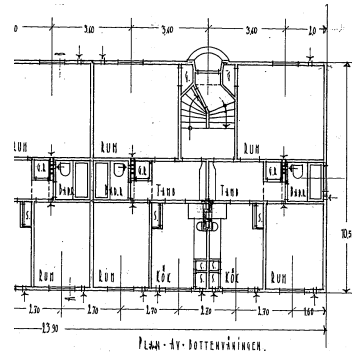
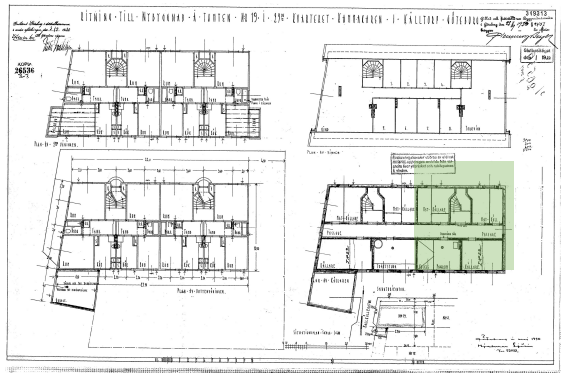


Figure 32 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

Old details can coexist with modern features and create a unique home.



Figure 33 The most evenly distributed home among the values, equal parts flexible and rigid, public and private, and with both open and enclosed parts of the plan, although that has been added afterwards. This apartment lacks circular movement but has sightlines.

Summary interview 7

Another example of a very changed apartment. Formerly two apartments have been combined to create a home for a large family. The original features are the floors in the guest room, living room and study. They are wooden plank floors with gaps between the planks, a favourite with the resident even if it is very impractical. The old brick chimney in the kitchen has been exposed in the dining area, and that is also something she really likes. A feature that is not as appreciated is the parquet floor in the entrance hall since it is very scratched.

The apartment has a closed plan, and while it is not a problem at all for the resident, she talks about a wish to open the wall between the dining area and the entrance hall to create the possibility of a circular movement, and a sightline between the living room and dining area. There is not really any sharp changes from inside and outside, having the glassed in

patio/sunroom on the back of the house creates a middle ground between apartment and garden. Due to its light, this sunroom is her favourite in the apartment.

Darker rooms are the bedroom and living room, originally the living room only had one window towards the street, but her family had put in an extra window towards the side and east, which has added a lot more light. The kitchen is light, but she wished the windows didn't have mullions and openable panes, since it makes them harder to clean. The bathroom has a window, but it could have been larger.

The entrance hall is large and ties all rooms together, except the guest room that is only accessible from the kitchen. There are no clear sight lines between any rooms, but it is easy to see into the apartment from the outside. While the kitchen facing the garden feels more private, they generally keep the blinds down anyway. The kitchen is definitely the natural gathering space in the apartment.

Most rooms have had different functions over the years, which to the resident (who has grown up in the house) makes nothing feel public or private. Any room can be anything you need it to. The private history with the apartment is also what makes the resident both like and dislike it, the memories are in the walls so to speak. It is an apartment that is too big for the residents in their current situation, but they are not actively searching for something new.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The amount of space in the entrance hall for storage. The large bathroom with space for both shower, bathtub, washer, and dryer. The light and spacious kitchen that has plenty of counter space and storage. The original floors. That the bedroom window faces the street so you can listen to the noises from outside when falling asleep. The window placements in the living room.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The strange floor plan left in the entrance hall after the refurbishments of the apartment. That the bathroom door is bulky in front of the coat rack. A bathroom tiled floor to ceiling would be nicer. The visible heating pipes along the walls. The guest room is difficult to furnish, and it is very noisy from the bathroom. Since the bedroom only has windows to the north it is very dark, and after the refurbishments it is a bit harder to furnish. Same goes for the living room. Square rooms are tricky since they don't really have a clear direction.

A quote from the interview, "It has a good foundation, if anything breaks, you know it's something you put there yourself".

She would rate it as 8/10, it is a good space, but small changes could be made to make it even better.

In conclusion.

More space is not always better, especially if old reconstruction creates strange unusable areas. If the apartment is well constructed, you know the things that break are easily replaceable since they are the things added after the fact.

(Cederroth-Odrowska. L, personal communication, 2023-04-13)



Figure 36 If something looks strange or is poorly constructed, it is not the original construction.



Figure 34 Having a window in the bathroom is fantastic!



Figure 35 The original floors are very pretty, but slightly impractical when cleaning.

Home 8

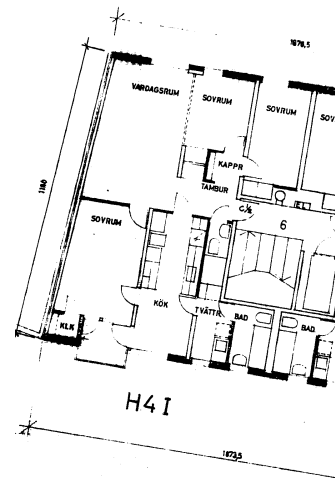
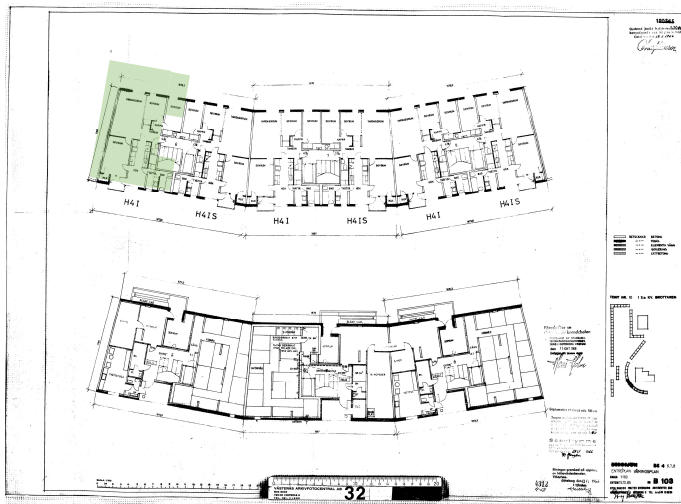
Year of construction: 1967

Size of apartment: 87 sqm

Number of rooms: 4 + bathroom, wc, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults

People the interview was conducted with: 1



On the outskirts of Gothenburg there are plenty of apartments built in the 60s and 70s. This is one of them.

Figure 37 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)



Figure 38 Another apartment with a little bit of everything. Plenty of light, open, enclosed, flexible, rigid, circular movement, and properly private bedrooms.

Summary interview 8

This apartment is barely changed at all since it was built. That means that the materials in the apartment are almost all original. The doors have been exchanged, and the resident mentions that they are very light and thin. He talks about how many materials feel quite flimsy and of bad quality, except the walls that are pure concrete. This is sturdy but slightly impractical, as it makes it hard to hang things easily on the walls. Having properly tiled bathroom is nice compared to having linolium floors according to the resident.

The apartment has a mostly closed off plan, there is no door between the entrance hall and the living room, but the door to the kitchen and dining room are often open and blocks the way. It is nice to be able to close doors to all rooms, but annoying having to open them all the time. When renting the apartment the resident saw a difference between the plan and the reality. On the original plan the wall between the living room and one bedroom is marked with dashed lines, but on the plan he saw it wasn't there. In reality it is a drywall wall there. If it hadn't been it would have been quite a strange and very open plan in the living room. This feels better to the resident, and is easier to furnish.

It is light due to very large windows with no mullions. The windowsills are deep enough to place plenty of plants or decorations on. In the dining room the sills are more narrow, but the balconies above create some shade and the balcony of this apartment provides some distance between inside and out. The bedrooms and living room have plenty of light in the mornings, and the kitchen and dining room are light in the afternoon. The darkest part of the apartment is the entrance hall and WC. The large bathroom has a window, and is the only bathroom the residents use, even if it is further away from the bedrooms.

The sizes of the rooms feel a bit strange to the resident. The bedrooms are very small and the living and dining rooms are very large. The kitchen is large enough with plenty of space for cooking but narrow, making it harder to furnish with dining furniture. The possibility to move around the living room, dining room and kitchen compensates for the narrowness. The size of the dining room, while very large, makes it very flexible. On the plan it is labeled as a bedroom, but it is now a combined dining room and home office. It could also be a living room or a large hobby room.

The natural lines in the apartment are diagonally through the living room and towards the kitchen, but the sightlines are often blocked by open doorblades. In a way this is good, the bedrooms are out of sight from the common areas of the apartment making them very private. Since the entrance hall naturally leads visitors towards the living room nobody enters the bedrooms accidentally. Having to walk through the entrance hall is a bit impractical as that draws dirt into the bedrooms. When it comes to the use of square meterage, the bedrooms could be bigger and the dining room slightly smaller. It is nice with two bathrooms, but not necessary for only two people.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The entrance hall is spacious and a natural passage into the apartment. The bedrooms are very quiet. How large and light the living room is. The large window and plentiful countertop space in the kitchen. Having the balcony in the dining room. The bathroom with a window.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

Dragging gravel and dirt into the bedrooms every time one walks through the entrance hall. The bedroom having small windows and bad air circulation. Since the walls in the living room aren't parallel the sofa ends up not facing the TV straight on. Having no space for a proper dining table in the kitchen. The dining room is a bit too large, what do you even put in it? That the large bathroom is so very big.

A quote from the interview, "wherever you try to walk there is a door blocking the way".

He would rate it as 7/10, it is fresh and has a lot of space for a large family. Being located so far away from the city centre draws the rating down by a lot unfortunately.

In conclusion.

Despite very sturdy foundations the finishing materials can feel cheap, and although concrete walls are robust, they are not necessarily well insulated. Rooms that are either too large or too small create issues with furnishings.

(Bourghardt. O, personal communication, 2023-04-19)

Home 9

Year of construction: 2019

Size of apartment: 50 sqm

Number of rooms: 2 + bathroom, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults, 1 cat, 1 dog

People the interview was conducted with: 1

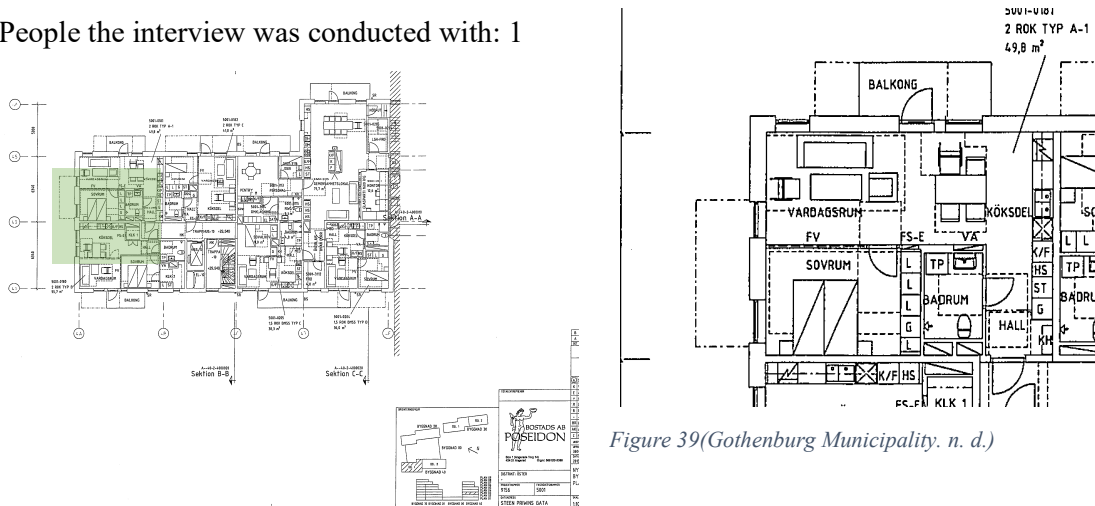


Figure 39(Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

In a small space it is essential with smart solutions when it comes to furnishings, in a new apartment the design might make that even easier.

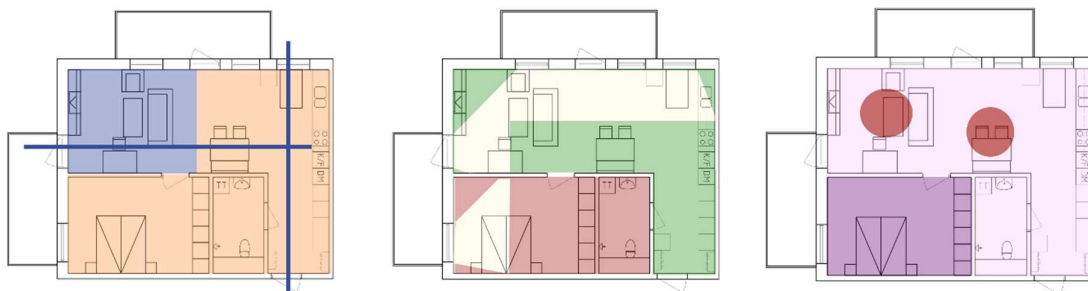


Figure 40 Flexibility as a necessity, not by choice, a dark and private bedroom and a very small entrance hall. The modern apartments all have very open plans.

Summary interview 9

This apartment is quite new, and the current residents are the first people renting it. Apart from adding some colour to the entrance hall and bedroom walls they have not changed any of the initial details. As he says though, if it wasn't a rental place they might have done more. The residents like the floors, the light walls and ceilings, and how the trims around the doors match the thresholds. They have added some decking to the balconies to make them more pleasant. He says it is very nice to have two balconies, especially for the animals who can roam freely inside and out.

In a small space like this the resident says he prefers an open plan, since it doesn't take up unnecessary space with a wall. They have created some division themselves between kitchen and living room with the placement of the couch. The space still remains social and airy. The

one cramped place is the entrance hall that is very narrow, and where they've had to add a lot of additional storage.

The apartment is light, despite facing northeast and northwest, this is nice because they can have the blinds up all day without it getting too hot. There is no direct sunlight in the apartment during the day. If anything, they wish there was a bit more sun on the balconies. The windows are large and undetailed providing a great connection between inside and out, and the balconies create a middle ground during the summer months.

The living room is very flexible, used currently both as tv-room and office, with furniture that is foldable to maximise the space. The kitchen has a natural ending point by the table, and the table becomes the natural space to stay, or use as a countertop space. They bought a mobile kitchen island to add more countertop, but it soon became full of appliances. The thing the resident misses the most is more storage, but he is unsure if it is possible to have more in such a small space as this.

The natural sightlines are towards the view in northwest and the busier street, rather than northeast and the other houses in the area. Except when entering, and you have a window straight in front of you, this is very appreciated as it makes the entrance hall feel less dark. The movement in the apartment is very controlled by the furnishings, and that also feels very limited. There is just one way to place the bed, and once it is there it feels far to walk around it. The movement feels more natural and uninterrupted between the kitchen and living area. Nobody would accidentally enter the bedroom as it is indeed very private.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The kitchen is very functional, it is great to have a dish washer. An open plan creates a more social space. The bathroom is very optimised regarding space. How flexible the living room is. The possibility to darken the bedroom and keeping it cool.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

How dark and narrow the entrance hall is. The lack of storage and working space in the kitchen. That the bathroom is so narrow. The living room is ok for a lot of functions, but not perfect for anything. How cramped the bedroom is with a full-sized bed in it.

A quote from the interview, "With this small amount of space, the whole place becomes one big compromise".

He would rate it as 8/10, it is as good as it gets with this space, but more storage had always been nice.

In conclusion.

A small space always has to compromise on things. And if you can't have your items on display due to lack of space, you instead need plenty of storage. Balconies are nice, they become great if there is some direct sunlight on them. There is always need for more worktop space in the kitchen. (Fridolfsson, J, Personal communication, 2023-04-20)



Figure 41 A small living space will still need to contain as many functions as a large home. This results in compromises.



Figure 42 An entrance hall gets cramped very quickly if it is too small.

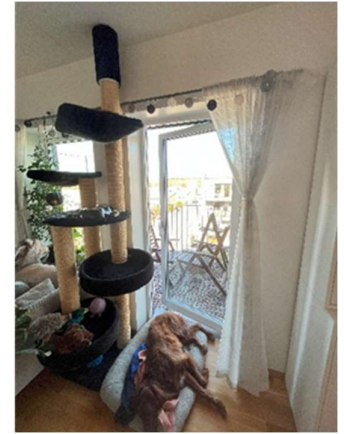


Figure 43 A balcony makes the apartment feel larger, especially in the summer. If you have animals, it is also good for them with the fresh air and extra room.

Home 10

Year of construction: 2020

Size of apartment: 89 sqm

Number of rooms: 4 + 2 bathrooms, kitchen, and entrance hall

Number of residents: 2 adults

People the interview was conducted with: 1

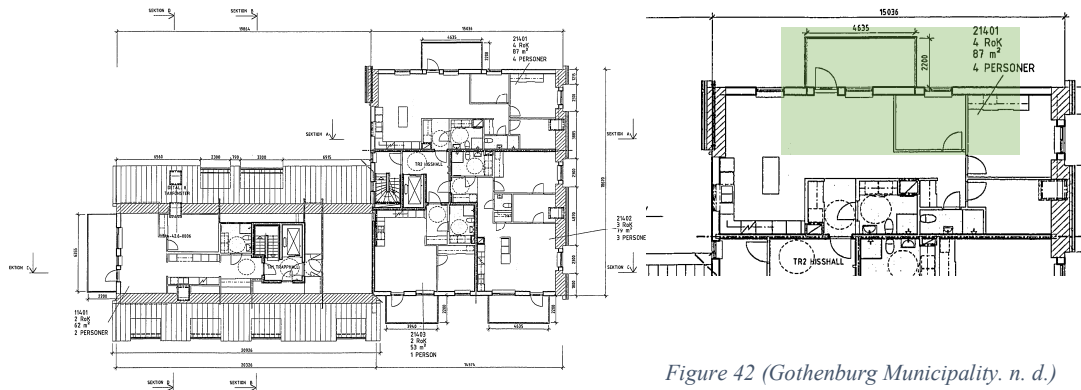


Figure 42 (Gothenburg Municipality. n. d.)

A newish apartment specifically built for older people. It has specific demands on amenities.

Summary interview 10

This apartment is designed with an aging customer in mind. You are not allowed to move in here if you are younger than 55 years old. Since it is very new no materials have been changed, but the residents made changes before completion. They chose different countertops, balcony floors, ceiling style etc, and payed extra for that initially. It was expensive but easy. The other appliances feels a bit cheap, and they have already had to repair the washing machine twice.

The plan is quite open which is social and nice, but creates a problem with cooking fumes spreading in the living room. The angle of the kitchen makes it somewhat secluded anyway. Having a glassed up balcony provides a space that is semi outdoors. This large balcony and large windows let in plenty of light into the apartment, yet the bedroom faces north and provides cool shade there.

The plan is very specific, and while one bedroom is used as an office, the rooms have very specific uses. The rooms have good visual connections between them, but they are possible to make private with the doors. It is

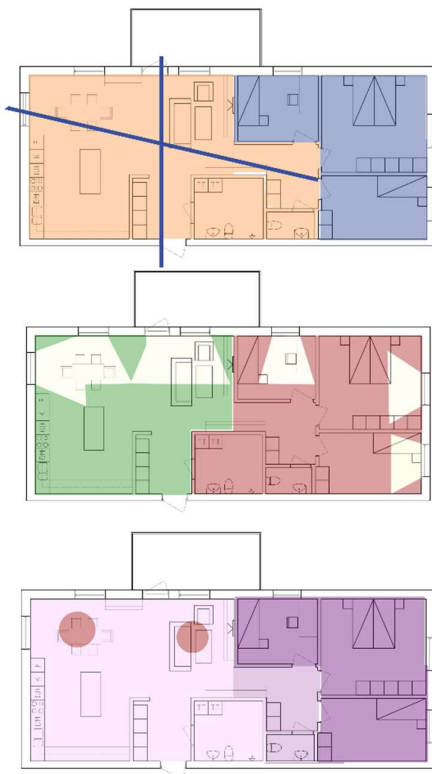


Figure 43 Bedrooms can always be used as other things if there are more than needed. Privacy and enclosedness are clearly linked, and meeting light when stepping into a home is nice.

also very well insulated, both heat and noise wise. If there is anything specific they miss it is a fireplace. From the entrance hall you face a window, which creates a lighter feeling when entering the home. The kitchen and living room are equally social, and the bedrooms are very private. There are two bathrooms, and they are used equally much.

Some things the resident found extra nice.

The great amount of storage in the entrance hall. How bright and airy the living room is. That the kitchen is very social. The bathroom has great ventilation. A great community within the house, lovely neighbours.

Some things the residents didn't like as much.

The odours from the kitchen spreading through the apartment. How the sockets are placed in strange places in the kitchen and bedrooms. That the bathrooms have no windows.

A quote from the interview, "still so nice and fresh, even if we've lived here for over three years, so bright and airy."

He would rate it as 10/10, the apartment might be a normal 89 sqm space, but the 10 sqm extra balcony elevates the whole home.

In conclusion.

In a new apartment there is less of a need to fix things, as long as things are of a good standard to begin with. It is great as a consumer to have a say in the choice of materials, even if it costs a bit more. A balcony has the potential of making the apartment feel a lot larger.

Lund. M, personal communication, 2023-04-21

Conclusion

The views people had on the immeasurable values can be summarized in this way.

Materials and details

Original features are often appreciated for their aesthetic values, as long as they don't get in the way of everyday life. When working with transformations it can therefore be advantageous to keep such details. People do tend to like sturdier natural materials, especially stone and wood. Cheaper feeling materials are quickly noticed. Another feature many mentioned was deeper windowsills to keep plants and other décor on. Some were clear that the care with which the work in the apartment was done was as important as the materials and details themselves. Making sure sockets and light switches are straight, that materials match in style and quality, and generally showing high quality craftsmanship throughout. People living in older apartments often comment on practical solutions done in their homes that shows an adaptation to that specific space and that not all apartments look the same. In newer apartments, people tend to see it as a blank canvas they can add personal touches such as texture and colour. A good detail that was mentioned by everyone was tall ceilings.

Enclosure and openness

The preference of the open vs closed off plan is about 50/50 with the people interviewed. However, everyone could see benefits of both styles. A downside of an open plan, according to those that had that was that you couldn't leave the kitchen messy when entertaining your guests, or to just have one more private space in your home. Another downside was the spreading of smells and fumes from cooking. On the plus side was the social aspect. Being able to interact with the rest of the house when cooking is something many people saw as a big plus. It appears here to be a need for a mix of open and closed plans, so that everyone can find a style that works for them.

Daylight

The big topic of conversation in all interviews was the amount, or lack of, daylight. The general view seems to be that the more the better, as long as you can make the bedrooms dark enough. As large windows as possible, without it infringing on anyone's privacy. Preferably all rooms should have windows, including the bathrooms. Focusing on large windows that are still energy efficient and easy to open and clean is a big positive according to the study.

Generality and flexibility

Flexibility is something more important in a smaller apartment. When there are fewer rooms those that exist need to fill more needs. A room with furnishable walls where you can place a desk, a sofa, a tv, extra storage, an armchair, or whatever you need, often having several uses at the same time. Generality is also good in larger apartments, having plenty of rooms to choose from it is good if the rooms can be used for many different things, extra bedroom, dining room, office, hobby room, library etc. A more general room can have different uses at different times.

Axiality

This is something that the people interviewed have never thought about themselves. When prompted, they might realise there is some axiality, especially if they have a window opposite the front door.

Movement

Another theme not often pondered by residents. There are always spaces that are natural to stop in in any apartment, but that is usually more down to furniture than architecture. As an architect one can create furnishable space for this purpose. In apartments where you can reach rooms from several directions people generally find it to be a positive feature, but not the thing that is most important about the apartment.

Room organisation

Privacy is another question dear to the interviewee's hearts. Here people felt that privacy regarding where the rooms were placed compared to both the outside features, but also within the apartment was important. Having the private areas of the apartment furthest away from the door might appear to be most logical, but for many apartments that is not necessarily the case. What we see as private vs public is very defined by amount of light. A space where people gather is often somewhere bright and open. That in combination of wanting bedrooms to be dark and cool indicates that the rooms should be organised by the direction of light. Keeping the private spaces together makes for a clearer space both for the residents and for guests. Noise is also something defining for privacy, specifically noise within the apartment or from neighbours. Keeping bedrooms away from showers, dishwashers, tv-walls etc is another thing people asked for.

Design over the years

Some clear indications of changes can be seen, especially through the diagrams.

The turn of the century homes did not have any open plan, and the rooms were often not very flexible. Every room had its clear purpose. They had all originally at least one circular movement, although in one instance this has been removed by the current resident. The division of public and private is very clear and there are few grey areas in between. Bathrooms sometimes end up in awkward spaces since they weren't always original features in the homes. All these apartments have tall ceilings that the residents loved due to the space it created, making even a small room feel grand.

The functionalism apartments are also of the enclosed plan variety, any openness is added afterwards. The rooms started to have a more general size for flexible use. Here we see the introduction of clearer sightlines, admission of light is a focus in construction, even if the ceiling height had come down a bit. Even the bathrooms have windows in these apartments. None of them have any circular movement. Here we also keep the division of public and private, although with the modifications made by the residents there are grey areas introduced.

The million-program apartments have the most daylight focused design of them all, and the use of sightlines is prominent. The introduction of the semi open plan helped with that, and here it is also evident that the circular movement has returned. All rooms that aren't living room or kitchen are flexible, and there is a greater grey area between completely private and

public. The main benefit according to the residents is the amount of daylight and large uninterrupted windows.

Modern homes tend to have a more open plan, and from the interviews it is clear that it is often due to square metre efficiency. The plan has returned to a less general type again, although an extra bedroom can always be used for various things and a small living room will need to fill several functions. These apartments have large windows, but too narrow windowsills for the residents liking. Their favourite thing is the level of insulation, keeping noises, and the heating bills, down.

Analysis

So much of the perceived qualities of a home lies in the apparent craftsmanship and quality of the work and materials used in the construction of it. Many people express sadness over removal of original features and appreciation for the details of a skilled craftsman. Some would rather loose comfort than aesthetics of an old home, but only to an extent. Bathrooms especially are more important to be functional than conforming to a specific style. Also, kitchens and bedrooms need to have a certain level of practicality, although the aesthetic values here often conform to the resident's idea of the correct style for the room.

Bathrooms in general is definitely something important to the people interviewed. If they have one bathroom in their home, they would most often rather have two, if they have two they express happiness over the fact. If it has windows, it is something they comment on as good, if it doesn't, they might remark upon the darkness in the room. Darkness and daylight are other features much discussed in these interviews. The amount of daylight entering an apartment is very important, as well as the darkness you are able to get in your bedroom. A dark hallway might be commented on, just as much as a light bathroom. Not something that would stop you from buying the apartment, but something you would notice after some time living there.

Another factor often mentioned in the interviews is privacy. Partly between rooms in the home, people seem to prefer a divided plan where each room is a space of itself if there are several people living in the home, but also to your neighbours. If the neighbourhood is noisy people feel the need to have good insulation in doors and windows to keep the noise out. If the next house over is very close, or you live on ground level, having people staring into your home feels very uncomfortable. This makes some people never open the curtains or the windows, or a room might not be too pleasant to be in.

Something often mentioned regarding the aesthetics was tall ceilings. That even a smaller room would feel larger if it had the height. Combining that with large windows that let in plenty of daylight and there seems to be a recipe for success. Quality and care of craftsmanship is another appreciated detail. Just as lack thereof is seen as sloppy or ignorant.

When designing with contemporary residents in mind, one might benefit from focusing on these factors.

The focus of the designs.

For the designs the focus out of the immeasurable values has been materials and details, daylight, generality and flexibility, and room organisation. While all values have been touched upon in the interviews, these four have stood out as the most important to the residents. The others are not as deeply considered. Enclosure and openness, and movement are only somewhat contemplated, while axiality is a subject the residents had rarely reflected much upon themselves.

Apart from these values, the people interviewed had a few specific areas they always circled back to. These do in a way connect to the existing values laid out by Forshed and Nylander. For example, taller ceiling heights is a way to get more daylight due to larger windows, and privacy is a side effect of room organisation.

Design

During the architecture education at Chalmers university the students are taught to design apartment buildings. The only mandatory course in it is during the second year, and at that point very few are fully equipped to design a functional home. While the designs that were made at the time were approved by the teacher and given a passing grade, they had some potential for improvement based on the interviews and in-depth study of previous material such as “the immeasurable values”. How the plans made by the author a few years prior to this thesis has been adapted and improved will be shown in the following chapter divided into three sections.

After looking at the designs of the apartments visited during the interviews, and with the literature in mind, here follows some examples of suggestions on design choices that could be made in the future. The analysis of the apartments is drawn from the experience the author has gained over the duration of the education and the literature read for this thesis. The original designs, as made by the author in 2018, are above, and below them is examples of a different way of using the same square meterage based on the interviews and literature studies.

The apartment building

The apartments chosen for the basis of the redesign is the following building designed by the author during their second year at the architecture program in 2018. Shown in this thesis is the standard residential floor with an array of different sized apartments. The text that was written for that project was as follows:

“Welcome to Ångaren Göta! A newly built residential building inspired by Lindholmen's old shipyard and the boats they used to construct. This house is specifically designed to resemble the appearance of traditional coastal steamships that once navigated the archipelago.

The maritime theme is evident in various aspects of the building. Along the northeast facade, there are walkways extending from the second floor and upwards. Along the southwest facade, there are longitudinal balconies that mirror the walkways on the other side. These balconies imitate the wooden decks that lead to the cabins on boats. All exterior doors have circular windows, similar to those commonly seen on classic boat models, with frosted glass to allow light into the hallway.

In this building, there is an apartment for every stage of life, in various sizes ranging from studios at just under 40 square meters to large four-bedroom apartments that are adaptable if the family size changes.”

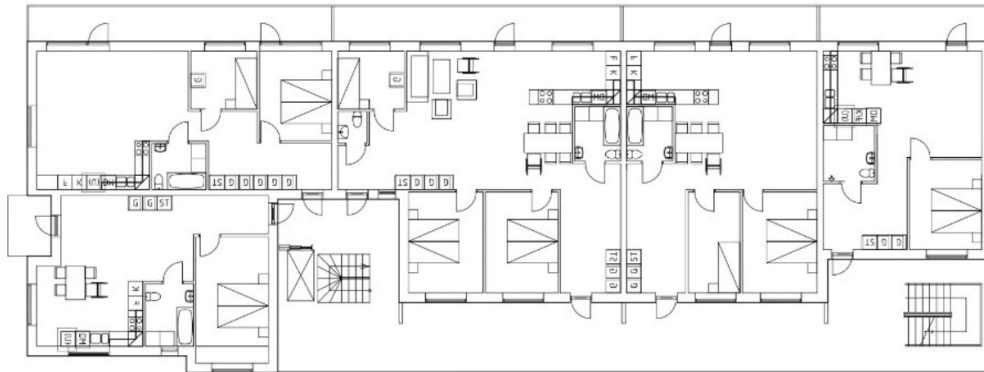


Figure 44 The original plan designed by the author in 2018.

In the original plan the apartments were designed with the intention of being light, but a few other qualities were pushed down the priority list because of that. One downside of the old plans are the quite long and dark hallways. There were also broken sightlines, and limited flexibility. The kitchens were often limited in size and awkwardly placed. A topic of conversation at the time was the walkway, or access balcony, in the front. It's something that definitely reduces privacy, but as it made all apartments have light from at least two directions. Since the walkway has an access point in both ends there is technically no need to pass that many apartments to reach your destination.

The light in the main living room of these apartment is their strongest feature, and also the nearness of bedrooms and bathrooms, so you never have to cross the entire apartment in the middle of the night. A downside of this is that bedrooms therefore have to be situated by the front door as that is where a bathroom is also often needed.

In the changed plan daylight is still an important feature, but more through the use of sightlines and open entrance halls. The main goal here was to concentrate the public vs private spaces in the apartments and turn the kitchens into more usable areas. Flexibility is also a thing that was increased, and with a further knowledge of the regulations of open plan living, the apartments are closer to what would actually be produced.

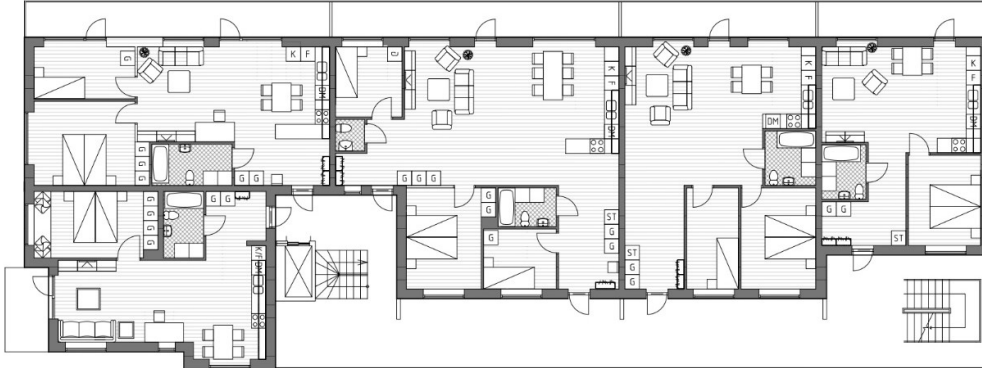


Figure 45 The updated plan designed by the author in 2023.

Just like in the previous plan the walkway is a slight problem, where daylight from two directions is prioritised over entire privacy, but the fact remains that the extra staircase makes for a probable increase in privacy for the people living in the middle apartments as many people would rather take the stairs next to their own door. The walkway was in the initial design a part of the design communication of making the building look like a boat, and therefore provide an aesthetic feature that can still be considered a fun and interesting bonus by the residents. Since the thesis regards apartment plans the choice was made to not change the footprint of the building or size of apartments, therefore the walkway remains despite its issues.

Section 1: enclosure and openness, and daylight



Figure 46 Diagrams showing enclosure, openness, and daylight. Original plans above, redesigns below.

The amount of space given to open vs closed off space in these apartments have over all stayed the same. However, the layout has changed to concentrate the open areas as much as possible to minimise the amount of narrow corridor space. This also help with the amount of daylight that enters the apartments, in combination with the choice of allowing the windows not facing the walkway to start at the floor. Having 2100mm tall windows that start from the floor is a great way to admit more daylight into the apartment.

All apartments designed here are shown with open plan to maximise the amount of daylight, as that was the main thing the interviewees spoke about. If one wanted separate kitchens and living rooms it would be possible to add extra walls for that in all apartments, although in one case it would mean accessing a bedroom from the kitchen.

The windows from the walkway provides all the apartments with daylight from two directions, which is something that is generally seen as a large bonus. The frosted glass panes in the doors also makes the entrance halls lighter without infringing on privacy. Since the combination of daylight and privacy was one of the main things talked about in the interviews, this was the priority in the main design.

Section 2: generality and flexibility, and axially

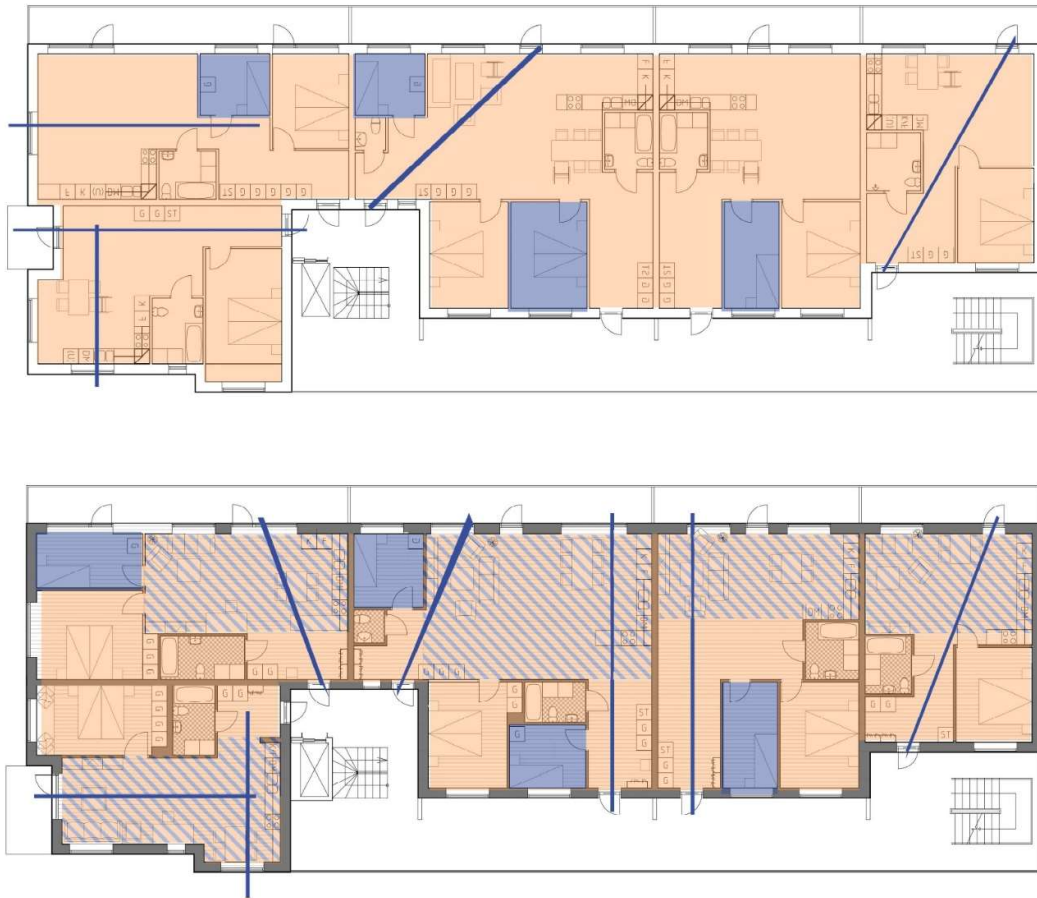


Figure 47 Diagrams showing generality, flexibility, and axially. Original plans above, redesigns below.

Flexibility is something that an apartment with an open plan has less of, and the extra room where you have the possibility to choose the purpose is often just a bedroom. The flexibility in the new plans is mostly due to the possibility of adding walls between the kitchen and living room. This is something that was not really possible with the previous plans, adding a lot more flexibility in the new plans compared to the old ones. If this change was made however, the sightlines would be somewhat changed or lost.

The sightlines in the newer design are clearer and more direct, providing with a better overview of the apartment. The new designs draw the visitor in in a much more concise way.

Section 3: movement and room organisation



Figure 48 Diagrams showing movement, and room organisation. Original plans above, redesigns below.

The room organisation is not very changed, apart from wanting to concentrate the private and semi-private areas in a better way as not to force visitors to pass too much of the personal space of the residents. The one place where there is possibility for circular motion is still in the same space, but now passes through the smaller bedroom rather than the larger since it is a room with the potential of several uses.

Kitchens and living rooms are continuously the spot one might end up stopping in. The green lines represent the flow of movement that might be seen throughout the apartments.

Material and detail

Something that is harder to show in plan is the discussion on material and detail. When it comes to materials the consensus is that sturdy materials are more desirable. Especially natural materials such as wood and stone. Wood floors, except for the entrance hall and bathrooms where stone tiles would be preferred. Stone countertops in the kitchen, and sturdy materials such as stainless steel for the appliances rather than plastic.

The main thing that was brought up during the interviews was ceiling height, so therefore the ceilings would be 2900mm tall to accommodate the wishes of people. This is another thing that will increase the amount of daylight in the apartments. A thing several people commented on was great or lacking attention to detail. This is something an architect has little to no say on, but that they might be able to strongly emphasise to the client and the construction company, so they don't cut corners to save on money. Naturally money is always an issue, but in the long run the value of the apartment would increase if the residents found it more appealing.

Final thoughts

Apartments built today have a strict set of rules to follow, in regards of both space and light. They also have some pressure on them regarding cost efficiency, which affects many aspects on quality. The thing changed in all apartments in the design phase was the room organisation. Here the choice was always made to concentrate the private areas to one location in the apartment, thus ensuring more privacy when hosting visitors. Also, the wish to keep bedrooms dark and cool was expressed by many and placing them facing north when possible is a way to ensure that.

Most apartments today have some openness, often including kitchen and living room, and often also the entrance hall. This can often remain, as long as placing a wall is possible if the residents should so wish. The openness does have the benefit of providing more sightlines that would otherwise not be there, but the disadvantage of being very public, there is no hiding dirty dishes in an open plan kitchen.

A thing many wanted more of was storage, this is something modern apartments tend to have a lot of as long as they are fairly large. In smaller apartments finding ingenious solutions for this is a fun challenge for any architect. Since the main point brought up in the interviews was the love of daylight, this should be a main focus when designing new apartments.

Answers to thesis questions and objectives

- What does people living in apartments from different design eras find to be good and bad design choices?

Good design choices mentioned are large windows, tall ceilings, sturdy materials, the option of privacy in parts of the apartment, multiple bathrooms, and apparent craftsmanship, if the apartment had plenty of storage, this was seen as a large bonus. Bad choices refer to are generally the opposite of the good ones. Combined with lack of daylight, and bad noise insulation, the list of good and bad becomes quite clear.

- Are there design choices that have fallen away or been added over the decades that are especially liked or disliked by the residents?

The more general comments about this are about the decrease of ceiling height over the years. General lack of detail work is another thing people in newer apartments are missing. However, a positive is the increased levels of insulation and safety, with better doors and windows alongside better climate control.

- What views does people living in apartments today have on the immeasurable values defined by Kjell Forshed and Ola Nylander?

When the immeasurable values were described, a few of them were difficult for the interview subjects to understand. Especially axiality, generality and flexibility, and movement. This begs the question, should the terms be changed when in talks with non-architects? The view that architecture is unintelligible and that architects are elitist is not helped by use of difficult terms. The values that were understood, however, were in general agreed upon as good ways to measure, with maybe additions of subcategories like airiness.

- How could a future apartment design look like based on these conclusions?

This question was explored further in the design suggestions, but a general rule of thumb would be to increase ceiling heights, have good built-in storage, design large window openings, and design for the possibility of a private space in the apartment. If it is possible to have more than one bathroom, this is a bonus.

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Linn Cederroth-Odrowska, interview in person 2023-04-13

Olof Bourghardt, interview in person 2023-04-19

Jonatan Fridolfsson, interview in person 2023-04-20

Magnus Lund, interview in person 2023-04-21

Key words:

Housing, style development, aesthetic values, functionality, lived reality.

Student Background/Information

Student competence

The author has previously taken part in following classes with relevance for this master project:

- Boendets rum, spring 2018

The design of a living space, and the understanding of necessary features for a home to function.

- Stadsbostaden, autumn 2018

Designing apartments in the city. Understanding spatial relationships within and between apartments.

- Arkitektur: teori och text, spring 2020

Development of research methods and the improvement of theoretical exploration within the architectural field.