

# Planning *for* Trust

*Strategies for participation in planning*



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Master's Thesis at Chalmers School of Architecture  
Master's Programme Design for Sustainable Development  
Department of Architecture and Civil Engineering

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Gothenburg, Sweden 2017

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# ABSTRACT

This thesis is about planning, communication and trust. The Swedish municipalities are responsible for the land-use planning. Planning is a complex issue with many contradictory interests. The planning architect meets the citizens in public consultations, and takes questions concerning matters that are not directly related to the specific plan. Planning architects need to have skills in communication. They have to be able to communicate with people from different contexts, and find the right way of collaborating in order to implement plans.

As time goes by, our reality will become even more complex, as the global and the local become ever more closely connected. Some of the big challenges of our time are migration, urbanisation and globalisation. These challenges put more pressure on social sustainability and democracy; the situation demands that municipalities find new ways of working, using dialogue and participation. One way is to have a continuous dialogue with their inhabitants.

The purpose of this master thesis is to gain an understanding for how participatory methods can contribute to maintaining and strengthening trust in the planning process in a Swedish context. It is also about the challenges of public meetings related to the planning process. The aim is to create strategies that planning architects can use for participation in the planning process. This is done by conducting a case study of an ongoing dialogue process in Torpa, Vänersborg municipality. The used methods are literature reviews and interviews with practicing planning architects.

The conclusion shows that structure, continuous communication, perspectives, aims, attitudes and atmosphere are important themes when it comes to participation in the planning process.

The results offer strategies for planning architects to use in their meeting with citizens, with the purpose of contributing towards a trustful planning process. The strategies are based on the themes found in the analysis



# ACKNOWLEDGEMENT

The idea of this master thesis started when I was working as a planning architect at Orust, a small municipality north of Gothenburg. Then I realized that my job is about communication and collaboration. It got clear to me that a significant part of the job is to create the collaborations that are necessary for the plan to be implemented.

I also realized that during my education I have learned about best practice in participation and dialogue. But best practice is seldom the case for practicing architects. I discovered a skeptical attitude among the citizens towards the municipality. This attitude was partly due to miscommunication or no communication between the inhabitants and the officials. In other words, the communication problems led to unnecessary distrust between the citizens and the municipalities.

Planning architects meet the citizens due to the mandatory participatory elements in the planning process. That is why I think it is essential for the planning architects to have strategies of how to communicate with the citizens. Hopefully the strategies can contribute to a trustful planning process and in the extension increase the trust for the municipality.

Thanks to all of you who let me interview you. The conversations have been interesting and I have learned a lot from you.

Thank you Lisa for sharing your knowledge with me, and thank you for the interesting discussions. Thank you Lena for constructive and valuable input.



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# I. INTRODUCTION

## I.1 Global challenges

Our society is changing rapidly. Urbanisation, migration and globalisation are three big challenges that affect our society (Abrahamsson 2015). These challenges will make our society more heterogeneous and diverse. They will also decrease the gap between the local and the global context, and contribute towards changes in power relations. The economic power will move from the western part of the world to the southern and eastern parts of the world and cities will have a stronger position than rural areas. But the tensions can also be seen within cities where there are big differences between districts (Abrahamsson 2015 p. 5).



Urbanization



Migration



Globalization

The challenges also affect the national state. More space is given to private actors in the political sphere. This development decreases the state's ability to provide a functioning welfare system, which means that the economical gap and social polarisation will increase (Abrahamsson 2015). Tendencies of limitations in the representative democracy and the global inequality between rich and poor will increase. This puts the trust in representative democracy under pressure, which has a resulting effect on social trust at a local level (Trädgårdh et al. 2013). These tendencies contribute towards social turbulence. They demand innovative ways of collaboration and dialogue between civil society, organisations and the state, which can encourage sustainable development (Abrahamsson 2015 p. 5, 37-49). New ways of collaboration between civil society and the public sector are required to help increase contact between people, and thereby strengthen the social trust among people and between civil society and the municipalities. Participation and dialogue are common in today's discussions about

sustainable development and spatial planning. Almost all Swedish municipalities are working with participation and dialogue (Tahvilzadeh 2015). Sustainable development is a complex issue of which one part is social aspects. Social sustainable development does not have a clear definition. But it is possible to divide it into two categories. One is individual well-being, the right to a decent standard of living, a right that everyone possesses. The second is the society's ability to meet complex societal issues, and the ability to strengthen social cohesiveness and societal resilience (City of Gothenburg, 2016). The local context will define social sustainability through dialogue and co-creation (Abrahamsson et al. 2016 p. 88-93). Social trust is a key component in social sustainability. Social trust is described as the social glue that tie people together (Botsman 2017). It is both about the trust to other persons but also the trust to institutions. It is based on the relations to other people in our neighborhood but it does also relate to a broader context. The social trust will increase the society's ability to meet complex social issues and create social sustainability. And it can be a way to measure if the participation and dialogue has succeeded (Abrahamsson et al. 2016).

## **1.2 The planning practice**

The pro-dialogue approach has been present in international research for several years (Nordregio 2016, 2017). It is affecting the way we work in several parts of society. One field where the pro-dialogue approach is present is in land-use planning.

In Sweden, land-use planning is managed by the municipalities. This means that the municipalities are responsible for producing planning documents that regulate how the land and water resources should be used within the municipality. Then the municipality is responsible for making sure that the plans will be implemented. The roles of the state and the municipalities have changed; they are not as strong as once were. Therefore, when implementing the plans, the municipalities are dependent on collaborations with several stakeholders (Fredriksson 2011). It is the planning architect who facilitates the planning process and the meetings related to it. A significant part of the planning process is concerned with creating collaborations between stakeholders. These collaborations are created at meetings related to the planning process. Some of the meetings are legally binding, while others are more informal. The legally binding meetings are called public consultations. The public consultations have a wide invitation and can be an asset when it comes to continuity in the dialogue between the citizens and the municipality, because they are compulsory. It is also common to hold an initial open meeting before the formal planning process starts. The aim of these meetings is to gather information about the site and inform attendees about the upcoming planning process. The planning process also includes several meetings with different stake-

holders in addition to the compulsory meetings.

There is a need to improve the planning practice in order to meet the changing demands of society (Malbert 1999). Many methods and models for dialogue and participation have been developed. Charette, design dialogue, focus groups, cultural planning, and drawing mental maps of the locality, to mention a few. Many of them are used in planning practice, and they all have their pros and cons. One problem is that these methods often attract a certain group of people, and thereby exclude others. The methods can be said to represent “best practice” for participation in planning. But best practice is seldom a realistic option for a practicing planning architect. The planning architects’ reality is complex. Time and money sets the framework of each planning project. This often means that extra efforts or new methods for participation are not always prioritised.

### **1.3 Problem formulation**

The global challenges contribute towards polarisation and heterogeneity in our society and have a direct effect on the practicing planning architect. The planning architect has to meet and collaborate with stakeholders from several different positions within society. The meeting often takes place during a public consultation. These meetings are not uncomplicated. It is not uncommon that the atmosphere is unpleasant. The planning architect becomes a conflict manager at these meetings where different interests meet and clash. The planning architect has to handle a variety of questions, often not related to the specific plan. The planning architect needs strategies that can help them conduct a good open meeting.

### **1.4 Aim and Questions**

The aim of this master thesis is to gain an understanding of how participatory methods can contribute to maintaining and strengthening trust in the planning process, in a Swedish context. It also seeks to gather knowledge about the challenges planning architects face when having meetings related to a planning project. Further, the aim is to create strategies that planning architects can use in open meetings with citizens.

How can participatory methods contribute to maintaining and strengthening trust in the planning process?

What are the success factors for participatory methods according to literature?

What does the planning architect need to apply best practice knowledge at an open meeting?

## **I.5 Delimitation**

This thesis is about trust, collaboration and planning in a Swedish context. The main focus is on how to create and maintain trust, through participation, between the citizens and the planning process and, by extension, the municipality. In addition, the thesis touches upon social trust among citizens, but does not elaborate or dig deeply into that field.

## **I.6 Translation of technical terms**

Plan- och bygglagen 2010:900 - Planning and Building Act 2010:900.  
The legalisation that regulates planning and building in Sweden.

Samrådsmöte- Public consultation

Samrådsredogörelse- Public consultation report

Tjänsteskrivelse- Official document

Tjänsteperson- Official

Översiktsplan- Comprehensive plan

Vindbruksplan- Thematic addition of windmills to the comprehensive plan

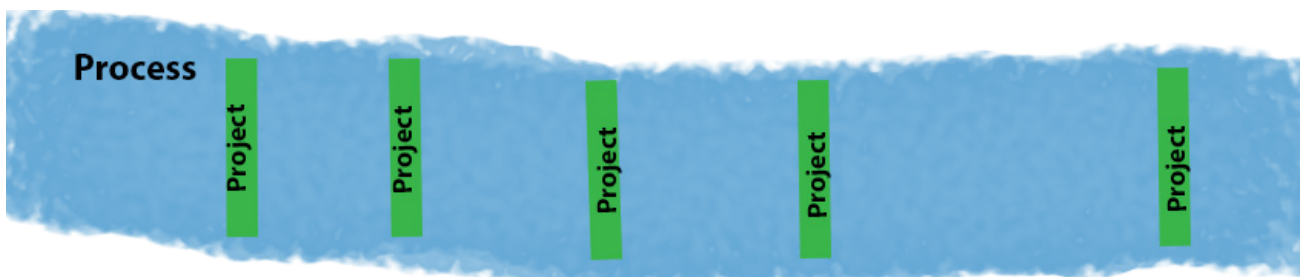
Fördjupad översiktsplan- In-depth comprehensive plan. This term does not exist in the legalization but is a common term among planning architects. In the legalisation, it is called a change in the comprehensive plan for a certain area.

Områdesbestämmelser- Area regulation

## 1.7 Key concepts

Several key concepts are used frequently in this thesis. These concepts can have slightly different meanings. I will therefore explain what they mean to me.

Process and Project are two of the concepts. Process is a pattern that leads to a change. It has a clear topic but no clear delimitation in time, and can go on forever. Project has a delimitation in time, or budget. But it can also have a delimitation in both time and budget. A project is therefore shorter or less extensive than a process. A project can be part of a process. One example is a dialogue process related to a specific site. That process can include projects, with one project being about improving lighting. When the lighting project is finished, the process can go on with other projects.



Three other concepts that are related to each other are Methods, Models and Tools. These are all words that can describe ways of doing something, for example how to involve citizens in the planning process. Some are called methods, other tools or models. To make things clear and simple I have chosen to call all of them methods. The term Stakeholder is often used in relation to planning. A stakeholder is someone that has an interest and investment in a planning project. They can be someone living in the project area, organisations in the area, a store owner, a developer. They can also be institutions such as the County Administrative Board or the Swedish Transport Administration.

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## **1.8 Methods**

### ***Introduction***

Several methods have been used to collect information about trust and participation in planning. The methods used are case study, observations, interviews, and literature reviews. How the methods have been used and to what purpose are described below.

### ***Case study***

A case study has been conducted in order to get a picture of how a dialogue process can work. The case that has been studied is an ongoing dialogue process in the municipality of Vänersborg, called Development Area Torpa. By following the case study of Torpa, Vänersborg, attending meetings and having interviews, information about the problems, opportunities and benefits of the dialogue process has been collected.

One of the benefits of a case study is that you can use several other methods in conjunction with the case study. This makes the case study a good method to use when you want to get an in-depth understanding of the context and the challenges of a scenario (Denscombe 2009 p. 70-73). It is hard to form conclusions that are relevant on a general level from one small-scale case study. But it can contribute some knowledge about the topic in certain cases (Denscombe 2009 p. 74). The methods used in the case study are interviews, observation and document studies.

### ***Interviews***

Qualitative semi-structured interviews have been conducted with people that have been involved in the dialogue process in Torpa. Officials at the municipality, the CEO at Vänersborgsbostäder and an individual living in Torpa have been interviewed. The interviewees were chosen because they have different backgrounds and have various reasons for being involved in the process. The aim for the interviews was to get an understanding of the process and to obtain knowledge about the challenges of dialogue processes and the meetings related to them. A summary of the interviews can be found in the appendix.

Beside, the interviews related to Torpa, five planning architects have been interviewed. The interviewees were chosen because of their interest in participation in planning. Two of the interviewees are employed at an architecture firm with a focus on social sustainability and participation. The other three interviewees are working for the municipality of Lerum. Lerum has a strong focus on sustainability and has worked with participatory processes on several occasions. The



aim for these interviews was to acquire knowledge about the challenges planning architects face in open meetings related to the planning process. When conducting the interviews an interview guide was used. The guide questions set the framework for the conversation and additional questions were asked when needed. The interviews were recorded and notes were taken. After the interview a summary of the discussions related to each question was written down, along with time markers designating a time to each question, to make it easier to find in the recordings. The content of the interviews was analysed by comparing and analysing common issues with key words and themes found when reviewing the literature.

An interview is a conversation between two people that is navigated by one of the individuals, the interviewer. It is a qualitative method that is frequently used in social science research. The core of an interview is the intersubjective interaction between the participants (Kvale 1997 pp.12-15, 65-66). The qualitative interview seeks to uncover qualitative knowledge about a specific topic. The interview can take unintended directions depending on what the interviewee finds relevant and interesting, but still keeps focus on a specific topic. A semi-structured interview allows for follow-up questions, during which the discussion can be developed, and certain issues can be further explored (Denscombe 2009 pp.234-235 & Kvale 1997 pp.35-37).

### **Observations**

By attending meetings that were part of the dialogue process in Torpa, information about how they were arranged and who participated was collected. The meetings were of various types. Open meetings with officials from the municipality and participants living in the area were conducted, as well as internal planning meetings at the municipality. A seminar at the Region of Gothenburg was also attended. The topic of the seminar was co-creation and during the seminar municipalities from the region shared their experiences relating to the topic. Torpa was one of the examples presented and discussed at the seminar. The purpose of the observations was to study how the meetings were arranged, who participated and what topics were discussed. During the meetings notes were taken and summaries of the participants' observations were written following the meetings. The analysis was conducted in a similar way to the interview analysis, with key words and themes being selected. The summaries contain information about topics that were discussed, how many participated and which stakeholders were present. Reflections from the meetings have also been written down in the summaries.

Observation is a good way of obtaining information about on-going social processes. When using participant observation, you have the benefit of getting a holistic understanding and are able to see the relation between different aspects and people. But the reliability of

the observations can be questioned. The method is very dependent on the researcher's point of view which makes it hard to repeat the study (Denscombe 2009 pp. 288-293).

### ***Literature and document studies***

To get an understanding of the dialogue project in Torpa meeting protocols and other documents such as PowerPoint presentations from earlier years of the project have been read and reviewed. The information gained from the documents has been a complement to the observations and interviews to gather an understanding of how the process has proceeded. The information in the documents has been analysed together with the interviews and the observations, again by using key words and themes.

To better understand the concepts of trust, governance and co-creation, literature related to the topics has been studied. Keywords and themes have been screened from the literature. These keywords and concepts then formed part of the analysis of the observations and interviews. The literature was chosen according to topic; and selected for its relevance to participation in planning.

To read protocol and other documents is a good way of effectively gathering a large amount of information. It is also easy to go back and check something when needed. But one should keep in mind that the documents are coloured by the people who wrote them; thus the researcher needs to approach them with a critical eye (Denscombe 2009 pp. 316-317).

### ***1.9 Disposition***

The first chapter introduces the topic of this thesis and the problems related to it. The main questions and purpose are presented together with a description of some key concepts and the delimitation of this thesis.

The second chapter describes the Swedish planning practice. The third chapter gives a picture of the issue of trust. Chapter 4 describes the difference between government and governance, and the shift from the former to the latter. Best practice for participatory methods is presented in the fifth chapter.

In the sixth chapter the case study of Torpa in Vänersborgs municipality is presented. Chapter 7 presents the interviews with planning architects. In the eighth chapter the conclusions and results of the empirical material study are presented.

The strategies that are based on the conclusions of the empirical material are presented in the ninth chapter.

The tenth chapter contains a discussion of and reflection on the thesis.



# 2.PLANNING IN SWEDEN

## 2.1 History

The Swedish municipalities have a monopoly on land-use planning. Each municipality has the responsibility of deciding how the land and water resources should be used within their geographical delimitations. The municipalities are responsible for conducting investigations and compiling the planning documents that are necessary for the aim of the plan. Only the municipality has the mandate to adopt a plan (Boverket, 2016). The municipalities' power over the planning has historically been weak, both in relation to private land-owners and the state. But it has slowly changed through legalisation and added abilities to purchase and sell land (Blücher& Graninger 2006 pp. 137-147).

Historically planning practice was managed by the state. But in 1907 there was a change in the legalisation concerning planning. The change implied that the municipalities were given the monopoly on planning. The monopoly gave the municipalities the right to buy land that should be used for the common good, for example roads or other common ground. But it was also a duty; the municipalities had to own land for the common good. From 1907 the municipalities started to compile planning documents and approve of them. The king had to approve and sign the documents, but he had no right to oppose them. Since then the monopoly has been questioned and there have been modifications in the law that debilitated and strengthened the monopoly in a back and forth repetition (Blücher& Graninger 2006 pp. 135-137).

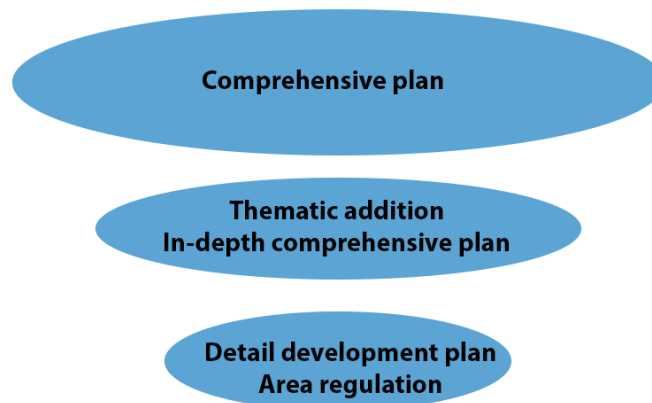
The size of the municipalities has changed over the years. The municipalities were previously much smaller than they are today, and every village once had their own board. That board had a connection to a regional board that was connected to the state. This system made the decision-making come closer to the people (Herlitz 2017). But during the late 1800s up until 1970 there were several municipal reforms. The small municipalities were merged into larger units, which meant that the democratic process was moved away from the small villages, becoming more centralised. The reasons for the reforms was the industrialisation and the urbanism. People were moving into the cities and the population in rural municipalities declined. The merging was a way to make the welfare system function in the municipalities with decreasing population (Länsstyrelsen 2007).

During the 70s the monopoly had its peak; the municipalities were strong with a lot of resources. The reason for their strong position was the state's goals for housing development, which included subventions for housing built on municipally owned land, etc. (Blücher& Graninger 2006 pp. 143-144). The 'million homes' program was built during this peak. The planning process was rational and effective. Today the monopoly is not as strong as it was during the 70s, despite still existing legally. Both the state and private land-owners have a stronger position than in the 70s (Blücher& Graninger 2006 pp. 137-147). However, the municipalities are still responsible for land-use planning; they have to plan and design new housing, infrastructure, services etc. within the borders of their municipality. The planning activities are regulated by the Planning and Building Act, PBL 2010:900.

In 1987 the planning and building legislation was changed. The change aimed for more citizen participation, to increase democracy and contribute to a modern planning practice (Heneke & Khan 2002). Since then there have been several changes that also aimed to encourage more participation and democracy in the planning process. But it also aimed to increase the discussion about planning and future development in the local context, intending to bring planning practice closer to the local context, where it should be implemented (Heneke & Khan 2002). The planning process has moved from being a rational process towards being a collaborative or communicative process. The changes in the planning legalisation imply that the citizens' participation has a more central role than previously (Khakee 2006).

## 2.2 The planning instruments and the process

The land use planning in Sweden is regulated by PBL 2010:900. There are three types of plans; Comprehensive plan, Detail development plan and Area regulation.



### ***Comprehensive plan***

Each municipality has a comprehensive plan that sets the guidelines for the long-term development of the physical environment. The comprehensive plan is not legally binding but it provides guidance for further decisions of how land and water resources should be used, as well as how the built environment will be used, developed and maintained. The comprehensive plan shall be reviewed every fourth year. In the comprehensive plan, the municipality shall report the basic features of the intended land and water use, how the municipality aims to conserve and develop the built environment, and how national interests and environmental quality objectives are to be met. The comprehensive plan should also show how the municipality coordinates the planning with national and regional objectives that have relevance for the specific municipality (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 3 Sections 1- 5). The plan must be designed so that its content and consequences are clearly stated (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 3 Section 6).

It is possible to make a thematic addition or a change to a certain area when following the comprehensive plan (SFS 2010:900 Chapter 3 Section 23). The change for a certain area is often called an in-depth comprehensive plan. The in-depth comprehensive plan is used when more specific guidelines for an area are needed, for a village, for example. One common addition to the comprehensive plan is guidelines for windmill development. This addition has recommendations for how and where windmills are allowed to be put up. Neither of these plans is legally binding but sets the framework for, and should be seen as a guideline for future development (SFS 2010:900 Chapter 3 Sections 23-24).

The Swedish National Agency for Housing, Building and Planning points out that the in-depth comprehensive plan is a good instrument for concretising but also communicating the municipality's intentions for land use in a specific area (Boverket 2017a ). In-depth comprehensive planning which is based on a collaboration between the local society and the municipality is an important tool in moving towards sustainable development (Arén & Herlitz 2017). If this plan is produced in a close collaboration with the inhabitants and other stakeholders it can be a concrete and well- anchored document of the development at the specific context. It could provide a common vision and guidance for the local society (Arén & Herlitz 2017).

### ***The process***



According to PBL 2010: 900 Chapter 3 Section 9, the municipality must share their proposal with the County Administrative Board and affected municipalities, regional planning bodies and other municipal bodies that are responsible for work involving regional growth and transport infrastructure planning. The municipality will also give its inhabitants, other authorities, associations and individuals with a significant interest in the plan, the opportunity to participate in the consultation. The purpose of the consultation is to gather as much knowledge as possible and to provide the opportunity for transparency and impact.

A wide public consultation should occur as early as possible in the planning process. In the beginning of the planning process the need for ideas is substantial, as is the opportunity for impact. The consultation should also continue as far as possible during the planning process. Citizens' dialogue in the planning process is important for various reasons. Decisions made without the citizens having an opportunity to influence them, have often had difficulty being widely accepted. Citizens' participation in the planning process is also important in order to create a comprehensive decision-making basis (Boverket 2014).

After the public consultation, the plan may be edited and brushed up according to the comments received during the public consultation. When this is done, the plan must be exhibited for at least two months. Anyone wishing to submit comments during the exhibition must do so in writing to the municipality. After the exhibition, the municipality must compile the opinions that have been submitted in a special report and



account for such proposals that may arise from these opinions. If the plan proposal is substantially edited following the exhibition, the municipality must exhibit the plan proposal again. (Boverket 2017a, SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 3 Sections 17-18). It is the municipal council that adopts the plan. When the plan is adopted it comes into force (SFS 2010: 900 3 Chapter Section 21).

### ***Detail development plan and Area regulation***

The detail development plan and area regulation are the instruments that are used when the municipality wants to legalise the guidelines in the comprehensive plan. The differences are that the area regulation does not give permission for buildings. Instead it is used for the conservation of existing buildings of cultural value. It is also used for the reservation of land for a certain purpose e.g. a road that will be part of a future detail development plan (Boverket 2017a). The purpose of the area regulation should be presented in a document. The document has to clearly present how the built environment and the surrounding environment are affected by the regulations (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 4 Section 43).

The detail development plan is a legally binding document, and shall consist of a map with the requirements to achieve the purpose of the plan. The plan area may not be larger than required in relation to the plan's purpose and implementation time. Along with the plan map, there should also be a description of how the plan should be understood, and a plan description (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 4 Sections 30-32).

The implementation time shall be at least five years and no more than fifteen years (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 4 Section 21). The municipality shall, through a detailed development plan, review the suitability of new buildings. The municipality shall also indicate public places, landmarks and water areas, as well as the boundaries of these areas (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 4 Section 2-5). The municipality may choose which regulations will apply in each area. The plan may not contain more requirements than necessary to achieve the purpose of the plan, and all plans must be supported by the Planning and Building Act. The provisions must be clear as to what is contained and what is omitted (Boverket 2017a). The detail development plan is binding upon the examination of building permits. It also governs the rights and obligations between landowners and the municipality. It shall also specify who is the authority responsible for specific public spaces. Usually the municipality is the authority with responsibility for public places, but the municipality may transfer that responsibility to a private property owner or community association. The principal is responsible for arranging

and maintaining these places (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 4 Section 7).

When carrying out a detail development plan it is possible to choose from four processes depending on the complexity of the plan. The first is called the standard procedure and shall be used if the plan is in line with the comprehensive plan, and is not of significant interest to the general public (Boverket 2017a, SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 5 Section 6). The municipality shall have a public consultation and review before the plan can be adopted by the municipal board. The public consultation shall include the county administrative board, cadastral survey authority, affected municipalities, known property owners, residents and tenants' associations. The municipality is not required to consult known property owners, residents and tenants' associations if it is obvious that the plan is uninteresting to them. The purpose of the consultation is to create as good a decision-making basis as possible, but also to give relevant insights and influence (PBL 2010: 900 Chapter 5 Sections 11-12).

After consultation, the proposal may be up-dated according to the comments received. It is possible for the municipal council to adopt the plan after the consultation, if there are no comments and the stakeholders accept the plan (Boverket 2017a). This procedure is called limited procedure.



But according to the standard procedure a review should be held. The proposal shall be announced for review. The review period should be at least three weeks, but will be shorter if all concerned stakeholders reach an agreement. The announcement will be announced on the municipality's notice board and in the local newspaper (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 5 Sections 18-19). The municipality then compiles all written comments in a review report. It is important that the review statement outlines the views which the municipality does not take into account. The municipality must inform those whose views are not implemented as soon as possible (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 5 Sections 23-24). Following the review, the detailed plan is adopted by the municipal council. The decision will take effect within three weeks, unless the decision is appealed or the county administrative board decides to review the decision (SFS 2010: 900 Chapter 5 Section 27).







# 3. TRUST

## 3.1 Trust a complex issue

Trust is a complex issue that can be defined in several ways. It is closely connected to the individual and the individual's well-being, but at the same time it affects society as a whole. It is described as the social glue that binds people together (Botsman 2016). The benefits of social trust are more effective societies and organisations and helpful collaborations (Rothstein 2013).

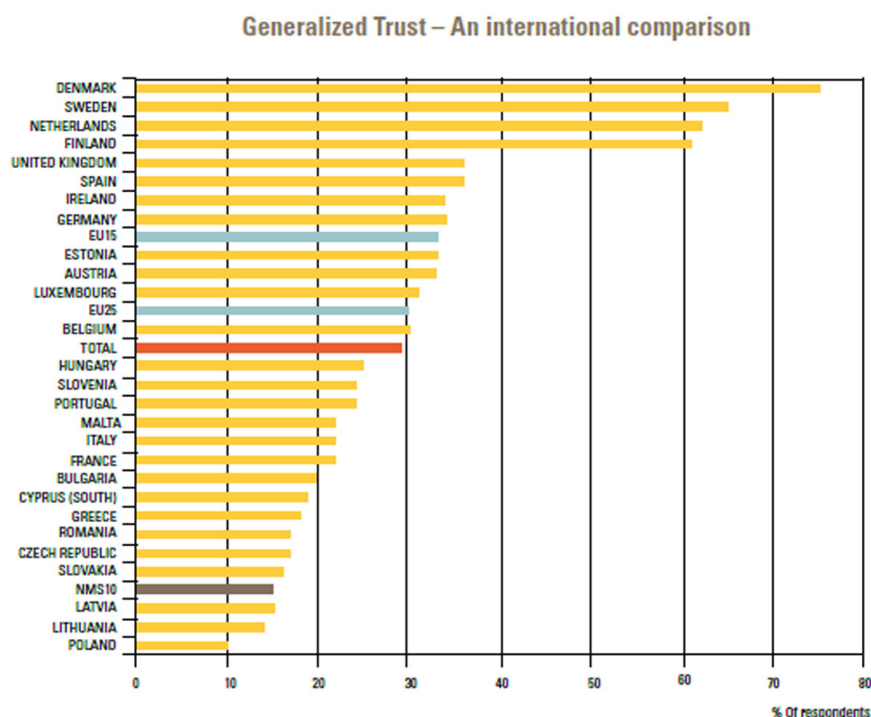
Trust has developed over time. Until the mid-1800s it was locally anchored within the village you lived in. You all knew each other and trusted each other. If one did not behave well the news spread around the village, so that everyone knew who was trustworthy and who was not. During the mid-1800s society was going through a huge change. Urbanisation was strong and changed society's structure and with it the social trust. The trust moved from the relations between people to authorities. Authorities were needed to handle the huge number of people. Institutional trust was developed and the trust in other individuals declined (Botsman 2016). Institutional trust has decreased during the last few decades, and there is a change towards a distributed trust, on a global level. This is due to the technological developments that allow us to have interactions and exchanges with people we have not personally met; one example of this is Airbnb (Botsman 2016).



### 3.2 Trust in a Swedish context

In an international perspective, the Nordic societies are fairly equal, both in terms of economical income among groups but also between the genders. Sweden has a comprehensive welfare system that makes the individual independent; they do not have to rely on the help of other people, such as friends and family, in order to have a good life. The system includes social insurance based on the individual's income, equal access to education, health care and pension. This system has contributed to an equal society regarding economical differences between groups. But it has also led to a positive approach to the market economy. People are confident that they are protected from extreme risks thanks to the welfare system, leading to flexibility on the labour market (Berggren & Trädgårdh 2011). The Swedish societal contract is based on a good relation between the state and the individual. The view of the state is that it is allied with the vulnerable groups in society. There is a general negative attitude towards hierarchies between people in general but also within institutions, which is markedly different to the attitudes held in the USA and other European countries (Berggren & Trädgårdh 2011).

Trust in other individuals and in institutions in Sweden and the Nordic countries is high, and has been stable throughout the last few years compared to the rest of Europe. A reason for this is a strong welfare system that has helped establish individual freedom and equality (Trädgårdh et al. 2013, Berggren & Trädgårdh 2011).



Source: the EuroBarometer 62.2 (2004). Data weighted.  
(Berggren & Trädgårdh 2011)

In recent years this development has taken another direction. The state has weakened, services that were previously offered by the state have now been privatised. There are a lot more services to choose from. You are free to choose which school your children shall go to, which healthcare centre you want to access etc. Global challenges such as wars and climate change, and resulting migration, will affect countries such as Sweden, despite these global challenges originating in other parts of the world. This means that Swedish society is becoming more open to diversity, challenging the social structure and the social trust (Abrahamsson 2015, Montin 2016). Though, these trends is not confirmed in the latest surveys about trust in Sweden. Swedish societies are more heterogeneous than ever, but social trust is still stable (Strömbäck 2017). The survey shows that 95 percent feel that they are part of society and 85 percent feel that they are needed by society. But it is possible to find differences between groups. People with high education and some degree of wealth have a stronger social cohesion (Strömbäck 2017 pp.4-8). The social trust seems stable at the moment, in a Swedish context. But no one knows what the future holds. The societies are getting more diverse and heterogeneous, which may contribute to a change in the trust.

### **3.3 Different types of trust**

Trust can be categorised into individual trust, inter-organisational trust and trust in institutions. Individual trust is the trust in another person. This trust is based on expectations and knowledge about how the other person will act. It is about acceptance of being vulnerable to another person in order to get something positive in exchange. Individual trust is fragile and takes time to build and is dependent on common positive experiences. (Rousseau et al. 1998, Trädgårdh et al. 2013) This type of relation is about give and take; you can not expect someone to give you something if you do not give something in return. Inter-organisational trust is the trust between different organisations, but also the trust individuals have in the organisations. It is based on knowledge about the organisation and expectations about its actions (Rousseau et. al 1998). The third type of trust is institutional trust. This is the trust that persons have in institutions such as laws and social rules and norms, as well as in governments and institutions (Rousseau et al 1998).

Trust is closely connected to the concept of social capital. Rothstein (2003) explains that trust is another term for social capital. He defines it as the amount of contacts a person has, multiplied by the degree of faith in them. Putnam (2009) defines social capital as connections among social networks and the norms of exchange and trustworthiness that arise from them. He means that there is birding and bounding social capital. The bonding social capital is strengthening a certain



group and are built on recognitions, it can also increase the gap to another group. The bridging social capital is decreasing that gap. because it is linking people from different groups to each other (Putnam 2000).

Strong and weak ties are a concept that is related to trust and social capital. The concept of strong and weak ties can be explained as a way of placing a value on social connections to others. Strong ties are based on spending a lot of time with particular individuals, which will lead to a strong sense of trust between them. These relations are common in the family or among close friends. The weak ties are connections to people you recognize in your neighborhood or social sphere, people you have not spent much time with but still have some kind of relation to.

Weak ties have a bridging function and keep the society together (Granovetter 1973). One important aspects when it comes to strengthen and maintain social capital and trust is to have a broad network and thereby the ability to access the right information, help or service when needed (Castell 2010 p,22- 23). If you feel that you have that ability you feel that you are part of the society. And if you are part of the society you are also able to affect the development and future in your surroundings. If the municipalities have strategies for strengthen the weak ties to the citizens it can contribute to engagement and development from a bottom up perspective.

### **3.4 How to create and maintain trust?**

Putnam (2000) argues that social trust is developed in interpersonal relations. He proposes that voluntary engagement in associations will increase social capital. Further he states that large/powerful governments can have a negative effect on social trust, hindering people from gaining social trust.

This perspective is something that is questioned by Rothstein (2011). High levels of trust are connected to low levels of corruption (Rothstein 2011). Public institutions and the officials working in them have an important role when it comes to social trust. Rothstein (2013) believes that people gain their social trust by evaluating the society they live in. He suggests that if public officials are known to be corrupt and untrustworthy, people will draw the conclusion that most other people cannot be trusted either. If officials are corrupt, most other people will take part in that corruption in order to get what they want. Then the individual will realise that to get by he himself has to participate in the corruption. If a society has corrupt officials it will lead to decreasing social trust among the citizens (Rothstein 2013:1019-1020).



Communication, collaboration, rules and contracts are important components when it comes to trust in processes. Trust, contracts and rules are necessary to create a process that functions smoothly. Regulations about how to collaborate, communicate and create cooperative action through the process are components that can create and maintain trust in a process (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010).

It is the institutions that set the rules for the process. There are both formal and informal institutions. The formal institutions are laws, organisations and rules. Examples of informal institutions are social values and norms, which are implemented in guidelines etc. These aspects are also affecting the formation and maintenance of trust. They can both build up and break down trust (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010 pp. 5-6).

While rules and regulations of how to communicate play an important role in creating and maintaining trust, they can also be a sign of distrust. If there was trust in the process the rules should not be needed (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010 p. 5). When a process functions well the regulations are not very important, because the stakeholders trust each other and collaborate thanks to this trust. But to first reach a process that the stakeholders trust, it is beneficial to have regulations that express the rules that should be followed. The regulations and contracts express the trust between the stakeholders. From this point of view trust and regulations complement each other.

Planning is a complex issue involving many stakeholders and conflicting interests. It is up to the stakeholders to understand, negotiate and collaborate with each other. Trust is an important component in complex contexts. It can be the component that chiefly contributes to a smoother process. In a complex situation with many stakeholders it is easier to reach innovative and good solutions if trust exists (Switzer Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010 p. 4). Stakeholders who trust the planning process and the other stakeholders involved are more likely to accept the decisions reached even if their needs are not fully met (Laurian 2009 pp. 369-371). A planning process filled with trust is more resilient than one without trust. If stakeholders trust in a process they are more willing to discuss conflicts with others before disrupting the planning process. (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010 p. 4)

But it can be a problem if the trust in a process is connected to one specific person. If that person leaves the process and is replaced by another it can contribute to decreasing trust in the process. To keep the trust in the process it is important to have rules on how to deal with conflicts, how to communicate, how benefits are distributed and how one stakeholder is able to leave the process (Edelenbos & Klijn 2007 pp. 30-37)

### 3.5 Summary

Trust is a complex issue but it is something that can help create smoother processes and a well-functioning society. It is closely connected to social capital and can be seen as the same issue. Social trust is developed through meeting other individuals; it is in meeting with others that you increase your social trust. Public officials are important when it comes to social trust, which becomes clear in the Nordic and Swedish contexts. Lack of corruption is one aspect that is crucial when it comes to trust in institutions.

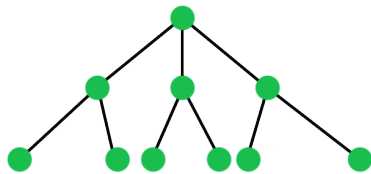
Even though the level of trust seems stable at the moment, there are global changes that might affect it in the long run. Therefore, it is important to work on the trust both by voluntary engagement but also through public institutions.

To meet and interact with people is very important for social capital to grow. Rules are also important for people to trust a process, as they can be a way of showing that people trust each other in a process, but they can also be a sign of distrust. To communicate and have someone that leads are also important factors helping create trust in a process.

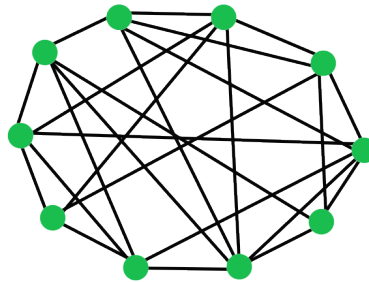
# 4. FROM GOVERNMENT TO GOVERNANCE

## 4.1 Governance in general

Our societies have traditionally been steered by national states through formal governmental procedures. But in the last few decades this form of government has started to shift towards another type of governing called governance (Abrahamsson 2016).



*Governing has traditionally been a top down activity managed by the states, but the last decades it has changed towards a network activity managed by stakeholders from civil society, called governance.*



The shift towards governance implies a change in the relation between the civil society, the market and the state. The national state's sovereignty started to decrease. Politics that affect the local society are formed outside of the national state, e.g. by the European Union institutions, the United Nations or the World Bank Group (Abrahamsson 2016). At the same time, the role of regional and local autonomy is increasing, which means that local and regional networks have started to influence how politics are implemented (Montin & Hedlund 2009 p. 10). It also affects how resources are used to handle societal problems, because of global networks consisting of actors from the private and public sectors now influencing politics. The public administrations have started to shift towards a market-oriented approach, or autonomy networks. This change has affected the representative democracy; representative politicians have started to lose their role as decision-makers. The ideal and function of representative democracy has started to decrease and be replaced by others forms of democracy and participation (Montin & Hedlund 2009 p. 10). The change towards governance makes the nation states weaker. They do not have the same power and resources to govern anymore. Even though the states are getting weaker, some of their traditional functions are still important. For example, foreign affairs and defense are dependent

on states and formal legal procedures (Torfing 2012).

Governance can be understood as a new way of steering and controlling society and economy, through networks consisting of actors from both the private and the public sectors (Montin & Hedlund 2009, Abrahamsson 2016, Torfing 2012). But this perspective is not unquestioned. There is a perception that network governing has been present in Sweden for many years. There is also a perception that the development has gone in the other direction, towards more hierarchies and formal structures of governing the society (Montin & Hedlund 2009 pp. 8, 23-30). According to Montin & Hedlund (2009) 'governance' is a word that explains that the state does not govern alone, but in collaboration with other actors, and that it is not something new (Montin & Hedlund 2009 p. 13).

However, our society is complex and is becoming ever more diverse, heterogeneous and complex. The challenges we are facing; increased migration, urbanisation and stronger connections between the local and the global, need to be handled with a broad understanding of the problems these challenges create (Abrahamsson 2016). We need to find new ways of collecting knowledge that is relevant in a local context in order to meet the complexity of our society and to work towards sustainable development. To deepen democracy and make sure that what is done in the municipal organisations is relevant, it is important to see citizens as a source of knowledge. Adler (2015) suggests that at the same time as the citizen's perspective has to be taken into account, the officials opinions and knowledge should not be reduced. She means that the municipality plays a central role in increasing citizens' participation and developing new methods of collaboration between the private and public sectors (Adler 2015 p. 15).

## **4.2 Governance in the Swedish Planning Practice**

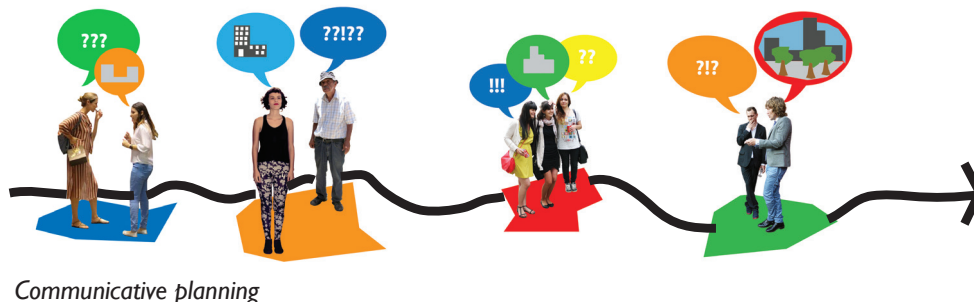
Governance is something that has influenced the planning practice as well. In general, it is possible to say that the planning practice has gone from being a rational top-down approach to being a bottom-up approach with focus on co-ordination and collaboration between several actors (Malbert 1999).

Planning is something that has been managed and implemented by the states and municipalities. In a Swedish context municipalities are responsible for developing and implementing land use plans. Rational planning and communicative planning are two planning theories that have had an influence on Swedish planning legalisation (Strömgren 2007). Rational planning is described as a normative process, and is based on the belief in an absolute truth and that the planner is a neutral expert capable of using scientific methods and conducting investigations that are needed to find the best planning proposal. If it

is possible to describe the result of a process with rational arguments, it can be called a rational process (Allmendinger 2009 pp. 63-70). ate between the politicians and the citizens (Allmendinger 2009 p, 197-198 & Strömgren 2007 p, 46-49)



Communicative planning has its focus on the participants and argues that consensus will be reached through discussions and dialogue. The society is viewed as a complex system undergoing constant change. There is no objective truth, but everyone constructs their own truth using their individual social experiences. The planner's role in communicative planning is to be the perceptive and to mediate between the politicians and the citizens (Allmendinger 2009 pp. 197-198 & Strömgren 2007 pp. 46-49)



The Swedish planning legalisation includes both rational and communicative elements. The process may appear rational because it is often described as a linear process that is managed by the municipality. But it also includes elements of participation and collaboration, in the public consultations.

The process has developed over time. In the 1960s municipalities were strong and the planning process was more rationally-driven than it is today. The politicians decided what the plans should contain and the planners were the experts that led the process, and made sure that it was implemented. But during the 1980s the planning practice changed into a more communicative and collaborative process (Strömgren 2007) where creating collaboration between key stakeholders is the dominant task (Fredriksson 2011 p. 88).

Hamdi (2004) argues that if one accept that our reality is complex with quick changes, it is also a fact that development is an ongoing process that can not be started or stopped (Hamdi 2004 p, 130). In the context

of constant change, it can be relevant to challenge the concept of consensus. Because it is impossible to reach consensus in a context that is constantly changing (Hamdi 2004 p, 130-140). The focus should be on the process rather than the goal. To make the process work well it is crucial to involve stakeholders and create collaborations.

There is a need to improve the planning practice in order to meet the changing demands of society (Malbert 1999). The municipalities are facing a complex reality that does not correlate well with the legalisation (Fredriksson 2011 p. 66). The municipalities have to consider other aspects than they did when the legalisation was introduced. Climate change and regional collaborations are examples of these new aspects. Another aspect is creating necessary collaborations with private stakeholders. Now municipalities are more dependent on private stakeholders to implement plans than they were in the past. A big part of the planning process is about creating these necessary collaborations. But the planning process is still rational and adapted to the planning monopoly with strong municipalities, while the municipalities lack resources and the ability to implement their plans (Fredriksson 2011 pp. 66-72).

The focus on creating collaborations implies that the planning activities are happening outside the formal planning process (Fredriksson 2011). Many discussions are held and decisions are made before the formal planning process starts, which means that the plan contains a lot of informal and invisible information and decisions. This makes it important to have a dynamic process that shows how and when things have been decided.



The fact that the planning process is about communication and creating collaborations puts the planner in a new position. According to Malbert (1999) the planner needs to have skills in facilitating a planning process that involves several stakeholders. The planning architect also needs to know how to adapt the planning system to meet the needs of participants. They also need to bring knowledge from several parts of the society into the planning project. He calls this profession the Process-Designer, and argues that their role is to bridge the gap between the planning system and the stakeholders (Malbert 1999, pp. 179-181).

### 4.3 Summary

Generally there have been a change from a top-down approach in governing, both on a global and national level, to a bottom-up or network approach. It means that the governing in the national states are affected by organizations outside the national boarder, but they also collaborate with local and regional organizations within the nation. In the context of Swedish planning practice this means that the municipalities have to collaborate with several stakeholders in order to produce and implement the plans. There are many activities and processes going on that is not managed by the municipalities. A significant part of the planning practice is to find these activities and connect them to the planning project. The municipality is the constant stakeholder because of the planning monopoly. The municipality can be the sounding board, the stakeholder who can connect other stakeholders with each other and make the processes come further. This makes it reasonable to see the planning projects as something that takes part in ongoing processes rather than something that the stakeholders participates in.



*Planning that participates*





# 5. PARTICIPATION

## 5.1 Introduction

Today's discussions in philosophy and social science show that the role of participation in collective decision-making and new ways of collaboration between civil society and the state have increased (Kha-kee 2006 p. 11). Since 2002 the amount of citizen dialogues used in the Swedish municipal organisations has increased. The idea behind citizen dialogue is to deepen democracy (Tahvilzadeh 2014). This idea has spread and is an important component in the municipalities, with almost every municipality working with some kind of dialogue. One of the factors contributing towards the increasing amount of citizen dialogue is the Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions' project about citizen participation, which started in 2006. The project goal was to inspire municipalities to use more dialogue within their organisations and to develop these dialogues into a method. The pro-dialogue approach is not unique to Sweden; it is happening all over the world (Tahvilzadeh 2014 pp. 9-10).

Internationally seen, Swedish politicians are fond of party politics but at the same time fond of dialogue and deliberative processes. These practices are extremely useful in getting citizens' opinions about a certain topic, anchoring decisions in consensus, and increasing the politicians' knowledge. But they seem to be most positive to dialogue when decisions should be evaluated and less positive when the decisions are to be made (Tahvilzadeh 2014).

To reach sustainable development and to deepen democracy are two reasons to work with participation. By giving citizens the power to influence the development in their area it is possible to move towards sustainable development. Influence is crucial when it comes to the will and ability to create change. The change should start on a local level where people can see and feel that they are part of the change (Arén & Herlitz 2017 pp. 14-15). By starting the change in the local context, the global context will also be affected, because in today's world the local is closely connected to the global (Abrahamsson 2016, Falkheden 1999). Planning is one occasion to work with strengthening the local democracy and sustainable development. The planning process can be seen as something that takes part in various ongoing processes and as a starting point for new collaborations.

One way to increase the engagement in the local context and develop our representative democracy is to create local democracy organisations which can form a bridge between the local society and the municipality (Arén & Herlitz 2017, Bomble 2016).

Our society is becoming more heterogeneous due to crises in other parts of the world contributing to refugees coming to Sweden. These changes lead to the creation of a diverse and multicultural society. Dialogue and participation are ways of creating a feeling of belonging (Khakee 2006 p. 13). There are hierarchies and differences in ability to affect the decision-making in our society today. Changes which encourage more diversity and heterogeneity may increase these differences. Dialogue is a method of making these differences visible. By involving people from different backgrounds and giving voice to their points of view it is possible to empower them (Tahvilzadeh et. al 2015 pp. 194-195) It is a way of broadening perspectives about the problem, both by gathering more information but also by addressing and resolving conflicts. Participation is a way of deepening democracy (Arén & Herlitz 2017).

Khakee (2006) means that the well-fare system provides common norms that have influenced the planning practice. The common norms had a wide acceptance in the society and gave the planners a ground for the common good. The welfare system does not have the same function as before. Since the 1980s there has been a change towards market-oriented development in our society, meaning that official institutions are collaborating with stakeholders from the civil society. The role of municipal politics has changed from being the institution that provides service for the inhabitants, to focusing on creating collaborations for development in the local context. This changes the traditional ways of influencing decisions, bringing the representative democracy into question. In order to influence the development, people tend to get involved in different types of organisations instead of political parties (Khakee 2006 p. 14). This means that there is a risk that groups with a strong position in society are getting more benefits than the vulnerable groups. The decreasing perception of a common ground demands that planning architects engage in more dialogue with stakeholders (Khakee 2006 pp. 12-13).

Another argument for using dialogue and participation in planning is that they can help generate a quicker process. The dialogue can create trust in the project, and planning processes that are filled with trust produce smart solutions that could not be created without dialogue (Nylander & Eriksson 2016). Even though there are several reasons to use dialogue and participation these methods are not unquestioned. One aspect is that dialogue processes are accused of slowing down projects. Citizen participation is accused of increasing expenses, delaying the project, enabling emotional or selfish choices and creating

disagreements or conflicts. The planning architects face a complex reality and are often asked to speed up the processes, which is one reason why planning architects avoid using participation more than the law demands (Khakee 2006 p. 19).

Representation is another challenge to participation. It is difficult to make sure that everyone's voice is heard; when working with participatory processes one has to be aware of hierarchies and power relations. The planner also has to be aware of their own role and who they represent. Tunström (2009) suggests that there is a risk that the participation just ends up in a vision, and that the planner acts like a filter, choosing who gets heard and who does not. Participatory planning gives the planner a big responsibility to choose who and when they should be involved. Planners are people with their own experiences and expertise in planning, and they represent a group (Tunström pp.149-150). The fact that the planner represents a group makes it crucial for them to be aware of who participates in the process, and even more importantly, who does not.

Another criticism of citizen participation and dialogue is that it is just a symbolic action that does not lead to any actual influence on decisions, and that citizen participation is just a way for leaders to legitimise their decisions. Tahvilzadeh (2014) argues that there is a risk that participatory attempts hurt democracy rather than deepen it. He claims that there is a risk that it only results in trivial dialogues that do not help bring about what was promised at the beginning, which can make the participants feel taken advantage of and disappointed in the institution that initiated the dialogue. It is not uncommon that attempts at citizen participation are dysfunctional and result in conflicts between the citizens and officials. There is also a problem of equality and representativeness. The participatory processes seldom lead to redistribution of resources, and the participants are seldom representative of all groups in society (Tahvilzadeh 2014 pp. 12-13, 37-40). Furthermore, he claims that the general approach among politicians to participation has to change in order for dialogue processes to succeed. It is crucial that the politicians have a positive approach towards citizens, but it can be a challenge, too. It is not likely that politicians will be positive towards participation if they do not gain any political capital from giving more power to the citizens. But citizen participation also demands engagement from the citizens; without that engagement there will be no real citizen influence on the decision-making. To get the engagement of the citizens it is crucial to implement the development on their premises (Tahvilzadeh 2014 pp. 42-43).

## 5.2 Level of participation

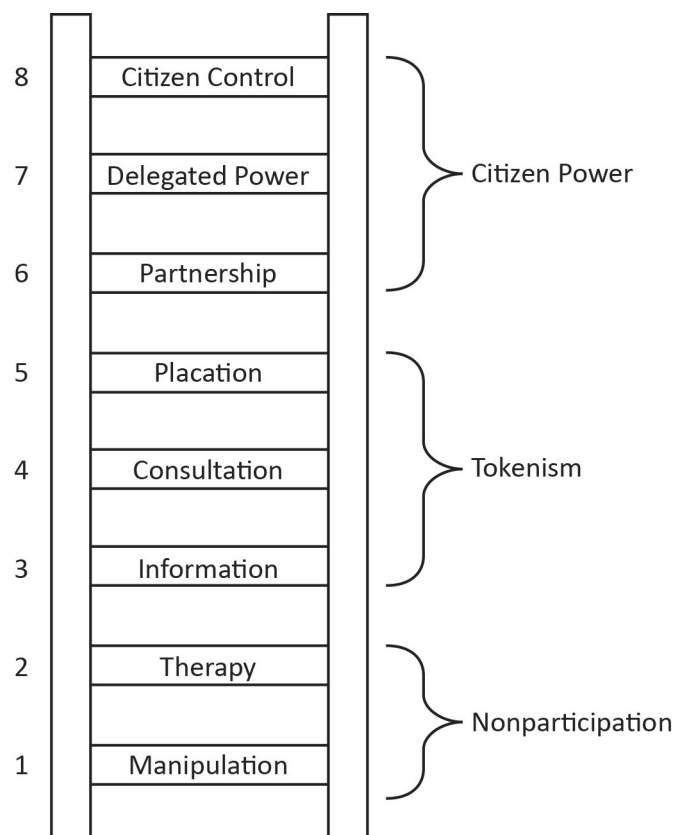
Dialogue and participation can be an asset for good decision-making but it is not uncomplicated or unquestioned. It is common to use participation and dialogue in the public administrations today, and the challenges we are facing demands us to have more collaboration between civil society and the states. This have resulted in many participatory methods, some of these will be presented below. Participation can be divided in different levels.

Arnstein (1969) explains different levels of participation through a ladder of eight steps. She divides the ladder into three parts; non-participation, tokenism and citizens' power

The first two steps she calls manipulation and therapy. These steps are not about participation, they are about educating participants, and convincing them that the proposed plan is the best solution.

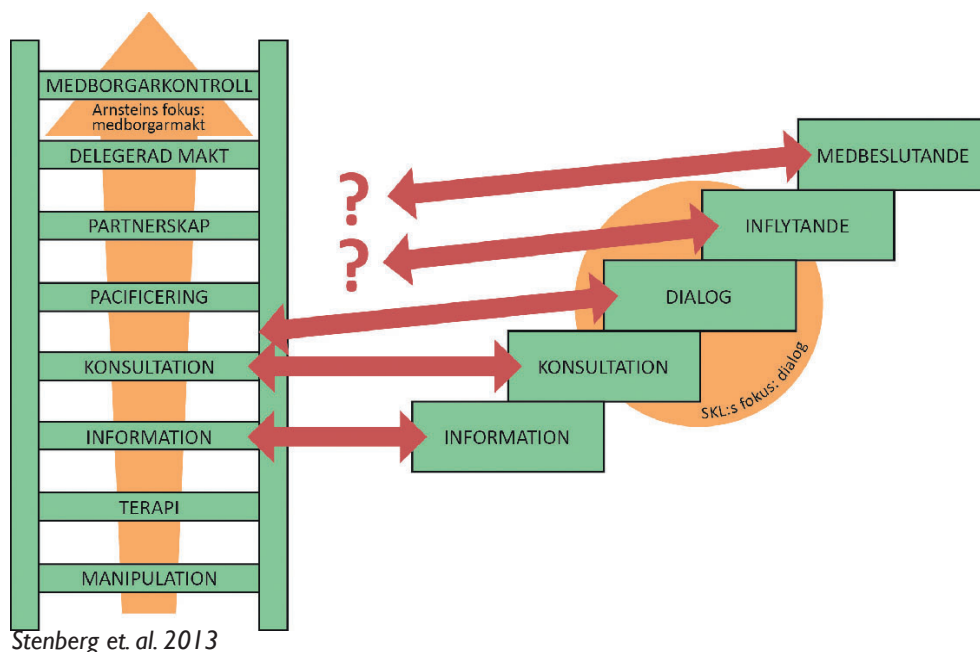
The third, fourth and fifth steps, are about giving the participants information about what is happening but no opportunity for them to give any feedback. It is about a symbolic participation; the citizens are listened to but their opinions are not considered.

The three steps at the top of the ladder are about collaboration and partnership. The citizens have direct influence over decision-making, for example by creating local boards with a budget and a clear area of action.



Stenberg et. al. 2013

This ladder has been discussed and developed in several ways since 1969. One example is SKL's participation stair. The stair has five steps. Compared to Arnstein's ladder, it lacks the first two steps because these two are not about participation. The next two steps are information and consultation which correlate to Arnstein's steps with the same name. Then there are slight differences in the steps. SKL calls the next step Dialogue. Compared to Arnstein's ladder that step would be placed somewhere between consultation and placation, where the citizens should be included in the process but their opinions do not affect the decisions. The forth step is called influence. This step does not correlate to Arnstein's partnership; it should rather be placed somewhere between partnership and placation. The citizens are part of the process from start to the finish but have no influence in the decision-making. The last step, called co-decisions, is comparable with Arnstein's partnership. The citizens have some ability to influence decisions through local boards or other organisations. (Castell in Stenberg et al. 2013 pp.36-39)



No matter if you choose to use the ladder or the stair our reality demands us to reach the highest step or beyond. The complexity of sustainable development demands us to create networks and partnership between civil society and the state (Abrahamsson 2016). The ladder and the stair can be measurements of how far we have come in a participatory process. But the goal must be collaboration and partnership that are based on co-decisions.

## 5.3 Methods

Within the field of planning there is a big interest in dialogue and citizen participation. Several methods aiming for participation in projects have been developed. Many of the methods are well established and are often used within the planning administrations as well as by other administrations. Some methods are presented below.

**Charette** is a method that was developed in the USA by the National Charette Institute. It consists of working meetings and open workshops with the citizens. The starting point is that all stakeholders have different opinions and knowledge. The different perspectives are communicated in order to reach a common proposal that everyone can support. There has to be a neutral process leader. The idea is that the work should be intensive over a short period of time. The invitation should be broad in order to get a broad representation (Länsstyrelsen 2015).

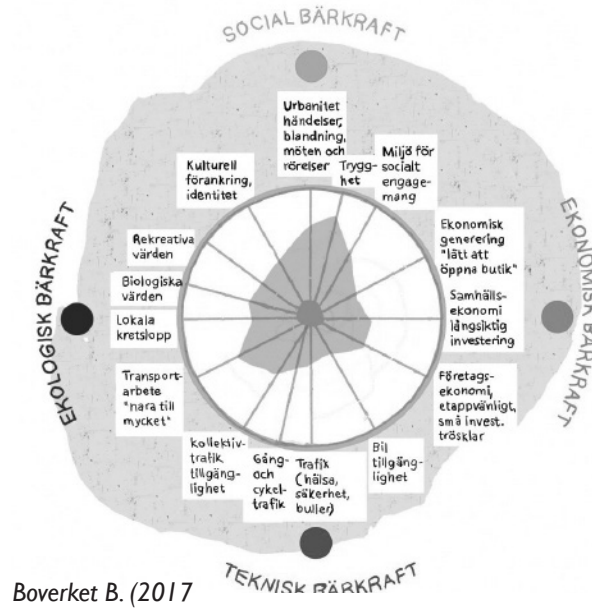
**Safety walk** is a walking conversation. The aim is to do an inventory of an area together with the inhabitants. The participants share their experiences, feelings and observations about the area. The tour should visit strategical places that have been researched before the tour started. The method can be divided into three phases. The first phase is an introductory meeting where safety is discussed and the concept of the safety walk is introduced. The second phase is the tour, which should have a maximum of 20 participants in order to get the most out of it. It can be beneficial to divide the group into men and women, because they often have differing experiences. Doing the walk during both the day and the night can give a broader perspective of the area. The third phase is a meeting when the official presents how the municipality aims to use the gathered information from the tour. (Boverket 2017b).

**SWOT** gives a quick overview of the current situation. The analysis gives a picture of the strengths, weaknesses and what are seen as threats and opportunities. The method can be used in discussion groups, where the participants list what they think are the site's strengths, weaknesses, treats and opportunities. (Boverket 2017b).





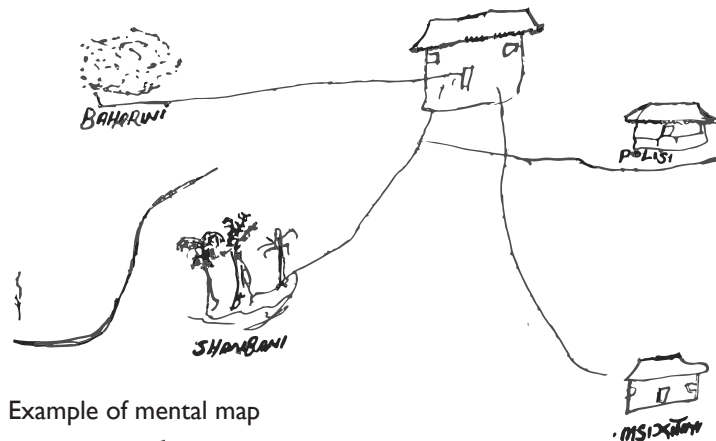
**Circle diagram** (Värderos) is a method that can be used to discuss and value the city or neighbourhood and the development plans made for it. It can be a tool for analysing whether a planning proposal contributes towards sustainable development or not. It consists of a circle diagram that is divided into fifteen issues related to development; these issues are then valued by ecological, social economic and physical sustainability. The center of the wheel shows the weakest connection to sustainability while the outer parts of the wheel show the strongest connection to sustainability. The Circle diagram contributes with a general estimation of the situation and should be complemented with a descriptive text. (Boverket 2017b).



**Surveys and interviews** can be used for gathering information from the citizens. The surveys can be formed in different ways. It is important to make them readable, attractive and concise. It is important to consider who has answered the survey, to make sure that they are representative. If any group is missing it is important to contact them in another way. Interviews can give an understanding of how people of different ages and backgrounds perceive an area. One form of interview is a storytelling café, where people share their experiences relating to a site. (Boverket 2017b, Ragner & Westerberg 2004).



**Mental maps** are a method where the participants are asked to draw their own maps of their neighborhood or village. The method is based on Kevin Lynch's theory of how people experience the urban environment. Elements that are included in his theory are landmarks – objects which serve as external reference points; paths – the streets, sidewalks etc.; edges – perceived boundaries such as walls and buildings; districts – relatively large sections of the area distinguished by a special character; nodes – where people and traffic meet e.g. a square (Boverkett 2017b).



Example of mental map

**Working book** is a method developed in Norway . It is a way of communicating the process for a certain area and has its focus on the questions that are important in the local context. It is a way to make a big group part of the development in an area. It is a booklet that contains information and different points of view, questions and issues that are related to the theme. It should be possible for the inhabitants to add their comments and opinions in the working book, and to be able to interact digitally on a webpage. There has to be a project group made up of initiative takers who are responsible for the set up and organisation. The edition staff are a group of citizens that the book is aimed for. They participate in the development of the book and collect and compile all the content. The content should be written individually by the citizens; it is a huge undertaking (Ragner & Westerberg 2004).

**Norsk stedsanalys** consists of six methods; Nature and landscape analysis, Qualitative site analysis, Realistic site analysis, Cultural environment analysis, Municipal atlas, and Aesthetic city design. One does not need to use all these methods but instead one should choose a few methods that suit the site best. All the methods are based on four themes. Nature and landscape conditions is about analysing the location of the city or village by analysing the landscape, climate, topography, region and relation to neighbouring villages and cities. Historical development involves analysing the site by historical elements of planning ideal, city fires, structures in land-owning and industrial establishment with railroad and other infrastructural elements. Urban structure



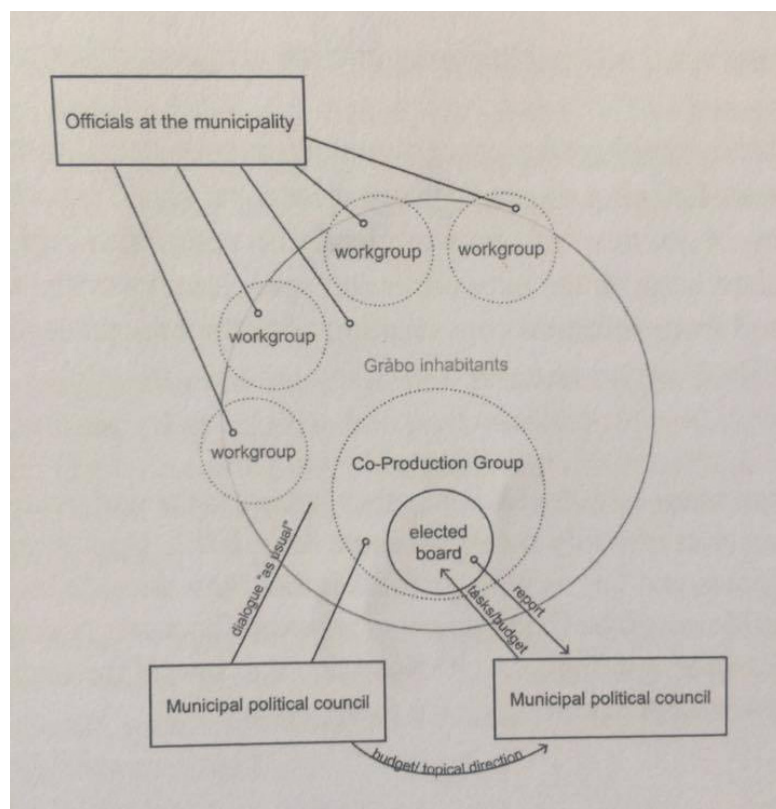
is an inventory of geometrical systems and rooms that the buildings are structured by. It also considers topography and building typology, and separate buildings and elements with importance for social and cultural life from a historical perspective are inventoried. (Boverket 2017b)

**Open Space** is a method that was developed from the idea that good ideas usually come up during a fika break (a coffee break), when there are no agenda and no chairman and some formality is removed (Ragner & Westerberg 2004). This may sound very unstructured but creativity, order and results are often created from disorder. Open space is a good method to use if there is a need to collect the problems and question that have developed over time and if there is an infected issue and a conflict that needs to be solved by many actors. This is also a good method if you have to come up with a lot of material quickly, or if you want to open up a process to engage more people in it.

All the methods mentioned are tools for involving citizens in the planning process. All of them have their strengths and can be useful in the planning process. But to deepen the democracy and increase trust, the dialogues must give the citizens more power (Ragner & Westerberg 2004, Abrahamsson 2016). The methods mentioned above relate to the first steps of Arnstein's (1969) ladder of participation. The methods are mostly about gathering information and not about creating collaboration and partnership. They can be useful in parts of the process but in order to deepen the democracy, empower the citizens and create trust in the planning process, something more is needed. Examples of models and methods that are more comprehensive with a focus on creating collaborations and deepening the democracy are presented below. These models and methods can be related to the three steps at the top of Arnstein's ladder because they have a clear focus on collaborations and partnership. The citizens have direct influence on decision-making.

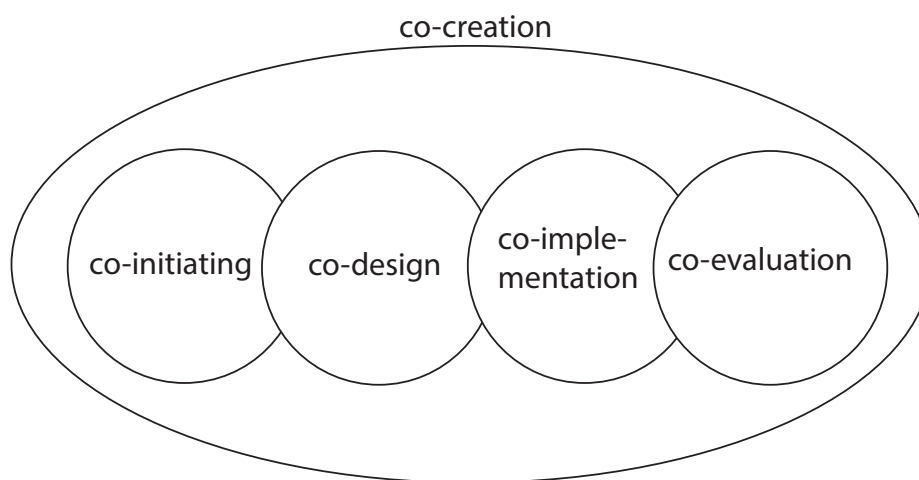
## 5.4 Co-production, Co-creation and Cultural planning

**Co-production** is a method for co-reation. In *Communicative Interfaces for Planning*, Bomble (2016) describes her experiences from working in a co-production group in the municipality of Lerum in the village Gråbo. The co-production model is based on the local context and the topics are up-to-date. The inhabitants decide on the topics. The co-production group of Gråbo is an open group that invites anyone living in Gråbo with an interest in the future development of Gråbo to attend. The group has a few formal members and a board. The formal members are associations in Gråbo, and the board is chosen by them. Representatives from the municipality are present at the meetings, both officials and politicians. It is the co-production group that issues invitations to the meetings. The participants differ depending on the topic of discussion (Bomble 2016).



Bomble (2010)

**Co-creation** is a model that can strengthen local engagement. Co-creation needs to be understood as an activity that is transdisciplinary and views the problem from different perspectives. The core of co-creation is that the participants should learn from each other (Alder 2015 p.15). The aim with co-creation is to equalise the power relations between the official and the public. To know the aim and the reason for the dialogue at the start is crucial for the success of the dialogue. Further, the dialogue has to contain four components; Listen, Confront, Reflect and Create (Adler 2015 p.20). This model is based on the municipality as the constant stakeholder in the process, who issues invitations to the meetings and leads the process. That is the main difference from the co-production model that Bomble (2016) describes.



**Cultural planning** is another method that has its focus on the local context. It is a bottom-up method for mapping, strengthening and developing a municipality or limited area by using existing cultural resources (SKL 2011 pp.5-9). Cultural resources in this context means creative industries and cultural sector as well as local traditions and activities. The method involves connecting cultural issues to a certain location, making it easy to involve the inhabitants, and give them the power to develop the area they live in. The aim is to create an action plan. The plan identifies the roles and responsibilities that can help create a better life at the site (Cultural planning laboratory). Eriksson and Nylander (2016) describe two dialogue processes related to the planning process. The first example is Hovås in Gothenburg. It was a planning project initiated by the municipality. A project group was created. They had a locality at site, the group consisted of people from many institutions.

It was initiated by the municipality. A project group consisting of people representing property owners, housing companies and several administrations from the municipality was created. This group was responsible for communication with the inhabitants in Hovås. Their task was to create a proposal together with the inhabitants. The group had an office on site where they held workshops and people could drop by. When the proposal was ready for public consultation it was handed over to the municipality and sent out to the people living in the area. After the public consultation the project group grew, with more people becoming involved as the process went on. The media was an important stakeholder. As soon as the project group produced new material they told the media about it, both as a way of spreading information and making the process transparent (Eriksson & Nylander 2016 pp. 43-63)

The second example is an area in Gothenburg called Fixfabriken. The municipality had no plans for the area but one woman working for a housing company saw the potential of the site. She spoke to the municipality about her idea, which was the start of a collaboration between two private housing companies and the planning and building administration at the municipality. A working group was created, with the task of creating a program for a detail development plan. They had a local site where they held workshops and meetings connected to the plan. They started a dialogue with property owners and people working in the area. They also held workshops with children and artists. Then an architect firm made four proposals which were exhibited at the library. The inhabitants had the opportunity to offer their opinions about these proposals. The aim was to bring the stakeholders into the process at a very early stage; a big and important part was to do the inventory together with them, as a way of anchoring the project. People were informed about plans before proposals were finished. The inhabitants got the feeling of being part of the project from an early stage onwards. (Eriksson & Nylander 2016 pp. 67-90)

The examples described have some components in common. These components are all important when it comes to deepening the democracy and strengthening trust. It is clear that **continuity** is one of these components (Nylander&Eriksson 2016, SKL 2011, Adler 2015, Bomble 2016). **Feedback and communication** are two other aspects that are important and are closely connected to continuity. Feedback and communication should occur continuously during the process. It is important to communicate the results reached in each step of the process to the politicians, citizens and officials involved, and to make sure they are part of the everyday work within the municipality's organisation (SKL 2011pp.30-31, Bomble 2016).

If the **continuity** is lost there is a risk that groups are formed and act on their own behalf. The groups can be formed among both the officials and the citizens. These groups tend to go their own way and create their own results which are not representative of the whole process. To prevent this from happening it is important to reflect together and make sure that there is a common goal that is based on all the different perspectives (Adler 2015 pp.91-93).

It is important that the process is **well anchored** at every step and on every level, from the local inhabitants to the politicians. Delimit the area and spread knowledge and information about the process throughout the area to get people interested. It is also important that the project is **well anchored** politically. The politicians have to be positive about the project and be ready to invest money and time in it. It is also important to divide the tasks and decide who has the main responsibility for what, and who else should be involved. It is good to have a steering group, a working group and one or several project managers, as well as a reference group from the site (SKL 2011 pp.13-17, Nylander & Eriksson 2016). To give substance to the process it is important that the plan is **consulted** on with the stakeholders involved and approved by the municipal board and the local politicians (SKL 2011 pp.33-37). For the plan to be trustful it is of value to use a language and pictures that is easy to understand (Nylander & Eriksson 2016, SKL 2011).

Another thing that is clear is the importance of viewing the problem or the planning area from **different perspectives**. Finding the relevant stakeholders early on and beginning a collaboration with them is of great value. It gives the project a good knowledge base (SKL 2011; Nylander & Eriksson 2016). Many attempts in participation and co-creation stop in what Arnstien (1969) describes as consultation. But to get to the next step participants have to learn from each other. It is then that you can call it co-creation. It is important to understand people's perspectives by **addressing the conflicts**; this will also contribute towards dismantling the structures that enhance preconceptions and polarisation (Adler 2015 p.16).

**Listen** and see the different perspectives and the complexity of the important issues; everyone should get the opportunity to tell their story irrespective of their background. If this is done properly, trust will be created between the participants and it will be possible to identify unconventional solutions (Adler 2015 pp.20-21). To **identify and confront** the conflicting goals and the power relations within the project is of value. The aim should not be to reach consensus but to manage to work out and resolve conflicts, and in order to do this it is important to be aware of the power relations (Adler 2015, pp. 21-22). Compare the perspectives and make an analysis of them to find the important subjects that are relevant for the planning of the area. Both the officials' point of view and the citizens' point of view should be included in the

analysis (SKL 2011 pp.28-29). The aim is to find common goals, interests and a common approach. It is essential to have an understanding of each participant's views on the issue or problem, and that the dialogue has continuity, to get this deep understanding of the problem and for the participants to find common interests (Adler 2013 p.22).

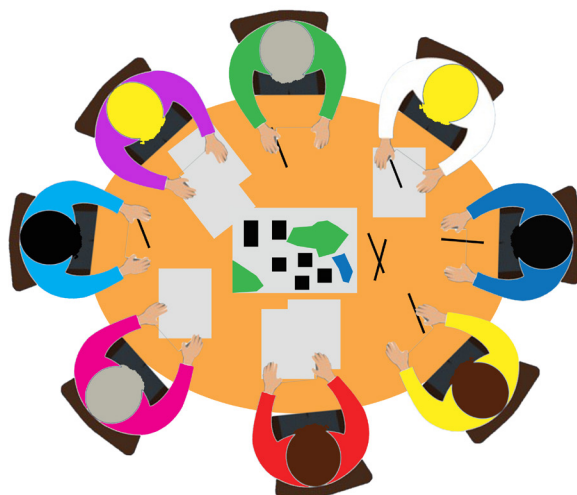
When there is a common picture of the issue it is possible to create a plan that the participants can agree on. It is important to put it on paper and decide which solutions and changes are necessary. But it is just as important to decide who should implement these changes, and how and when. To succeed with this step it is important to have citizens, officials and politicians in agreement (Adler 2015 p.22).

**Attitudes** are another aspect that is of value. As Adler (2015) observed, the attitudes among officials and politicians are crucial for the way co-creation is implemented. Administrations are hierarchical and there is a widespread opinion that involving citizens as equals to the officials is risky, as the co-creation will never be properly anchored in these kinds of organizations (Adler 2015 pp. 15 -16). These attitudes are mentioned within cultural planning as well. The first step is to make sure that the politicians have the right approach; that they have understood what it is to use the method and are ready to put time and money into the project (SKL 2011 p.15).

Adler's (2015) studies show that co-creation initiatives often starts with an internal discussion among a small group of officials. Then it starts to grow and forms within the administrations and their hierarchical organization, which limits the process. The co-creation process starts when the citizens are invited and takes part in the dialogue.

## 5.5 The meeting

When working with participation the meeting between the officials and the inhabitants is a crucial occasion. There are several ways of having a meeting. There are meetings that have a strict structure and meetings that have no structure; depending on the aim of the meeting one or the other method is suitable.





There are some key components that should be considered when preparing a meeting. **The aim** for the meeting needs to be clear, so that it is easier to decide what kind of set-up is suitable. The invitation is the next thing to be considered. It should correlate with the aim and topic of the meeting and should include information about who will participate, what activities will be held, and what it is possible to affect and what the participants are expected to contribute with. If **fika** will be offered this should be included in the invitation as well (Ragner & Westerberg 2004).

The next step is to think about where the meeting should take place. It is dependent on what kind of meeting will be held. If it is a big public presentation, the meeting may take place in the area of concern. But if it is a small meeting – an interview, for example – it is advised that the meeting place is neutral and that the participants feel safe and confident. To furnish the room in a way that makes the meeting function properly is of value. Whether there will be small discussion groups, a big presentation or discussions in a large group, the room should be furnished in a way that fits the purpose and style of the meeting (Ragner & Westerberg 2004).

The first impression attendees get of the person leading the meeting is important; they should be well prepared and act professionally in order for the participants to trust the process and to make them feel that it is worth making an effort and being part of the process. The atmosphere of the meeting is important. To get the right atmosphere it is important to start with yourself; what do you like? But the most important part is to be flexible within the parameters of the meeting. It is a good idea to start with an activity that the participants can do while keeping quiet and anonymous at the same time. You should try to not deliver too much information at the start, which can make the participant feel passive and bored. It is good if everyone can enjoy the atmosphere and it is important to be confident from start. Opening the meeting with fika or an exhibition with the possibility of mingling can be good. Avoid giving a lecture, as it will make your relationship with the participants overly formal and the participants will become passive. Always present the aim of the meeting and who leads it. A quick presentation of the participants can be beneficial, it may contribute to a nice atmosphere (Ragner & Westerberg 2004).

## 5.6 Summary

Participation is a broad topic. There are many participatory methods that can be used in a planning project. In order to reach the higher steps on the stair or ladder of participation it is important to involve all stakeholders in all steps of the project. It may not be possible to use the methods fully in a planning project, due to delimitations in time or budget. But there are some factors in the methods that can be good to have in mind for the planning architect; ***Feedback and communication, continuity, well anchored, addressing the conflicts, listen.*** These factors may be useful in the regular meetings related to the planning process.



# 6. THE CASE STUDY

## 6.1 Introduction

To gather knowledge about dialogue processes and to get an understanding of the downsides and benefits of such process a case study has been conducted. The case under study is a dialogue process in Torpa in the municipality of Vänersborg. The dialogue process is not part of a regular planning project. It aims to increase the inhabitants' wellbeing and strengthen their ability to create change in their neighborhood. The process is interesting because it contains open meetings. But it is also interesting because it is possible to gather information about the relationship between the citizens and the officials. It is also a way to get an understanding of how the officials experience the process, what the challenges are and how they respond to them.

The process was initiated and led by the municipality. They have co-operated with Collaboration Vänersborg, a steering organisation consisting of the municipality, Knowledge Coalition West (Kunskapsförbundet Väst) and Region Västra Götaland. The Psynk-project has been part of the process. The Psynk-project was ongoing between 2012-2014. The focus was on synchronising efforts promoting children and youths' wellbeing and physical health. It was a national project initiated by the Swedish Association of Local Authorities (SKL) and Regions. The municipality of Vänersborg and Collaboration Vänersborg was part of the project. In relation to the project it was decided to start Area Development Torpa. The reason to the dialogue initiative was problems related to the school. Parents and teachers were in contact because of problems with some of the pupils in the school. They realised that the problem was broader than the issues in school. The problems were related to the pupils' living situation, school and spare time. The aim of the project was to increase integration by starting a dialogue with residents, by organising meetings between the inhabitants and increasing their feeling of participation in Swedish society and their neighbourhood. It was also about increasing the feeling of safety in the area, encouraging education and employment and raising the physiological wellbeing among the residents of Torpa.

Interviews with officials and inhabitants in Torpa have been conducted. The aim of the interviews was to gather knowledge from different perspectives of the process. The aim was also to get knowledge of the obstacles and benefits of the process. Besides from the interviews, observations at different meetings have been done. The aim of the observations was to get information of how open meetings were held, but also to get information about how officials prepare for the open meetings.

## 6.2 The Neighborhood Torpa

Torpa is a neighborhood in the municipality of Vänersborg. It is located quite central in the city of Vänersborg. With the sports arena to the west and the city center to the north. Around 5000 persons lives in Torpa.



There are three pre-schools and two primary schools in the area. At one of the schools there is a library that is open after school time. It functions as a local branch of the municipal office. It is possible to go there to get help from officials with translation of information or to fill in forms etc. There are also several food stores in the area. Many inhabitants are engaged in associations that have localities in the area, even though many of them are missing localities that suits their activities. Many activities are held in the sports arena for example; ice hockey, dance, hand ball and soccer.



Torpa was built in the 1960s, during the million homes program. Most of the properties are owned by Vänersborgsbostäder which is the municipal housing company. These properties are all rental apartments. The rest of the building stock is privately owned apartments and row-houses. The housing stock mostly consist of three or four stories high buildings.



The area is inhabited by people of low socio-economic status. Many of the inhabitants have a different ethnical background than Swedish, around 50%. It is common that many persons are living in the same apartment, because newcomers stay with their family and friends before they have found their own apartment. The yards are well-used and some are worn down and in need of refurbishment.

Area	Inhabitants	Part of inhabitants age 0-29	Other ethnical background	Employment age 20-60	Average income	Higher education
Flanaden	2200	44%	Ca 50%	48%	376 tkr	8%
Öxnared	2515	37%	5%	89%	664 tkr	34%
Brålanda	1376	29%	5%	77%	480 tkr	8%

*Statistics of different parts of Vänersborg. Flanaden is part of Torpa*

## 6.3 The dialogue process

### *The beginning*

The dialogue process began in 2013. During the first year, many internal meetings took place at the municipality. Among others, administration managers and the CEO at the municipal housing company (Vänersborgsbostäder) attended the meetings. The organisation was discussed, along with how to have a good open meeting with the residents. Though, the residents in Torpa were not involved from the start.

*“But the approach was too much top-down in the beginning, the residents was not involved”* – CEO Vänersborgsbostäder

One of the interviewees means that the process had a top down approach in the beginning. The residents in Torpa were not involved from the start, it was just the officials at the administrations that discussed how to proceed with the process. In addition to the meetings a survey was done. This survey mapped the socio-economic situation in Torpa and in the rest of the municipality. According to the interviewees the internal planning meetings had their pros and cons. The meetings helped make sure there was a structure for the work in Torpa. The attendance at the internal meetings was high, many of the administrations managers participated. Collaboration between different administrations is important in socio-economically vulnerable areas and in the case of Torpa it worked quite well.

*“One positive thing has been that we have had a good collaboration between the administrations within the municipal organization”*

– Official at the Municipal Development Administration

One of the interviewees means that the collaboration between the different administrations are important in socio-economic vulnerable areas, and that the collaboration in the case of Torpa has worked well.

Another aspect of the internal meetings that came up during the interviews was that there were too many meetings. Interviewees also spoke about how there was an anxious approach to the public meetings with the residents. Since the aim was to meet the residents and start the conversation with them it has been important to have open meetings but the case has been the other way around, there were mostly internal meetings in the beginning.

*There has been a lot of internal discussions and quite little of action”*

– Official at the Municipal Planning Administration

One of the interviewees worried that it was just a discussion among officials with no actions being taken. This picture correlates with

how Adler (2015) describes how a co-creation process usually starts, with a discussion among a group of officials, before growing to a real project. The attitudes among officials and politicians are crucial for the way in which co-creation is implemented. Administrations are hierarchical and a negative approach to involve the citizens as equals to the officials may complicate the process. The co-creation will never be properly anchored in these kinds of organizations (Adler 2015). The approach among the officials in Torpa was not negative but a bit anxious which lead to many internal meetings.

Presence in the area is something that comes up as an important component in participation and dialogue processes. In the case of Torpa there have been some activities in correlation to the comprehensive plan but also in relation to the dialogue process, concerning light. In October 2013 one open meeting was held. The discussions were about possible improvements that could be done. Much of what was discussed at the meeting was then implemented. This meeting and the activities after it is something that is seen as positive among the interviewees. But the feedback to the inhabitants during and after the improvements were lacking. The activities that were held in relation to the dialogue process concerned safety and the light. There was a collaboration between the officials working with light and some of the inhabitants. Together they improved the lights in the area. Some of the tunnels were also painted. Presence in the area is described by Nylander & Eriksson (2015) as a key component for a successful dialogue. They mean that to have a locality in the area is crucial to build trust to the process.

Another aspect that is brought up is the feedback to the residents. Interviewees say that it is very important to tell the residents when something happens. For example, notes should be taken at meetings and sent out to the participants as soon as possible after the meeting. Residents should also be informed when something is implemented that has been up for discussion at a meeting. This did not happen in a satisfying way in Torpa. Feedback is an important component in creating a dialogue process that is trustful. It has to take place continuously during the whole process and has to be communicated to all stakeholders (SKL 2011; Adler 2015; Nylander & Eriksson 2015).

### **New energy**

The improvements discussed at the meeting in 2013 were implemented during one year. The process fizzled out after the open meeting in October 2013 and the period of improvements and activities related to it. The process got an energy boost at the end of 2015 and the beginning of 2016 when the municipality started a collaboration with researcher Lisa Bomble from Chalmers. Bombles research is about local networks and continuity for participation in planning. The process



was still quite slow, due to lack of a formal process manager. The lack of a process manager meant that there was no one driving the project forward. The project manager role was shared by several officials from different administrations, which meant that no one was in charge. The process in Torpa lacked a process leader, which all the interviewees pointed out as a problem. This made the process a bit unstructured and unprioritised. It was a challenge for the officials to know how much time to put into the process, and how to know what mandate they had to act. The lack of a process leader has also contributed to the process going off track at times. The last period of the dialogue process in Torpa was not that well anchored among the politicians, which also contributed to the loose structure of the process.

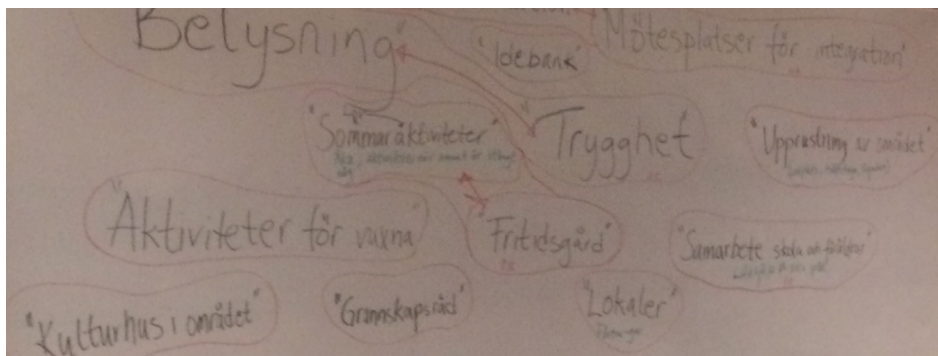
During 2016 many internal meetings were held at the municipality. Lisa Bomble participated and informed attendees about her earlier research in Gråbo, municipality of Lerum, and how it could be used in Torpa. How to design the open meetings with the inhabitants in Torpa was discussed at the internal meetings. After getting a positive response from the administration managers a structure for the open meeting was set and in November 2016 the first meeting with the inhabitants of Torpa was held. Organizations with a connection to Torpa were invited, but no individuals. The aim of the meeting was to restart a dialogue and to anchor the process with the inhabitants.

## Open meeting

In January 2017 a new internal planning meeting for the next open meeting was held. The next open meeting was held in Torpa school in February. Everyone living in the area was invited. The invitation was sent out to the officials of the municipality, and to residents in the area. It was also put up in staircases in the housing of Torpa.

Around 60 persons were present at the meeting. There were representatives from the municipality (officials but no politicians), residents, representatives from associations connected to Torpa and people working in the area. There were men and women, young and old. It was an open meeting with a neutral moderator steering the discussions.

First everyone who liked had the opportunity to bring up topics they thought were important to discuss. What came up was written down on a big piece of paper so that everyone could see. Then the participants formed small groups and discussed the topics among themselves. Not every topic was discussed, only the ones that each group was interested in. The discussion groups consisted of both residents and officials. Each group had one secretary who wrote down what was discussed. They also wrote down the stakeholders with an interest in the topic. When the discussions were finished, every group presented what they had talked about to the others.



Picture of the paper sheet with topics

How to create a local neighborhood board was one of the topics of discussion. The aim of that board should be to own the development process in Torpa, and be the organisation working with the municipality to create a better Torpa. Other topics were better communication between the schools and the parents, better localities for the youth center, safety and may more.

*“I think it is important to start in the small things, as long as it is something that people are engaged in it will make them believe that they can have influence”*

To create the engagement needed for a neighborhood board or co-creation group is sometimes hard. One of the interviewees means that it is important to start in the “small questions” that is possible to implement in a short term perspective. It is crucial for the inhabitants to see a change, to see that they can have influence, in order for them to trust the municipality. It is about giving and taking. He means that if the municipality is clear about the framework, the budget it is easier to understand and trust the municipality. Further he means that it is of value to implement something quick, then the citizens will trust that the municipality are willing to work with them, and they will be willing to give as well.

### ***Internal planning meeting***

In March 2017 a planning meeting was held at the municipality. The aim was to plan the second open meeting in Torpa. The meeting was held in the municipality’s offices. The invitation was sent out to participants at the previous meeting at Torpa school, and to officials at the municipality. Only five people attended the meeting, all municipal officials.

The meeting was coordinated by the planning architect. He has been involved in the processes for a couple of years. The meeting started by everyone reflecting about the previous open meeting. Then one of the participants talked about how his group (the youth center) had continued their work. To have a neutral moderator at the open meeting was something that came up for discussion as a positive aspect at the internal planning meeting. The participants at the meeting agreed on that as a component that contributed to a successful meeting. Laurian (2009) means that a neutral process leader can be important for a trustful process. Which is in line with the discussions at the internal meeting.

Structure and roles were discussed. Who has the mandate to do what? The fact that the process needs a process manager was discussed. Smaller working groups was also something that were discussed. The participants thought that the work would benefit from smaller working groups. Then everyone would not need to be present at every meeting and it would be easier to manage the participants to come together. Some discussions about who should take these roles was held, but it was hard to make any decisions because of the lack of participants at the meeting. It was decided that the planning architect should write down a project plan. The project plan should be used as a basis for applying for a budget for a process manager.



Discussions about the role of planning architects in the process was brought up. It was asked for to have one person from the planning office in the team. The planning architects have experience to meet the citizens due to the public consultations. The other officials think is an asset in the dialogue process.

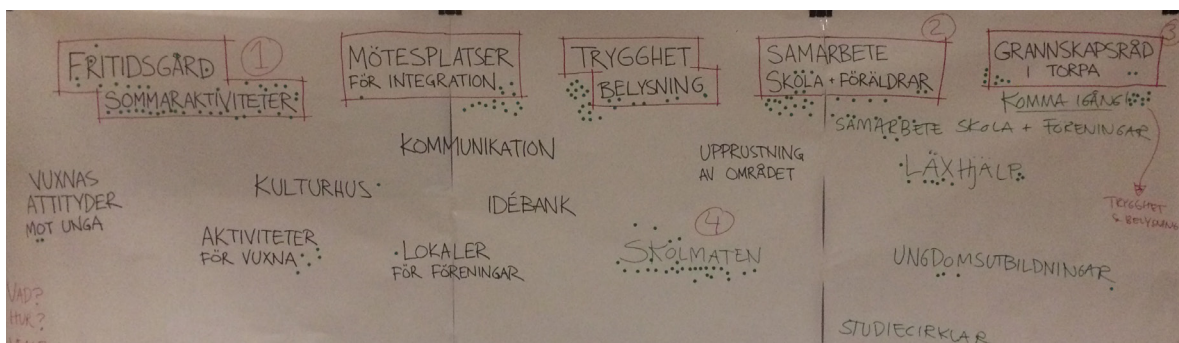
The tasks before the next meeting were divided up, such as who will bring fika, who will book the moderator and who will send out the invitations.

The question about a process leader was something that was discussed at the internal planning meeting. The conclusion was that it is crucial for the process to continue but the aim is that the inhabitants in Torpa should be the leaders of the process, the ones who decide what should be discussed at the open meetings.

## Open meeting 2

The second meeting was held in March 2017. The meeting had a similar format to the first. A lot of people were invited this time as well, and invitations were sent out in the same way as last time. Not as many were present as at the first meeting; this time around 30 people attended. Some had been present at the first meeting and some were new. The meeting was moderated by the same person as the previously open meeting.

At First the moderator spoke a little about what had happened at the previous meeting and then some of the people who had been present at the first meeting explained what had happened at the meeting, and what they had worked on since then. Most of the groups, apart from the youth group, had not done much since the last meeting. The youth group had started work on a new youth centre. They had found a building and created a board of officials that would organise the renovation and the activities at the centre.



Picture of the paper sheet with topics

The meeting continued with a discussion in the big group about the topics from the last meeting. The big sheet of paper with the topics from the first meeting was discussed. Those who liked had the op-

portunity to add things. Some new topics were added. When that was done, everyone had to mark which topics they found most interesting. Then the moderator helped with dividing the group into smaller groups to discuss the topics brought up. In relation to the discussions in the smaller groups it was possible to have some fika. The focus in the smaller discussion groups was to find out how and who could be part of implementing the ideas. Some groups came further than others, but all groups seemed to have good discussions.

When the time was up each group presented what they had talked about and what they planned to do until the next meeting.

How to reach people and to be sure that the persons that show up are representative for the area were topics that were discussed. To reach the people living in an area and thereby should be interested in the process is something that is crucial in dialogue processes (SKL 2011; Adler 2015), and was also present in the discussions taking place during the case of Torpa. The officials thought that it is a challenge to reach out to people and to make them come to the meeting. One aspect that came up in relation to this was informality and flexibility. One of the persons living in the area meant that it is important to catch people on the way to the meeting, not make the invitation too formal. She meant that it would possibly be a better attendance if the meeting were held at one of the yards, in the evening when people are out socializing. She also meant that many of the inhabitants do not know the language and do not understand the invitation or why they should go to the meeting.

To find key persons was brought up related to representativity in one of the interviews. The interviewee meant that the key persons can represent a group of people, be the contact person for that group, or convince persons in his or her group to come to the meetings. He also meant that it is crucial to find the issues that are of interest for the inhabitants. If they can see that they can affect their situation they might be willing to attend.

### ***Seminar at the Region Gothenburg***

A seminar about participation and dialogue processes was arranged by GR (The Region Gothenburg) together with Mistra Urban Futures through Lisa Bomble. The seminar was part of their network meetings for the municipalities in the region, with different themes at each meeting. This time the theme was social sustainability and co-creation.

Officials from different administrations from several municipalities were present. Two case studies were presented. Lerum municipality presented their co-creation process in Gråbo and Vänersborg municipality presented their dialogue project in Torpa. Experiences, challenges

and benefits of co-creation were then discussed in smaller groups.

Organisation was one of the themes that were discussed. The fact that there are many ways to organise a municipality. Some organisations are more vulnerable than others. Some of the municipalities experienced problems when one person quit. They meant that the projects are vulnerable because they are often connected to one official. If that person quits the whole project fails. Some of the municipalities had an organisation that could handle that kind of problem. The municipality of Lerum had a development department that had the function of connecting the different administrations of the municipality. Their task was to know what was going on within the different administrations and to connect them if they were working on similar projects. This meant that there were often several people working on a project, and they were therefore more resilient if one person quit during the project.

Process management was another topic of discussion. The participants discussed how process management had traditionally been the task of the municipalities. Though this had started to change. Other groups in the society were driving the processes forward, as a way of empower the people. The officials viewed this as something positive. It also meant that the municipality did not have to finance everything, but could have partnerships with organisations that co-financed projects.

Both the municipalities of Lerum and Vänersborg had a vague political anchoring of their projects. It was better in Lerum, where the politicians participated in the open meetings. Both had little or no budget for the processes. The municipality of Tjörn explained that the politicians had decided that they should work with Cultural planning, not just in the planning process but in the municipality as a whole. This made it easy for the officials to involve the inhabitants early on in planning processes and other activities. Anchoring and process management are issues mentioned in Cultural planning as key components for the process to be able to function (SKL 2011). One of the first steps in Cultural planning is to anchor the process with the politicians; when that is done it is much easier to know what mandate you have as an official, but it is also good to know that the politicians have understood the process and that they will be part of it (SKL 2011).

The participants had experienced how engagement tended to decrease when the processes got too fixed and formal. How specific words and concepts are used and how they affect the processes were discussed in relation to this. For example, the word “association” had a negative connotation and tended to ruin the engagement among people. But words such as network or partnership had a better and more positive connotation for people. The fact that flexibility and informality are seen as important components in a dialogue process somewhat contradicts the other component, continuity, mentioned earlier.

What happens here and now? was a topic for discussion. The value of knowing what is going in your own municipality but also what the neighbouring municipalities are working on. To have a network within the municipal organisation that makes sure that relevant ongoing processes are connected to each other. Communicating with colleagues in neighbouring municipalities in order to help each other and exchange experiences was also raised as an important issue.

## **6.4 Summary**

From the case study it is possible to distinguish some important aspects concerning meetings with the citizens. The approach among the officials seems to be crucial. It seems like it is common to be a bit anxious about the meeting, which in the case of Torpa resulted in many internal planning meetings. The benefits of the internal planning meetings is that they had a quite good structure of the process.

Another aspect is to have a neutral leader at the meeting. The person who lead the meetings in Torpa was very professional and succeeded to keep the discussions to the topic. She also encouraged people to talk in the big group. It was impressive to see that many participants were brave enough to do that.

To get a valid representation is a challenge according to the case study. Key persons and flexibility is crucial when it comes to representation.

Mandate among the officials and to have a process manager is also a crucial component when it comes to dialogue processes.

Last but not least is feedback and to be clear about delimitations in budget and time. Further, it is of value to find the small things that are easy to implement when it comes to dialogue and creating collaboration with the inhabitants.

# 7. INTERVIEWS WITH PLANNERS

## 7.1 Introduction

Interviews with five practicing planning architects have been conducted. The interviewees were chosen based on their interest in participation in planning. Three of them are working at a municipality and two of them are working at an architecture firm. The aim for the interviews was to gather information about the challenges planning architects face in meetings with stakeholders that are related to a planning process. Questions about what they consider to be key factors for the planning process to be trustful, what is most challenging in public consultation and how they prepare for such consultation were asked.

## 7.2 How to handle the questions and the information?

It is not uncommon that the planning architect is asked lots of questions at the public consultation that are not related to the specific plan. Public consultations tend to be open meetings where a lot of questions come up for discussion. One reason for the broad range of questions is that planning is complex and touches upon several issues. Another reason is that the public consultation is an opportunity for the citizens to meet the municipality. This means that the planning architects have to handle a many questions that are often not related to the plan. It also implies that, for the occasion, the planning architect is the face of the municipality. Therefore the planning architect has a responsibility to handle the questions well, by answering them at the consultation or passing them on to an official who will know the answers. There is also a responsibility to share the information he or she has.

*“It is always good to have colleagues from other administrations present, but also politicians, as it makes it easier to give good answers to questions.” - Interview 5*

One issue that the interviewees brought up is the value of having colleagues present at the meeting. To have representatives from other administrations can help the planning architect to give a better answer to questions. If none of the officials present at the meeting are able to answer the question, it is better to give the questioner the contact details of someone that works with the issue in question, rather than

come up with an answer or try to find it out later. To have a political representative present is beneficial. Politicians can contribute with another point of view. It is not uncommon that the politicians and the officials see the problem from different perspectives. Money and budget are important aspects according to the interviews. The officials take directions from the politicians. If there is a politician present they can explain the reason for the decisions made.

It is important to write down what was said at the meeting, in order to collect the information. The Planning and Building Act has some criteria for how to handle written opinions but not how to handle what is said during consultation meetings. One way to take care of the questions discussed at the meeting is to write down a summary as part of the public consultation document. All of the interviewees say that it is important to take notes at the meeting and share them with the participants, either by sending them out in an email or putting them on the municipality's webpage.

### **7.3 What is needed for a trustful project?**

A special organisation dealing with communication is a key component when it comes to trust in the municipality as a whole, according to the interviews. An organisation that manages communication can solve frustration and confusion among the citizens (Interview 5,6,7,8). The organisation's task can be to connect the questioner with the official that works with the issue in question. This is something that the planning architect cannot affect themselves. It is possible to use other methods that can contribute to trust in a planning project, according to the interviews,

One issue that was brought up in relation to the question of what is needed to create trust in the planning process was to be consequent.

*"To implement guidelines and rules in the comprehensive planning, with consequences for the detail development planning, is one way to do it." - Interview 7*

The interviewee means that if it is possible for the citizens to follow rules or guidelines from one level of the plan to another they will understand why some plans are prioritised and others are not. This is mainly of value when it comes to saying yes or no to planning notifications handed in by a private developer. If there are clear guidelines on how to prioritise new planning projects it is easier to say yes or no. It is also easier to justify arguments for why certain plans should be prioritised than others.

The interviewee also means that it is very important to work with trust in the organisation as a whole. Further, it is important that the munic-



ipality is transparent and consequent. It is important that people can see that what has been decided has an impact on future work (Interview 7).

To have an organisation that works with communication is important in helping the municipality be trusted, according to the interviews with planners. To be able to handle questions that do not have a clear contact person or are related to a specific planning project is important. The interviews confirm what Bomble (2016) found in her research, that citizens tend to see the municipality as one unit. It is important to have an organisation that will coordinate questions to the right officials. But if there are no such organisations you have to try to inform yourself about what is going on in your municipality and who to contact for each project or question. The issue of rules and organization is something that Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini (2010) points out as an important factor for a trustful project. To have some rules or organization of how the project will work is of value, the rules can create trust among the stakeholders. But it is also crucial that the communication functions well Laurian (2009).

The purpose or aim was brought up in relation to trust and the meeting with the citizens. If the meeting has a clear aim it is easier to be constructive. If the purpose is clear it is easier for the citizens to know what it is possible for them to affect and what is not. To have a clear aim may help reduce false expectations of what is possible to influence or not. Many decisions have already been made by the time the citizens have the opportunity to give their point of view. This is especially the case when it comes to detail development plans. Many decisions are made in the comprehensive planning process. These decisions have consequences for the detail development plans. But that can be hard for those who were not part of that process to understand and accept.

The aim was also raised as an important aspect for a trustful planning process as a whole, not just in specific meetings. If the aim is clear it is easier to be fair and constructive, which can also contribute towards people being treated equally. If everyone knows the aim of the meeting it is easier to keep the conversation related to the topic. If someone raises a question not related to the topic it is easier to say that it will need to be discussed on another occasion. Ragner & Westerberg (2004) mention some key components that should be considered when preparing a meeting. The aim for the meeting has to be clear, so that it is easier to decide a suitable set up for the meeting (Ragner & Westerberg 2004 pp. 38-40).

It is hard to stimulate a good discussion at an open meeting with a lot of participants, as often it is only a few participants who will share their opinions. It can be good to avoid delivering a lecture presentation, but instead to have a presentation with pictures and text in the back-

ground and have maps and illustrations displayed on tables. It is often easier to have a good conversation around a table, according to the interviewees.

Another aspect that comes up in relation to how to create trust in the municipality and the planning process is how you as an official behave during the meeting with the citizens. It is important to be honest about what the citizens can and cannot affect, to describe the boundaries of the project, what has already been decided and what is still possible to change, in order for people to not get false expectations. Further, it is important to be open-minded and humble to questions raised and when you get questions you do not have the answer to it is important to explain that you don't know the answer, rather than to make one up. Say that you don't know and put the questioner in contact with the official that will know, or say that you will get back to the questioner when you have the answer. It is important to follow up, and not to leave the question unanswered. To create a relationship with the stakeholders early on is of value, as well as maintain this relationship throughout the process (Interview 5).

## **7.4 What are the challenges of open meetings?**

To keep the meeting constructive was raised as a challenge, partly due to the fact that people have the opportunity to ask the municipality questions, but also due to the fact that it is hard to have a good discussion when many participants are present. There is a risk that some will insist on giving their opinion and might even "take over" the meeting. One issue brought up in relation to this was the purpose of the meeting. If the purpose of the meeting is clear it is easier to say no to certain questions that are not related to the project. The question raised may be important, but does not relate to the project and should therefore be discussed in another forum. This issue was also brought up in relation to trust. If the planning architect shows that he or she is aware of the hierarchies in the room and keeps the discussion to relevant topics it may contribute to increased trust in the project.

Another aspect that came up as a challenge was representativity. The interviewees meant that it is hard to reach out to a wide range of people (Interview 7,8). It is common that only a certain group of people show up. Usually the meetings are over-represented by people with a strong socio-economic status. This is a problem because the discussions become narrow and not all perspectives are brought up, which can hinder the creation of the most informed solution.

To reach out and get as many opinions as possible is hard according to the interviewees. The format of the open meetings does not make it easy to get as many opinions as possible.



*“The public consultation is a good way of giving the same information to all that are interested in the project, but it is not the best occasion to get everybody’s opinions.” - Interview 7*

One benefit of the public consultation is that it is possible to give the same information to many people at the same time. But it is not so easy to gather a lot of opinions and suggestions about the proposal. The reason for that is that many people do not feel comfortable to speak in public. There are also hierarchies between people in the room, meaning that some people will feel comfortable about talking, feeling that they have the right to speak, while others will feel uncomfortable about speaking and would rather remain silent. That may contribute to a wrong perception of the citizens’ opinions, both among the citizens themselves and within the municipality. To be aware of who is present and who talks is crucial (Interview 6,7). By listening and taking notes it can be possible to find out who was not there and who did not get their voice heard. Then it is possible to contact them later in order to get their opinions.

To have a good presentation is not very easy according to the interviewees.

*“People communicate differently in different areas.” - Interview 5*

In order to have a presentation that can be useful and understandable for the participants it is of value to know who will come. To get an idea of who will be present it is best to talk to people. Call up key persons or organisations, ask them if they will come and if they know who else will be present (Interview 5,7). Another aspect of how to make a good presentation is to be open and humble, according to the interviewees. Try to not get stuck in defensive explanations of the proposal. Trying to see the questioner’s point of view and seeing the project in a broader perspective may help when explaining the proposal. By adapting the presentation and the explanation of the proposal one can reach out to the participants and hopefully encourage good input and discussions.

*“A neutral facilitator can sometimes be beneficial, for example if the plan is controversial and people are very upset.” - Interview 7*

The interviewee means that a neutral facilitator can help the participants to communicate with and understand each other. A neutral leader can also be an asset in a process. Laurian (2009) argues that a neutral process manager who encourages communication can help prevent distrust (Laurian 2009 pp. 380-381). This is a form of inter-personal trust which is highly dependent on the specific person.

## 7.5 How to prepare for an open meeting?

All the interviewees stress that it is important to reflect on who will come. To know who is interested in the project will also give a clue as to what kind of questions will be raised at the meeting. One of the interviewees explains that he sometimes calls up people he knows will have an interest in the plan, and asks them if they will come (Interview 7). The next step is to think of how to answer the questions that may be raised, and then reflect on which colleagues could be helpful in giving a good answer to these questions.

To consider which pictures should be part of the presentation is of value (Interview 6,8). As mentioned before it is important to adapt the presentation to the context and to the people who take an interest in the plan. It is also important that the pictures communicate the purpose of the plan without communicating that it is a finished proposal, especially if the presentation is taking place early in the process. The leaders of the meeting should be prepared to explain the proposal in a way that will ensure the participants understand that it is just a proposal, not a finished project.

Another issue is the atmosphere of the meeting. To create a pleasant atmosphere is important according to the interviewees. One aspect that is important is the size of the room. It has to be big enough without being too big. If the room is too big there is a risk that it will feel empty and contribute to an unpleasant feeling (Interview 6).

*“The physical aspects surrounding the meeting are of value, such as how big the room is and how the room is furnished.” -Interview 6*

How to furnish the room is also important to consider (Interview 6,8). How the room should be furnished depends on the purpose of the meeting. To create a relaxed atmosphere that encourages people to talk is a challenge. One of the interviewees claims that lectures can be problematic. Meetings that start with a lecture explaining the plan tend to become inflexible and formal. Therefore, it can be of value to have a presentation with a lot of text and pictures rolling in the back. But as a complement to that have tables with maps and other material that explains the plan. The material at the tables can contribute to good discussions about the plan.

Fika is something that is important for the atmospheres, according to the interviewees. Fika can contribute to relaxed conversations but also to increase the energy. If a meeting is held just after working hours it is a good idea to start with a fika. The fika can bring up the energy, but it can also contribute to relaxed conversations where the participants can get to know each other. Fika and how to furnish is something that Ragner & Westerberg (2004) also lifts as important factors at meetings. They mean that these things can contribute to a good atmosphere at the meeting. Hopefully this can contribute to a successful meeting where the participants feel that they are part of the meeting.

## 7.6 Summary

From the interviews, it is possible to understand that a municipal organisation that works with communication can be beneficial for the trust to the municipality. One can also understand that how the planning architect communicates at the meetings is important. To adapt the presentation to the context is essential. If people can get something out of the presentation they may be engaged in the project. To be aware of hierarchies and power relations is also important. Further, it is of value to have a room that suits the meeting, and to make sure the computer and projector works properly. And last but not least it is essential to bring fika, it can contribute to a nice atmosphere at the meeting.



# 8. CONCLUSIONS

## 8.1 Introduction

Migration, urbanization and globalization are three aspects that puts the traditional national states under pressure. The changes will contribute to a more heterogenic and diverse society, where the trust to the representative democracy is challenged. This development demands new types of collaboration between civil society and the state (Abrahamsson et. al. 2016). It is possible to distinguish a pro-dialogue approach in our society (Tahvilzadeh 2015). Many participatory methods have been developed and many are used in or in relation to the planning practice. But dialogue and participation is not uncomplicated, and it may not be the best solution if it is not implemented in a proper way. The empirical material shows that it is not easy to have a good dialoge with the citizens. The case study has shown that it is easy to get stuck in internal planning meetings among the officials. It does also show that it is hard to come forward in dialogue processes that lack proper process management.

From the literature about trust it is possible to understand that trust is something that keep our society together and makes it function well. Societies with low corruption tend to have a high level of general social trust. Trust is developed in relations to other persons. Communication and rules are two important factors to create and maintain trust in a project.

The Swedish planning process has elements of compulsory participation called public consultations. These meetings are managed by the planning architects. It is an important component in the Swedish planning process as it is here the stakeholders can give their input. There are also a lot of other meetings related to the planning process. It is partly at these meetings the partnerships and collaborations needed for the implementation of the plan are formed. The challenges of a more heterogenous and diverse society mentioned earlier do also influence the planning architects reality. The meetings with the citizens are important and may get even more important in the future due to the change towards governance. This change demands more collaboration between civil society and the state. The changes may contribute to the open meeting being even more diverse. Which means that the meetings may be even more challenging, due to many perspectives and opposing interests. The planning architects need to have methods of how to manage these meetings. The Swedish planning practice has

traditionally been a rational process. It had its peak during the 1960's. During the 1980's it started to change towards a more communicative and collaborative process (Strömgren 2010). Since then many methods of how to involve citizens in planning projects have been developed. There are a lot of participatory methods that can be useful in a planning project and also contributing to trust in the planning project. Some of the methods are beneficial to use in certain stages of the project. Other methods are more comprehensive and useful for involving stakeholders from the start-up to the evaluation of a project.

The material about participatory methods shows that there are several ways to involve the citizens in the process and to gather information from them. But the participation explained in Arnsteins first steps is not participation on a prominent level according to Arnsteins (1969) ladder of participation. To create a process where the participants have influence in the decision making by creating collaborations and partnership is crucial in order to deepen the democracy (Arén & Herlitz 2017, Abrahamsson et. al. 2016, Adler 2015). It is possible to define some components that are part of participatory methods and can be of value for a trustful planning process, according to literature. These components are **structure, continuous communication, perspectives, attitudes and atmosphere**. These components are also important according to the empirical material. Below there is a summary of the components and the function of them.

## 8.2 Structure

One component that matters when it comes to trust is rules (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010). In one way rules can be a sign of a lack of trust, because if trust existed rules would not be necessary. Though, from another perspective, it is necessary to have rules for the process to be trustworthy. One example of a helpful rule is a rule concerning how stakeholders can leave the process. If it is a clear how one person can be replaced by another, the process will be more robust. The rules can also be about having a clear structure for the process or the meeting. If such rules are set from start it is easier to know what to expect from the process or the meeting.

Contracts are another issue that can contribute to trust in a process. Contracts are a way of showing that the stakeholders trust each other. By putting on paper who should do what and when, the project becomes tangible in a way that can contribute to higher trust among the stakeholders, even if the contract is not legally binding (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010).

The case study of Torpa has shown that a lack of division of responsibility and roles can make the dialogue process work poorly. In the case of Torpa there was no clear project manager. This contributed to

a hesitant approach among the officials - hesitant in the sense of not knowing who had the mandate to do what. Though, there has never been hesitancy about the necessity of the dialogue process with Torpa's inhabitants.

One issue brought up in the interviews is the importance of a municipal organization working with communication. The interviewees stress that having a well thought through organisation for communication between between the municipality and the inhabitants is important for the citizens to trust the municipality. It is not directly related to the planning profession but to the municipality as a whole. Communication is a component that are crucial when it comes to trust and the municipal organization, according to the interviews. The inhabitants have the view of a constant dialogue with the municipality while the municipality sees a lot of dialogues concerning different issues going on (Bomble 2010). This is a problem that could be handled by a special organization. The organization can have the responsibility to take care of general questions that do not have a clear receiver, and connects the questioner to the official who can help them. Such a organization could also have the responsibility to connect projects that relate to each other within the municipality. This organization could contribute to a more efficient dialogue between the municipality and the citizens.

### **8.3 Continuous communication**

To have continuous communication between different stakeholder makes the process and the decisions made within the process well anchored (SKL 2011). A process that is well anchored both politically and among the inhabitants can contribute to increased trust. By giving feedback continuously during the process the municipality can contribute to trust in the process. To explain and visualise how the information contributed by the citizens is used is of value. People who do not get their ideas fulfilled are more inclined to accept this if they can understand why their suggestions were not included in the proposal (Laurian 2009).

Feedback in the form of quick implementations is also of value according to the interviewees. If the municipality can implement some things quickly after they have been discussed with citizens it can contribute to engagement and trust. If the inhabitant can see that something happens they are more likely to put effort into the process and contribute with their time and resources (Rosseau et. al 1998, Castell 2010). It does not have to be something big, but it has to be something concrete. It is risky to talk too much without taking any action.

Presence in the area is one example of how to work with continuous communication. If the officials that work with a planning project have a locality in the area of concern it is easy for the inhabitants to drop

by and have a talk, bring forward their opinions and suggestions. It can also be a way of strengthening weak ties to officials, and planning architects working with the plan. If they are present in the area of concern the inhabitants will start to recognise them and in extension, develop a relationship to them.

To put the specific project in relation to other ongoing projects is essential. The inhabitants can then see how the project relates to other dialogues they have been part of. The inhabitants tend to see the municipality as one unit (Bomble 2016). The inhabitants can experience that they have to answer the same things all over again. To avoid this it is important to explain how the specific project relates to other projects.

To have someone who is in charge is crucial, both for processes and meetings. If the leader promotes communication and participation it can increase trust (Laurian 2009). To have a clear picture of each stakeholder's role is important. To be familiar with the others' skills, abilities and delimitations can contribute to an increased social capital which the process can benefit from.

To be honest in the communication with the stakeholders is crucial for making the planning process trustful, according to the interviews. It is also about being open-minded and humble when receiving and answering questions. Listen to the questioner and try to understand their point of view and give an answer that can help them understand the project. If you do not know the answer try to put them in contact with the official that will know the answer, rather than making up an answer yourself.

## **8.4 Perspectives**

Everyone has their own perspective . In a planning process these perspectives have to be highlighted and discussed. To help move the process along it is important to listen to different perspectives and opinions. If the participants listen and understand each other's perspectives it is easier to reach a solution that everyone can accept (Adler 2015). If the various perspectives are addressed it is possible for people to get an understanding of another person's perspective and accept a decision that does not benefit them (Laurian 2009). Another aspect of listening to and addressing perspectives and opinions is learning from each other. Stakeholders involved in a process have the opportunity to listen to and partake of each other's perspectives, and thereby learn from each other

Representation is related to participation and different perspectives. To have a wide representation is crucial when it comes to participation and co-creation. Hierarchies are closely connected to representation.



The planning architects need to be aware of hierarchies and power relations. It is hard to get a wide representation at the public consultations and other meetings related to the planning process. The public consultations make a good occasion for giving the same information to all of those interested in the planning process. Though, it is not a good occasion on which to hear everyone's opinion. To be aware of who is represented and who makes their voice heard also makes it possible to find the groups that have not shared their point of view, which makes it possible to contact them after the public meeting and listen to their opinions.

It is difficult to get a wide representation. One way is to find key individuals who can bring more people to the meeting, or give their group the information they got at the meeting. One of the interviewees advises that key individuals can be the link between the municipality and the people who do not participate in the meeting.

Another aspect raised in the interviews was the municipal representation during public consultations. To have officials from several administrations present together with politicians gives weight to the process as it is possible to give a valid answer to questions. Further, it shows that the project is taken seriously by the municipality. To know who will attend is useful when trying to work out which questions will be raised according to the interviewees.

## **8.5 Attitudes**

Attitudes are a component that is central in relation to participation and meetings with citizens. The case of Torpa has shown that there were a lot of internal discussions concerning the meetings with the citizens. There was an anxious approach to the public meeting which resulted in many internal discussions and much planning for the open meeting with the citizens. The discussions made it hard to get to the point, which was to meet the citizens. This is something that Adler's (2016) research confirms. She finds that participatory processes and co-creation often start as internal discussions within the municipalities. Attitudes among politicians are also important. They have to be positive about participation and about meeting the citizens. If they are not on board it is hard to have an efficient process (SKL 2011).

## **8.6 Atmosphere**

The aim is one component that has relevance to the atmosphere. To have a fair and constructive process or meeting it is important to have a clear aim (Ragner & Westerberg 2004). A clear aim can contribute to stakeholders being treated equally. One of the interviewees suggests that by having a clear aim it is easier to reject interests and questions that are not relevant to the aim. It is therefore easier to keep the dia-

logue constructive and have a good tone at the meeting.

It can be good to make the meeting flexible by not having a specific time for the presentation, but have it rolling in the background. To have maps and illustrations at several “stations” may contribute to good discussions in smaller groups. Different activities can encourage people to be confident enough to offer their opinions. Having an informal start to the meetings can be a way of starting conversations among people, and making them feel relaxed, according to the interviewees.

Fika is an activity that can contribute to a relaxed atmosphere (Ragner & Westerberg 2004). It can also give energy to tired participants and contribute to creating a professional impression. Another aspect that is crucial for professionalism is to make sure that technical devices work properly (Interview 7). It is also important to have a room that suits the meeting and to furnish the room in a way which will contribute to a relaxed atmosphere and a professional impression (Interviews 5 and 6, Ragner & Westerberg 2004).

## 8.7 Summary

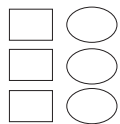
The planning process includes a minimal level of citizens participation but there are no hindrances to working with more participation, according to the plan and building act. However, this is seldom the case for the practicing planning architects due to delimitations in time and budget. But if the public consultations are used in an effective way they can include a lot of the components that the best practice lifts as key components. The theoretical material shows that there are many methods one can use when working with participation in planning.

**Structure, continuous communication, perspectives, attitudes, atmosphere** are factors that are important in participation and planning. The strategies presented in the next chapter are based on these factors.

# 9. STRATEGIES FOR OPEN MEETINGS

## 9.1 Introduction

Strategies have been formulated in order to try to make use of the best practice methods, the case of Torpa and the knowledge gathered from interviews with planners. The strategies are aiming to help the planning architect to have a good open meeting. The focus is on open meetings because the public consultations and other meetings related to the planning process have a format that is similar to open meetings. To have strategies of how to work with trust continuously in the planning project may contribute to less serious conflicts.



**Organize!**



**Be brave!**



**Communicate!**



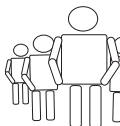
**Act professional!**



**Anchor it!**



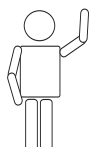
**Bring them in!**



**Who leads?**



**Honesty!**



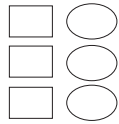
**See you there!**



**Listen!**



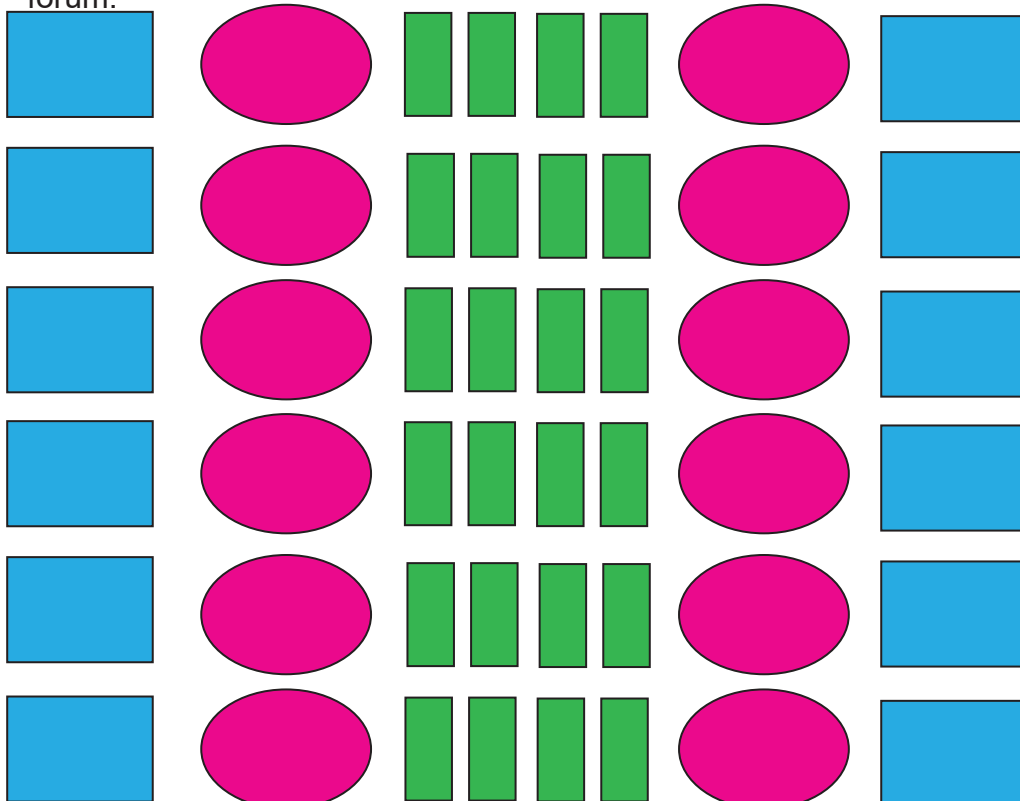
**Close down!**



## Organize!

Three components that matter when it comes to trust and processes are rules, organisation and structure. To have a clear organisation and structure for the meeting is crucial. Put down the agenda on paper and send it out with the invitation. Explain the purpose of the meeting, who will participate and which activities the meeting will involve. Write down a time schedule of the activities and who will lead them. Present the agenda and time schedule as an introduction to the meeting.

A clear purpose to the meeting will clarify what the participants can and cannot affect. A well-communicated purpose can increase people's trust in the planning project because it can decrease false expectations about what is possible to influence or not. It makes it easy for the participants to know what the meeting will be about and what to expect from it. It can also contribute to keeping the dialogue constructive and on topic. A clear purpose makes it easier to say no to questions and opinions that are not related to the project, and to explain why some questions or opinions need to be discussed in another forum.





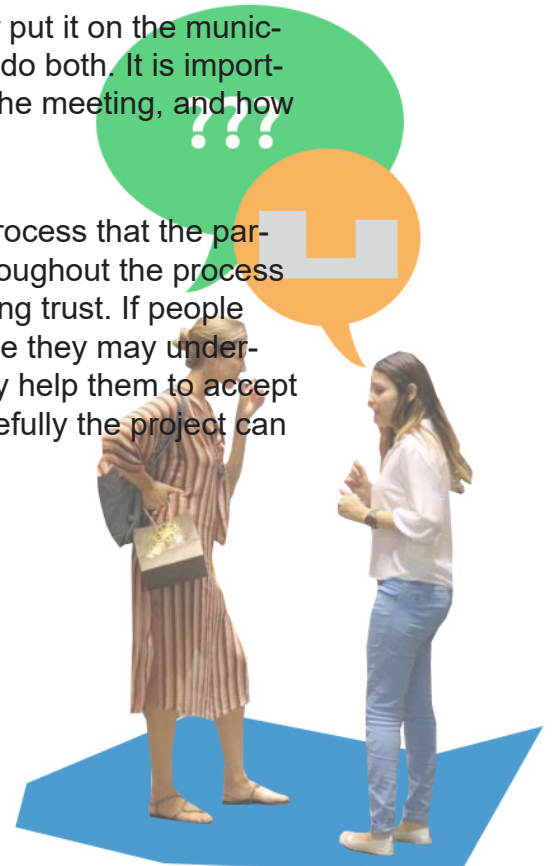
## Communicate!

Start the meeting by explaining why you are there and put the meeting into a context. Explain what led to the meeting and how the planning project relates to other ongoing planning processes or activities. There are always processes and activities going on in every part of our society; they may have been initiated in civil society or by the public sector. To see the “new” planning project as part of, or an extension of, the ongoing processes is crucial for the project to be trustful.

Another aspect is to give quick feedback during the whole planning process. To send out notes as soon as a meeting is finished is one way to do this. The notes should be sent to everyone who participated. They should include a list of who was present and the topics that were discussed. The notes should also explain how the issues brought up during the meeting will be part of the future work, and who will be responsible for this work. Issues that cannot be part of the project should also be included.

If the meeting is not a public consultation, the notes should be in a document that the participants can access. Either put it on the municipal webpage or send it out to the participants, or do both. It is important that people are able to see what was said at the meeting, and how it will be used in the future.

Communication can contribute to a transparent process that the participants trust. To communicate what happens throughout the process is crucial when it comes to creating and maintaining trust. If people can see how and when decisions have been made they may understand the reasons behind the decision, which may help them to accept decisions that contradicts their opinions, and hopefully the project can continue smoothly.





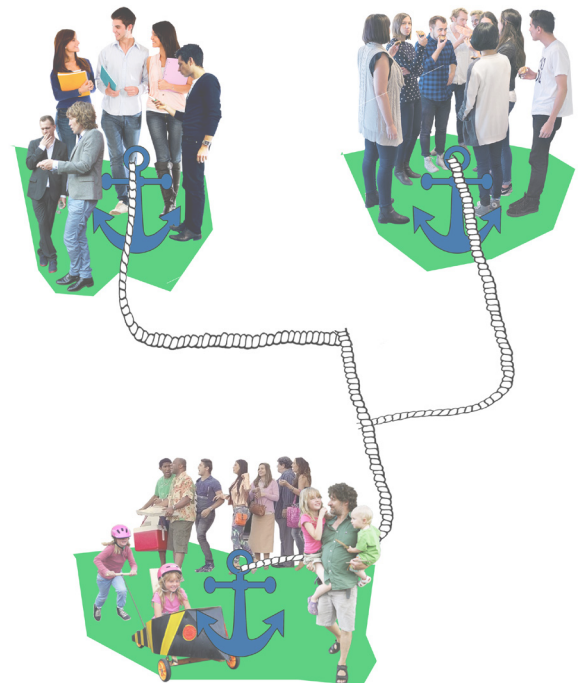
## **Anchor it!**

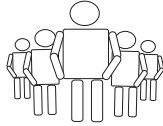
This strategy is about getting everybody onboard. To make sure that the planning project will be successful it is important that everyone understands and supports it. It is necessary to have an official document that describes the project, its aim and delimitations. This document should also describe the background of the project and which ongoing processes it relates to. The document has to be approved by politicians. It is also of value to have an agreement with some of the politicians about being present at the public consultation meetings.

It is important that both the citizens and the politicians equally understand and support the project. If the politicians are aware of its aim and content and support the project, it will be easier to have a transparent and trustworthy process. It is also important that the citizens know the aim and the delimitations. This knowledge will make them understand what they can and cannot be influenced.

If politicians are present it is easier to give good answers to questions that will come up. The politicians and the officials may in some cases have different points of view. If both officials and politicians are present at the meeting and can explain their point of view, it may be easier to get a comprehensive understanding of the project. It will also be easier to have good discussions about questions that will come up.

Another aspect is engagement. To have attendees from several parts of society can contribute to a strong engagement. Engagement tends to spread; if someone can see that others are engaged in the project it is easier for him or her to also get involved.





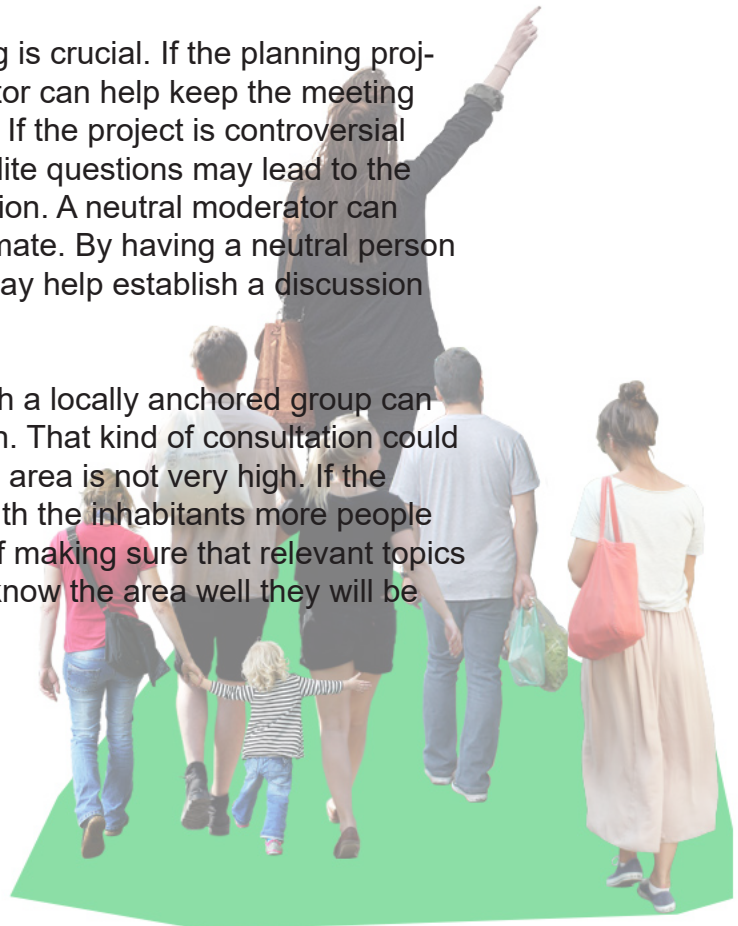
## Who leads?

Usually it is the planning architect who moderates public consultations. But sometimes the projects are controversial. People may be angry with the politicians, the planning architect, or with another official working with the project. If that is the case, it can be helpful to engage a neutral moderator.

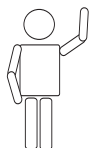
Another way to moderate meetings is by conducting them with the support of another party, whether a group of involved people or an organisation that is part of the planning project. Usually there are some organisations or individuals that have a lot of knowledge and engagement with the project site. These persons or organisations are often a big part of the planning process. They often have good contacts with the inhabitants and the officials, and can be the link between the two spheres. But this cannot be done if it is a public consultation, then the municipality has to be responsible for the meeting.

To have someone leading the meeting is crucial. If the planning project is controversial a neutral moderator can help keep the meeting constructive and relevant to the topic. If the project is controversial it is easy to get stuck. Angry and impolite questions may lead to the officials being put in a defensive position. A neutral moderator can contribute to a polite conversation climate. By having a neutral person deciding who should talk and when may help establish a discussion without interruptions.

To moderate the meeting together with a locally anchored group can also contribute to a good conversation. That kind of consultation could be beneficial if the engagement in the area is not very high. If the co-moderators have good relations with the inhabitants more people may attend. This can also be a way of making sure that relevant topics are addressed. If the co-moderators know the area well they will be aware of the relevant topics.



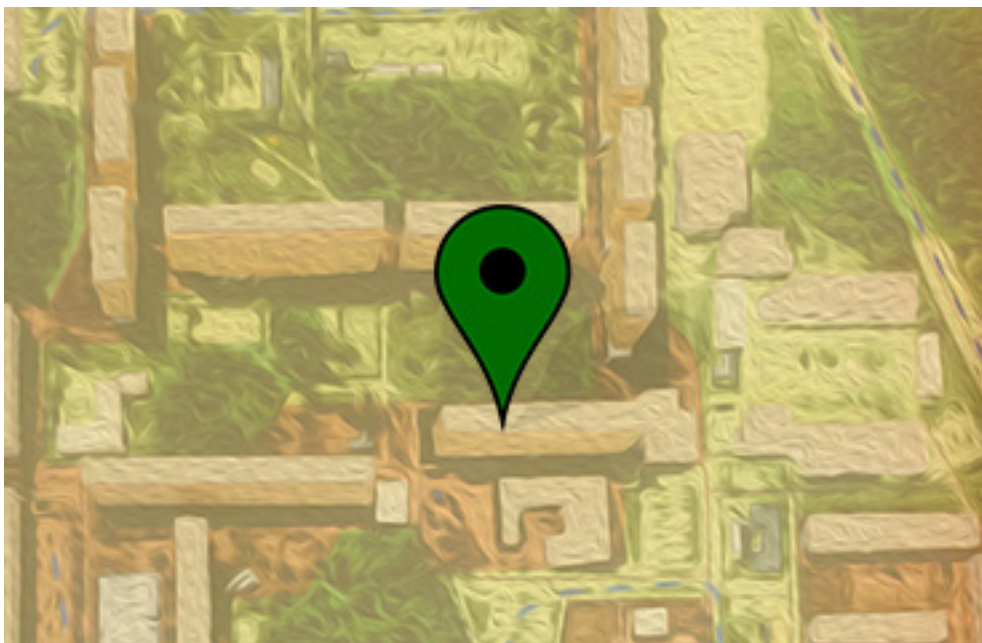




## See you there!

Being visible in the project area is of importance if you are aiming for a good process. To spend time in the project area is valuable, either by having a branch of the planning office in the area or by walking around and spending time on site. If people can see you they may trust that you are working on issues that are relevant for the area. It is by seeing people and talking to them spontaneously that we build relationships and create conditions for trust.

If you spend time in the project area it is easy for the inhabitants to pop by and have a short talk, which can be of great value for the process. The public consultation meetings can be too formal for some individuals. If the process gets too formal people tend to lose interest. This more informal strategy may not be possible to use at a specific meeting, but it can be seen as a preparation for meetings related to the planning process. By spending time in the area, you will create relations with the people you want to participate in the public consultation. The fact that they know who you are may influence them to go to the meeting.







## Be brave!

Do not be afraid of not knowing where the meeting will end up; that is part of the job. Go to the meeting and see where it takes you. Be open to the opinions and questions raised. Act professionally, you have a responsibility to be the face of the municipality for the occasion. It is important to be human and humble, but also professional. You have to be aware of your position in the society. Some groups may consider that you are above them, others may think that you are a lazy official that just drinks coffee. However, you have a lot of knowledge that you have the responsibility of sharing. You are also the person that leads the project and are therefore responsible for listening and talking to the stakeholders at the public consultations.

Think of possible ways to gather as much information as possible. There are many methods that can be used in order to gather information and start discussions, so make sure to use them.

Discussions about creating dialogue and participation with the citizens are common in Swedish municipalities. One of the reasons for doing these two things is to strengthen the democracy between the political elections, and to enable citizens to affect their living conditions. To make sure that progress does not stop with an internal discussion it is crucial to hold citizen participatory meetings. Just go there and see where it takes you.

The planning practice is about collaboration, which is why it is crucial to meet people. It is necessary to collaborate in a planning process, but also afterwards -the plan needs to be implemented once it is finished. The necessary collaborations for implementation begin with the making of the plan. The meeting can be the start of a collaboration that will help move the process forward. If you choose to not have a meeting with the stakeholders you will lack the opportunity to create a relationship with them.



## Act professional!

Make sure that you have a good idea of who will be attending. Talk to people that have been part of the process before or are part of an organisation that will take an interest. Ask them if they will come and if they know someone else who will come to the meeting.

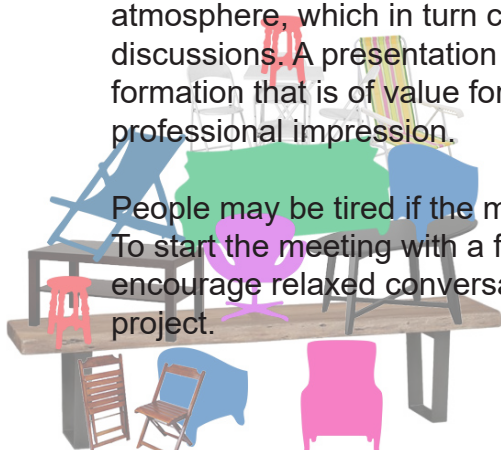
The room has to suit the meeting; it should not be too big nor too small. Choose a room that is flexible if more people than you expect will show up. Think of how you furnish the room. Make sure that people can feel relaxed but also that everyone can see the presentation, if you have one. Make sure that the computer and the projector work properly.

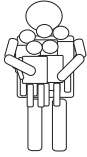
In Sweden we live with the perception that the best ideas are developed at the fika pause. Bring some snacks or sandwiches, tea and coffee to the meeting. People are nicer and more creative if they have something to eat.

When you know who will attend the meeting you may also have an idea about what questions might be raised. Try to find out what questions will be raised by asking yourself what topics have been discussed before. When you are informed it is easier to make a presentation that is of value to the participants. It is also easier to select and bring along colleagues who will be able to help you give good answers and broaden the perspective of the project.

A room that is furnished in a suitable way can contribute to a relaxed atmosphere, which in turn can contribute to good and constructive discussions. A presentation which works smoothly and includes information that is of value for the participants will contribute to a more professional impression.

People may be tired if the meeting is held just after working hours. To start the meeting with a fika can increase the energy. It can also encourage relaxed conversations that can lead to good input into the project.





## Bring them in!

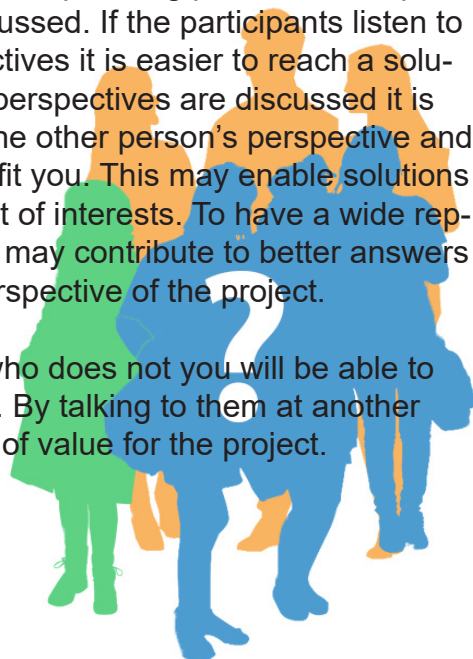
Not being too formal is crucial when keeping people engaged in the project. The invitation should therefore be wide and sent out in different ways. Have an open invitation and do not forget to personally encourage people to attend. To get all the different perspectives it is important that people participate. So, call key individuals before the meeting. Ask them to attend and bring their friends. Make sure that representatives from several groups will attend. Send out the invitation both digitally and by traditional mail. Another way of letting people know about the meeting is to put up information posters around the area of concern.

The invitation also concerns colleagues at the municipality. Make sure that officials from other administrations as well as politicians are present at the meeting.

Hierarchies are closely connected to representation. Be aware of hierarchies and power relations at the meeting. Try to make sure that everyone has the opportunity to talk. But there will be some groups that may not be represented in the room, and some that will not voice their opinions. Be aware of who they are and try to contact them later, to get their perspectives.

Everyone has their own perspective. In a planning process these perspectives have to be voiced and discussed. If the participants listen to and understand each other's perspectives it is easier to reach a solution that everyone can accept. If the perspectives are discussed it is possible to get an understanding of the other person's perspective and accept a decision that does not benefit you. This may enable solutions that are not possible without a conflict of interests. To have a wide representation of politicians and officials may contribute to better answers to questions but also to a broader perspective of the project.

By being aware of who speaks and who does not you will be able to contact those who do not speak later. By talking to them at another occasion may give input that can be of value for the project.





## Honesty!

To be honest is one of the most important things when it comes to trust. If you get questions that you are unable to answer be honest about it. Do not give an answer if you are not sure. Instead you should say that you will try to find the answer later and then contact the questioner. Or if you know of someone who will have the answer, put the questioner in contact with that person.

If issues not related to the aim of the meeting are raised, be honest about it and say that it has to be discussed in another forum. Give the questioner your contact information and ask them to contact you later to discuss the issue.

By telling the truth you will be perceived as a trustworthy person, which can contribute to trust in the planning process. By explaining the facts you may also avoid some serious misunderstandings and false expectations. If people feel that they can trust the information they get at the meeting they may be more positive about engaging in the project and sharing their knowledge.

If you are honest enough to say no to some questions at a meeting it may contribute to a constructive discussion. It may also be of value for the engagement among the stakeholders. If they can see that the project is focusing on the topics related to the site and persons living there they may be more engaged.





When people have questions or opinions that does not fit your perception of a problem, take the time to really listen and try to understand the opinions people have. It may give you innovative ideas. But it also helps you to give them a good answer.

Listen to the smaller discussions at the meeting or when you spend time in the project area. Take the opportunity to listen and have a chat with the participants during the fika break.

Sometimes people are upset and disappointed and they may say that they will appeal the plan. If you take the time to listen to them maybe you will find things that you can change in their favour. But the fact that you listen to them can also make them change their opinion.

Listening to discussions over a coffee can help you to get to know what the inhabitants think is important right now. This may prove useful in the planning project.



## **Close down!**

If everything goes wrong, do not be afraid of just closing the meeting. Explain that there is no reason to continue right now. Decide a new date for a new meeting. Prepare for the new meeting well in advance. Make sure that the aim of the meeting is clear. Make sure that you have the information and material needed. Invite colleagues and politicians who can help provide good answers and contribute to a constructive conversation. Perhaps the project is controversial? Then it could be essential to engage an neutral moderator.

This strategy should be used if you realise that the aim of the meeting has been misunderstood by a large part of the group, and it is impossible to continue the meeting without new material or information that can resolve the situation. To continue the meeting would only risk that the project will get held up. People will continue being angry and you will end up in a defensive position. This will not contribute to a constructive discussion or a trustworthy project.



# 10. DISCUSSION AND REFLECTION

## 10.1 Participatory methods

There are several methods for participation in planning. Some of them are more comprehensive than others. Co-creation, co-production and cultural planning are three methods that have a comprehensive approach to participation. These methods involve the stakeholders from the initiation of the project to the evaluation. The fact that the stakeholders are involved throughout the process may contribute to maintaining and strengthening trust in the planning process. The methods may contribute to creating transparent processes where the stakeholders are able to see how and why decisions are made.

To gain social capital and trust it is crucial to meet local inhabitants and develop a social network (Putnam 2009, Castell 2010). The methods imply that people meet, listen to each other and discuss questions that are of interest in the project. The fact that the stakeholders will meet several times during the process may contribute to increased trust, both among the stakeholders but also in the municipality. The methods aiming for participation could be related to “Partnership” in Arnstein’s (1969) ladder of participation. This means that the participants are part of the decision-making that affect their lives, and are also partners in the implementation of the development. Furthermore the methods are based on some kind of structure, which help create collaboration and partnership. Structure and rules are also aspects that are of value when it comes to creating and maintaining trust (Switzer, Jansen-Jassen & Bertolini 2010 pp. 5-6)

The methods mentioned can be used in dialogue processes that are not only related to a planning project -what is discussed in the processes may also be implemented outside the planning process. Further, it means that there are many things going on that the planning process can be part of if a planning project is initiated. This may contribute to a smoother planning process.

One aspect of these methods is that they all include engagement from civil society on a voluntary basis. It can be a challenge because it may attract a certain group of people and thereby exclude others. One example is young people. How can the younger generations be interested in being part of projects based on these methods? The fact that these methods are often related to local boards which are related to associations, as described in the case of Torpa, may be a challenge. It includes a lot of time spent in non-profit involvement. These methods



also tend to have quite strict structures, which can put people off.

Our society has gone from having a strong common ground and feelings of togetherness to a more individualist and network-based society. It is important that processes or projects that include these kinds of methods are flexible in order to attract people, not least the younger generations. People have knowledge and are capable of being responsible for the development in their area. But to have the energy to work with it on a non-profit basis is challenging. In order to succeed it may be important that the methods are based on the current questions, meaning that the combinations of participants can differ depending on which questions are up for discussion. If the structure gets too formal some will feel that they have the main part of the responsibility and thereby lose their incentive to participate.

It may be beneficial that the local boards have some persons that are constant. Those people could be municipal officials. Their task could be to safeguard the common good. One of the risks with a local board is that only certain people will be heard and get their questions answered. The municipality also has the ability to help move the work forward because they are locally anchored and have a wide network. But the municipality should not be the actor that decides which questions or topics should be discussed. That should be decided by the inhabitants/the persons that are engaged on a voluntary basis. Another aspect of why the municipality is an important stakeholder is the official's expertise, and whether they have knowledge that will be of value across different projects. The municipality has a broad network and is also able to connect stakeholders who can collaborate on projects. The role of the municipality should also be to seek collaborations for implementations, to be clear about what the municipality is able to contribute with and what the other stakeholders can do to help realise the project. The planning projects can also benefit from these dialogue processes. If there are networks that have ongoing dialogue processes related to the development it can be an asset for a planning project. By taking part in those dialogue processes the planning architect makes sure that relevant questions are raised in the planning process. This might lead to co-production between the civil society and the municipality.

However, as mentioned earlier, all the methods have components that are of value for participation in the planning process. These components together may contribute to strengthening and maintaining social trust. The methods are examples of best practice, but best practice is seldom the reality for the practicing planning architects. In Sweden there are 290 municipalities. Many of them are rural and have a small population. This means that many of the municipalities have a small budget and therefore lack staff and other resources. Further, this means they are not able to allocate the resources needed for more participation than the planning legalisation demands. Another aspect

that influences how much the municipalities work with participation is time. There are stakeholders that want the process to be finished as quickly as possible. It may be private developers who want to start building as soon as possible for financial reasons. Politicians also tend to favour quick processes because it can be a way to increase popularity and gain votes in elections. Though, the planning process includes compulsory elements of participation, the public consultations. Besides these consultations, several informal meetings are held, which means that some of the best practice methods can be used at these meetings related to the planning process.

## **10.2 Open meetings**

Planning is not just about producing maps and illustrations explaining the planning project. A significant part of the planning architect's work is to mediate between conflicting interests, and to create collaborations needed for the implementation of the plan. Planning architects are facing a complex reality with several opposing interests. These interests are highlighted and discussed throughout the planning process at several meetings. Many of these meetings are open to anyone with an interest in the project. The legally binding public consultations can be seen as an asset for participation in the planning process. The fact that they are legally binding means that to some degree public participation is required in every planning project. The public consultations is a way for the citizens and municipal officials to meet and create relations. If the public consultations and other meetings related to the planning process are managed in a good way they can contribute to a trustful process. But these meetings are not unproblematic. Conflicts and opposing opinions are part of the planning process, as are hierarchies and power relations. Not every planning architect has the skills and knowledge required to facilitate meetings and handle conflicts, which makes the open meetings a challenge for them.

According to the interviewees it is difficult to make sure that there is a wide representation at the meeting. To have an open invitation is important. The invitation should be sent out in many ways, both digitally and by traditional mail, but it can also be displayed on posters in the project area. Even when the invitation has been sent out to a wide group of people it does not always lead to a wide range of people attending. The meetings related to the planning process tend to be over-represented by individuals with a strong socio-economic status, according to the interviewees. This means that perspectives from more vulnerable groups of society will not be raised for discussion at the meetings. Another problem related to representation and open meetings is hierarchies and power relations. Hierarchies among people will affect who talks and who does not. Some people may not feel comfortable about talking in public, and some may not feel comfortable voicing their opinion due to other people's presence in the room.

If the aim is to get as many perspectives on the planning project as possible it is important to be aware of who is present at the meeting, and who shared their thoughts. But it is even more important to be aware of who is not there and who did not contribute their thoughts. If the planning architect is aware of that it is possible to contact them after the meeting and get their opinion then. The public consultations are good forums for giving the same information to many people at the same time, but they are not suited for getting a lot of input from the stakeholders. Therefore, the open meetings related to the planning process may be complemented with other forms of meetings or methods to gather as many perspectives and opinions of the project as possible.

Another challenge related to the open meetings is conflict. It is not uncommon that people living in an area are satisfied with the situation as it is and do not welcome the changes that the plan implies. They might be upset and frustrated, which might contribute to an unpleasant atmosphere at the meeting. It is easy for the planning architect to get stuck in a defensive position that might increase the unpleasant atmosphere. These situations are not easy to solve. But according to the interviewees it is important to listen to those who are angry. Sometimes just listening to them will calm them down. Trying to understand their perspectives on the project might help prevent the planning architect from getting stuck in a defensive position. Though, it is not possible to please everyone; some will be dissatisfied with the planning project. But if everyone feels that they have been part of the project and had the opportunity to voice their opinion, and have their opinion listened to, it might be easier for them to accept things that are not in their favour.

The fact that some might be upset and frustrated when they come to the meeting may produce an unpleasant atmosphere. Groups of people that are upset might try to take control of the meeting by repeating their point of view during the meeting. This can contribute to a perception that their point of view is shared by all the participants. It is therefore important to encourage as many as possible to speak, even though this might be difficult. To moderate open meetings is not always an easy task. The planning architects are the project leaders in a planning process, which means that they also lead the meetings related to it. The planning architects need to have good knowledge about the planning legalisation, good skills in design but also in project management and facilitating meetings. It can be hard for one person to be an “expert” in all those fields at the same time. The planning architect might need help with some of the tasks in order to succeed. According to the interviewees it can be beneficial to have a neutral moderator in cases where the project is controversial. This might help create a more relaxed atmosphere at the meeting, making it easier to have a constructive dialogue and solve problems. According to Laurian (2009) a neutral moderator can help create trust in the process.

The moderator can help bring different opinions forward, and make people listen to each other, which can contribute to an understanding and trust in other stakeholders involved in the process.

Ragner & Westerberg (2004), in correlation with the interviewees, argue it is crucial to have a clear aim for the meeting, in order to prevent misunderstandings. But the aim needs to be communicated clearly, both in the invitation and at the start of the meeting. The aim will help the participants to know what it is possible for them to affect and what is not. If that is communicated properly it may lower false expectations. A clear aim can also be something that can increase the trust in the project, according to the interviewees. Feedback is also something that is of value when it comes to trust in the planning process. To give quick feedback in relation to meetings and continuously during the planning process is of importance. That feedback can make the stakeholders understand why their opinions are used or not used in the work with the plan. But if decisions to use or not use information and opinions from the stakeholders are not communicated throughout the project, it can create feelings of distrust and dissatisfaction. The stakeholders may feel that their opinions are not taken seriously and that their participation is just something that the legalisation demands, and that planning architect wants for the sake of routine, neglecting to consider the stakeholders' opinions about the plan.

Another challenge that the planning architect faces at public consultations is the wide range of questions. Bomble (2016) found in her research that citizens tend to see the municipality as one unit, a perception which sometimes shows during the public consultations. It is not uncommon that the citizens see the public consultation as an opportunity to pose questions to the municipality, even if they are not related to the specific project. The planning architect needs to be prepared for this. One way is to have colleagues from other administrations present, who can help give answers.. But it is very important that the planning architect is honest about what he or she knows or does not know. It is better to give out the contact details of the official who will know the answer to a question, rather than make up an answer. There is a risk that questions that are not answered at the meeting will be forgotten. It is important that the planning architect tries to get the questioner in contact with someone who knows the answer. A municipal organisation that works with communication and takes care of questions like that can help increase trust in the municipality, according to the interviewees.

### **10.3 The case study**

The case study of Torpa was chosen to gain knowledge about dialogue processes, and how open meetings are managed by municipal officials. It was also an opportunity to attend open meetings and make

observations about how many participated, who attended and who did not attend, who had the opportunity to talk etc. The dialogue process in Torpa was initiated by the municipality. The aim was to create a local board which can work in collaboration with the municipality, on issues that can increase the inhabitants' wellbeing. The municipality wants the inhabitants to be in charge of the development in their neighbourhood. The dialogue process was not related to a planning project and may therefore not be the best case study for my thesis, which focuses on how the planning architect handles meetings related to the planning process in a way that creates trust in the process. A better way to collect specific knowledge about how planning architects manage open meetings might possibly have been to attend some public consultations related to one or several planning projects.

## **10.4 Final reflections**

This thesis does not aim to solve all the problems related to participation and trust in planning, or in society as a whole. But the work has indicated that no extraordinary actions are needed in order to create conditions for trust in the planning process.

Some of the proposed strategies for open meetings may appear to be simple and ordinary. But to have these simple things in mind may contribute to a planning process where participation contributes to trust. The strategies may be a bit too simple to be useful in complex meetings with serious conflicts. But if these strategies are used in the everyday work it may contribute to less serious conflicts.

It may seem unnecessary to work with trust in the Swedish context because the trust to institutions and other people are high. But the high level of trust may also be seen as an important reason to work with trust. Because trust is one important factor in a well-functioning society. Further, according to Rothstein, it is in the public administrations trust is created. The high levels of trust are nothing that exists by itself, it has to be maintained. The fact that our society is changing rapidly makes it important to work on these issues continuously.

Trust, participation and planning are complex issues. There are several possible topics for further explorations. One of these topics could be to develop or evaluate methods that can be used to invite as many people as possible to meetings related to the planning process. The invitation to and representation at meetings were something that the interviewees saw as a challenge.

Another issue that could be interesting to explore on is the planning legalization. There have been changes in the plan and building act, which is aiming for quicker processes and more participation. It would be interesting to see if these changes have had the intended effect.







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# APPENDIX

## **Appendix I**

### **Interview questions for persons involved in the dialouge process in Torpa**

What is your background?

What is your role in the dialouge process?

How do you deal generally with citizens dialogue in the municipality?

How and when did the dialogue process in Torpa?

What was the purpose?

What do you think has worked well?

What have been the negative / not worked well?

### **Interview questions for planning architects**

How long have you been working as a planning architect?

What do you think is important for planning with trust?

How do you at Lerum work with public particiapation?

How often do you have public meetings?

What are the challenges with public meetings?

How do you prepare yourself for the meetings?

How do you make sure that you collect the info and use it later?

## Appendix 2

**Interview 1, 2017-02-17**  
**CEO Vänersborgsbostäder**  
**Gunnar Johansson**

**How long have Vänersborgsbostäder (VB) owned the properties in Torpa? (00:00,45)**

There are private apartments and a tenant. So, VB does not own all properties in the area, but we own the majority.

From the beginning, VB was owned by HSB. The properties in Torpa was built by HSB. They are built in the 60s and is relatively good condition. It will not have to be that big renovations soon. VB was formed in 1996 and has owned the properties since then.

**How do you work with trust, influence and dialogue in the area? (00:02,35)**

We have meetings with the tenants (bo-möten) once a year in every neighborhood. We also do a tenant survey. On these occasions, we try to find out what residents think and feel and what they would like to have more of or what they want to change.

We do also have janitors in our areas. Torpa has a reception, so many employees have Torpa as their base. But they have a larger area that they take care of.

We try to have a dialogue with the tenants association (Hyrersgästföreningen). But would like to have a broader dialogue because there is a risk that not everyone is represented by the association.

There are a lot of other associations and organizations in the area. Some of them have contacted VB and asked to rent a premise. Unfortunately, there are no premises in the area to offer. VB have tried to have cooperation with the tenants' association, helping hands, sports club to organize activities and more. Some has been successful but there are challenges and a need to employ someone who I specified in communication.

**Do you work with these issues in different ways in different areas? (00:15,05)**

No, it is about the same everywhere.

**In what ways have you been involved in the dialogue process and area development Torpa? Have you been involved in the process from the beginning? (00:15,30)**

From the beginning it was the municipality that started and VB invited themselves in this work because they wanted to initiate a better dialogue with their tenants. So one could say that we have been part of the process since the start.

### **How do you think it worked? What was / is good and bad?**

(00:16,07)

When it started a few years ago it was mostly officials at the municipality who had their own meetings. They discussed the feeling of unsafety in Torpa, and some other questions. We also had a meeting with the inhabitants in Torpa. It resulted in better lighting and colorful paintings in some tunnels. There is nothing wrong with what we managed to do. But the approach was too much top-down and the residents were not involved.

Later Lisa and Paul restarted the dialogue process. They wanted to invite the residents to get a bottom up perspective.

### **What do VB want to have out of the dialogue work? (00:20,10)**

A well-functioning area. Happy and satisfied tenants who remain and who take care of their neighbourhood.

One important question is how do we develop a representative group. A local group to work in collaboration with is great. But how do you get the engineering of it all? So far, the structure is loose, it requires a commitment to make it work. Poor with premises. Those who succeed better have a good meeting place.

An example is Hovsjö hub. A meeting place for all.

EBO- people who seek asylum and chooses to stay at their family are tearing the properties down, and we need to do a lot of renovation due to that. But we need to get the bottom-up perspective so people understand that they need to take care of their homes. We need to renovate our stairways, courtyards, in total it will cost about 10 million. We renovated for approximately 10 years ago. We must find a way to get the area going to work better. We need bottom-up approach.

The social issues has to get a solution, it can help a lot. We have had problems with garbage. The management should be moved off the yards in to make them work better and make it easier to sort the garbage. Bedbugs is another problem, we don't want people to swap furniture with each other.

Difficulty built in these processes, it is not so easy to know how to do. How to get started?

Things happen, things get better. But one could question whether it is the right things that's being done.

### **How do you see your responsibilities (what can you contribute) to the social issues in Torpa? (00:42,18)**

Right now we don't have any employee focusing on communication. We need someone who can be the link between management and tenants. Communication is an important component but it is difficult to make it work.

You have real estate in Brålanda. Are you involved in the planning processes going on there? I have heard of any organization working with the municipality and driving their processes themselves.

Brålanda is dominating in our municipality, many political representations are from Brålanda. We are not involved in anything at the moment.



**Interview 2, 2017-02-20**

**Official at the Development administration, Municipality of  
Vänersborg  
Anne-lie Lindgren**

**For how long have you worked in Vänersborg?**

8 years at the development office.

What is your role there? What is your background?

Strategic work with public health issues, on behalf of a political council of Health and social sustainability.

Much of my focus is on participation and equality related to health, and to get the municipalities different administrations to cooperate in health and the issues in focus.

**How do you deal generally with citizens dialogue in the municipality, and at the development office? (00:05,45)**

It differs between the administrations but we don't have any common goal to work with it.

**How and when did the dialogue process in Torpa? What was the purpose? (00:06,02)**

It has been going on for about 4 years. Children and Education Administration initiated it. After contact with parents to students on Tärnan School. Many of them were from Somalia. It turned out that there were problems among the children that not only was the school's responsibility.

From start the project was called Development area Torpa (område-sutveckling Torpa) In the beginning it was two organizations that was included in the project.

Collaboration VÄNERSBORG: A steering structure consisting of the municipality, Knowledge Coalition West (Kunskapsförbundet Väst) and Region Västra Götaland.

Psynk- project: A project initiated by Swedish Association of Local Authorities and Regions and managed by Collaboration Vänersborg. The focus was to synchronize efforts for children and youths' well-being and physical health. Increasing integration and gender equality was part of the project.

The process began with internal meetings where the structure of the project was discussed. It was divided into several themes. One person was responsible for each team. I was responsible for Mobility, to get the collaboration between associations and residents going. The goal was to hire someone who lives in the area, to work at the municipality for the project.

What has happened since the start up in 2013 is a branch of the library on the school. There is an employed person who works in the

library with helping those who go there. Help them with things concerning integration, the Swedish society and the municipality, such as filling in questioners and other documents.

There is also a new youth center. The old was too far away and crowded so they had to close.

The project received funding from the Council for Social Sustainability in 2014, money that should go to activities in the area. Examples of what it was used for is:

Tunnel Project - summer workers

Sports Centrum and youth center

Internships and youth employment

Information film about student health

Football school

El Sistema

Meeting point Tärnan, Library and "service center"

Health on equal terms

Helping hands (Hjälpande händer) - evening and weekend activities for teenagers

Girl evenings

Extended summer activities

Lighting to make the area feel safer

We had an open meeting where we discussed what could be improved in the area. Paint the tunnels, put up better lighting etc. came up and was things that later was carried out. But it has been difficult to re-connect this to the residents, which may have led to some dissatisfaction. When we did something they have already found something else they are not happy with.

Another thing that we did during the first period was a Health Survey. Health on equal terms. It is used by the officials in their work at the municipality. But the residents can't see how it is used.

### **Who has been involved? (00:28,38)**

All the administrations within the municipality.

Associations

Residents

Vänerns borgs bostäder

### **What do you think has worked well? (00:30,27)**

I think one positive thing has been that we have had a collaboration between the administrations within the municipal organization. It is needed, socio-economically vulnerable area will require greater resources. For example, the Vanersborg municipality has worked to spread out local sports facilities evenly in the municipality. But I think you should distribute them where needed, some areas may need more, they should get it.

It is difficult to get the dialogue anchored among the residents. It is important at you listen to everyone, not only to the strong voices. You have to catch those who do not have the resources to get their voice

heard. We have tried to listen to as many people as possible. We have used those working in the area (Helping Hands, etc.) to "fill in" what they have heard from residents in the area.

We have tried to translate the survey that was sent out in different languages and have people who can explain the questionnaires at the meeting place in Tärnan. All did not answer the survey but they had dialogue with those who they talked to, which has also given us the info about their opinions and ideas, but this is filtered by a service person.

Another positive and important point is that the issue has come up on the agenda. The discussion is a good start. And there are many associations in the area. Somali, Roma, etc., with many sub-associations that are engaged, it shows by them attending the meetings. Sadly, there is a challenge with too few premises for the associations.

But even though it has been a long and slow process I think it has happened quite a lot in the area, as mentioned before. But some of the most important things are:

Helping hands open to teenagers

Football Schools for the residents

Projects for lighting. We stood outside shops asking about where they wanted better lighting. The work with the comprehensive plan, Pål and Annelie went out on the field. Talked to the residents, brought a map and talked about the area. This was used in the comprehensive plan.

The fact that the Planning administration has been part of the process has been very good. They have a tradition of dialogue within the department and knowledge that has been valuable for the process.

**What have been the negative / not worked? (00:41,45)**

No project manager, but we are trying to get money to get a manager. We have lost track a bit, due to the lack of a project leader. There has not been anyone with the responsibility. Things have happened anyway, but not with some real control. There is uncertainty among the residents about what is happening, and what will be done which is due to that the municipality has been poor at communicating it.

**Interview 3, 2017-02-20**  
**Planning Architect at the Building Administration**  
**Pål Castell**

**How long have you worked in Vänersborg?**

Three years came directly from Chalmers when I finished with my PhD.

What is your role here? What is your background?

Planning Architect, working with detail plans and the comprehensive plan.

**How do you deal generally with the dialogue in the municipality, and on your office? (00:01,10)**

Tight situation, we can't do it as much as we would like. However, in some plans, we have worked well with it, in fairly early stages. We had meetings, informed that we will begin work with an area before we had any proposals.

We have a 3D model, which can be used for consultations and other meetings. But it is not used in the extent that it could be. Mittvändersborg- does not work in the current situation, is not very good but when used it is often appreciated.

During the work with the comprehensive plan we have been out a lot of different areas, rural, Torpa etc. Groups that are not so well-established in the community lives in Torpa, that's why we decided to go there and talk to them.

We try to work with dialogue as much as we can.

**How and when did the dialogue process in Torpa? What was the purpose? (00:06,25)**

I was not there from the beginning, because it started before I started working here. But I got involved in one way or another. I was given the task of representing the building administration because I'm interested in these types of processes.

When I started going to the meetings, it was mostly officials who talked about the organization, how the process would be. Much talk and drawings of boxes and arrows. I felt that we never came close to Torpa.

So, I went there and talked to people on my own. I understood that there was a lot of interesting things going on in the area. People were happy that the municipality appeared in the area. I noticed that there was a gap between the municipality and Torpa. There were lots of ideas about what they wanted to do, but they didn't know much about the municipality or who to talk to, there was no link between the residents and the municipality. I tried to hand over what I was told to the other officials that was part of the project, Development area Torpa. One aim was to produce statistics that showed ill health, income, etc. I was a little skeptical to it. What is the purpose of it? Internally, it could

be monitored in some way, but it is hard to make any difference so it is visible in statistics through small projects. What is required to make any difference is that it moves in a group who have better economically and that a group that do not have it so economically moves out. That is nothing that will help the most marginalized groups. Then it was my experience that it fizzled out. There was some turbulence in one of the administrations, it got a bit messy, all this made it fizzled out.

Later, Lisa came into the picture. She wanted municipalities to co-operate with in her research and was looking for municipalities that was interested in developing civil dialogue. Sofia Wickström, my boss suggested Torpa.

Karin (Social Welfare), Lisa, Paul and Sofia had an initiating meeting. Thanks to Lisas research the project has been going. I try to push the project forward, but I do not own the question.

**Who has been involved? (00:20,38)**

Hakan, Ann-Len, Karin, Eva persons involved, they are managers at different administrations in the municipal organization.

**What do you think is working well? Why? (00:21,02)**

Resta gård is one of Sweden's largest asylum accommodations and has best practice in integration. Support group started at Resta gård, it is Syrian people and the Red Cross has started a movement from below. It has no direct link to Torpa but Resta gård is located close to Torpa. Some of those who lived at Resta gård there moved to Torpa. I think it is a project we could learn from.

Small percentage of those living in Torpa who was at the meeting in November which is a bit sad.

It has been much focus on integration. Integration is so much more and should be worked with in a wider range. There are other questions that also are important that we could work with. There is a crash of the system in our society, the system is complex and cold, there is no personal contact, which makes it hard for newcomers to integrate. There have been some things, library with the meeting place and Helping hands.

It has been a positive view of the unconventional work. High attendance among our manager at the different administrations. They come to meetings and show that they want to be there. A step in the right direction is the meeting we had last week, interest is high. Although the notice went out late.

I miss certain groups. Somali culture association, politicians Abdulai Mohammed who lives nearby sitting in a committee, social welfare

committee. Political group called demokratiberedningen working with integration.

Important that the notes from the last meeting is sent out, the feedback to the inhabitants is crucial. That it is not done properly at earlier meetings, which is a symptom of poor organization.

**What is not working? Why? (00:30,07)**

We have been out to little in the area. We have worked mostly internally and have had poor feedback with what have been done and so on.

A lot of talk about the organization, and a little anxious mood for meeting people. Do we know what we do? Are we ready for this? - General discussion at meetings.

I think there has to be some insecurity and uncertainty about where we'll end up, that's one big part of citizens dialogue and nothing you should be afraid of. You have to think "Better done Than Perfect!" as Marianne Bergung once said. It is better to talk to people and see where you end up, than plan everything in perfection.

It is hard to have a good communication with the inhabitants due to the CEO management executives, etc. have been at the meetings. It would have been better with a process manager, and officials who had been given the task to work on the project. Of course it is good that the managers are engaged and actually going to the meetings, but they may not be the most appropriate. Sometimes has the communication been poor within the working group as well.

There is no political decision for the "re-start" when Lisa came along, but we have one for the earlier years, which is the decision we are working towards. But it can sometimes feel a little unclear, it is not sufficiently anchored with the politicians. What is our mandate? What is our budget? How it is anchored? Politicians are not involved, so, why choose the administrations to go on anyway? These are questions that have come up to mind.

Paul has experienced that it is difficult to raise issues that do not require a decision to the politicians. He would like to bring up issues that can be discussed to sense the mood among politicians, see what they think. But they would like to have a clear basis for decisions and official letter and opinion for decisions to even discuss the questions.

**What do you want out of the dialogue? (00:53,02)**

The municipality will support the start-up of a grannskapsråd (neighbourhood board) then it shall continue by itself. Anne-lie is a good project manager for it.

**What do you think the planning office can get out of the dialogue?** (00:58,07)

A mission that Paul has taken upon himself and gained the support of his boss. He does not think that it will be used in their work right now because they don't got any plans in the area. use the work of the planning work.

**Do you have plans for the area?** (01:01,04)

No



**Interview 4, 2017-04-18****Inhabitant in Torpa and part of Vänersborgs young muslims  
Mohammed**

**What are Vänersborgs young muslims doing? Your association?**  
(00:01,03)

We try to catch young people, so they don't fall outside the society. Many are newcomers so we try to teach them about the Swedish society, but we also have education in Koran and Islam. We started one year ago with 37-38 members, today we have 80-90 members. The association grew fast partly because there was many persons coming from Syria the last year.

**How long have you lived in Torpa?** (00:02,45)

Lived there for ca 25 years. I live in my own apartment with my family since 2012.

**How did you hear about Forum Torpa/Områdesutveckling Torpa?**  
(00:03,10)

We did get an e-mail to the association. It was an invitation to a meeting in November last year, with the municipality. So we went to that meeting and have been part of the process since then.

Have you been involved in similar processes?

No

**How have you participated in the process?** (00:04,01)

Just the open meetings. I haven't heard of any other way to participate, don't think I have been invited to any planning meetings at the municipality.

**What are your expectations on the process?** (00:04,30)

That something positive will come out of it. I have high expectations, both on the municipality but also on the people living here. This is a chance to make a change, and for people living in the area to be part of it. But they have to be engaged, they can't just wait for someone else to do something.

All inhabitants in Torpa want a change, but the language is a problem. People don't show up at meetings because they don't understand what it is about.

It is hard to invite people by e-mail because they can't read Swedish, we have that problem in the school I work in as well. I think it is better to call them and explain what the meeting is about and why they should come.

**What do you think has been good so far?** (00:07,20)

The fact that there are people coming to the meetings, it shows that there are engaged people in the area. There are more but they don't understand Swedish so they don't go to the meeting.

**What have been bad so far? (00:08,05)**

The inhabitants should lead the meetings more. They should invite the municipality and hold the meeting, tell them what they need and want to work with. But to do that it is important that you feel that you have the power to do something. It is so important that the municipality help people to implement their ideas. The municipality should not talk, they should do more. If they don't show that it is possible to do things people will not show up, they will lose their trust in the municipality.

**What do you as residents need to succeed to create a neighborhood board? (00:10,05)**

It is hard to make people do nonprofit work, especially youths. The municipality have to give them something. Like at the last meeting, they youths had worked a lot because they did get a locality for their youth center. They see that their engagement result in something, and now they can plan activities for the summer etc.

It is crucial to find the questions the people are interested in and give them quick feedback of what is possible to do or not. Be clear and honest about how much money the municipality has. If that is clear from start it is easier to trust the municipality, then you can understand why it is possible to do something and impossible to do something else.

I think it is hard to reach the parents, but maybe it is possible through their kids. If they can see that something is good for their kids they may also be engaged, but we have to explain for them, try to talk to them and the municipality has to give something. Do something that shows that it is possible to make a change, it can be something small, it doesn't matter as long as it is something that the inhabitants want and need. If the municipality shows that they want to give something, then the inhabitants can also give. There are many who have knowledge in crafts carpentry they can build themselves if the municipality buy the material, for example.

But to get to know what people want to do they have to talk to the municipality, and to make them come to the meetings it is important to have an interpreter. It is also important to find the key persons who can convince people to go to the meetings. Or the key persons, a person that are a contact person for a specific group can go to the meeting and then explain for his or her group. Then the meetings would be smaller and more efficient. Because in one way it feels like we have come nowhere, we just talk and talk. That will make people lose hope and stop coming to the meetings.

I think it is important to start in the small things, as long as it is something that people are engaged in it will make them believe that they can affect. And it is crucial that the municipality is clear of what the budget is and what is possible.

**Interview 5, 2017-03-31**  
**Planning architect**  
**Carin Gustrin**

**How long have you been working as a planning architect?**

Four years. First at the municipality of Partille and the last half year at Radar architecture.

**How do you at Radar work with public participation? (00:01,07)**

Since I recently started working at Radar I haven't had any public meetings yet. But in some of the projects we work a lot with participation. We have one person Joakim Forsemalm who is an expert in dialogue, he is involved in these plans and coordinates the dialogues. But when I was working in Partille I had some public consultations and meetings not regulated by the plan and building act.

**How often do you have public meetings? (00:03,01)**

In Partille we had the meetings that the law demands. I remember one specific case which was complicated. It was a quite small plan. There was an existing old building and the purpose of the plan was to change it so it got legal to have 7 apartments in the house. The house is called Borgen and it is located on a hill, with a neighboring Villa area. The municipality were also working on a site improvement permit for a road. The road was supposed to connect to Borgen through a neighboring Villa area.

The road and the small detail development plan were also connected to another larger plan, which process hadn't started yet. However, the developer had some sketches of the road which they showed to the residents in the villa area. They didn't like the sketches and were frustrated when they came to the meeting. They thought that if they say yes to the plan they had to accept the road as well, but that was not the case. This whole thing was a result of bad communication, between the municipality, the inhabitants and the developer.

In the end the meeting was good, we discussed the problems and it turned out quite well. But as I see it the problem was the communication or rather the lack of communication between the municipality (us planning architects) and the developer. They showed the sketches to the residents without telling us, and I think that they weren't humble enough when talking to the residents. Everyone got upset, I think it would have been possible to talk to them in another way and have a better discussion.

But after that first meeting of the plan for Borgen, we decided to start a dialogue with the residents. We asked them to choose a couple of persons that should represent them at the meetings. This was part of the other larger plan that the road also was connected to. They did and we started by having an inventory at the site together with them.

The second time we met at the municipality together with the developer. The aim for that meeting was to make a priority list. It was really a challenge because they had so separated opinions about what it should be. In the end, they agreed on a list, but I am not sure if that was the right thing to do. But it was hard to manage something else at the moment, it is a question of time and experience. You always have the pressure to come up with a solution as fast as possible, and it was my first job I wasn't experienced enough to mediate all the interests and opinions in another way. I was in need for more support from colleagues and my boss, but it is not always easy to get that when it is needed.

**What are the challenges with public meetings? (00:14,25)**

You want it to be constructive, but it is sometimes hard to keep it that way. Often you have a clue of questions will be raised. But it is often questions about many things that are not related to the plan. Some questions and opinions just has the purpose to bring down the plan, not on relevant reasons, rather that someone doesn't like the idea of new neighbors than that something is actually wrong with the plan. That kind of opinions are common and a bit hard to handle. But the only thing you can do is try to explain the plan and try to keep to the subject. People are good in finding ways to say no to plans they don't like, and it is hard to make them trust the municipality. Sometimes they think we just want to push them down, that is a challenge. One has to be patient and explain in a way that everybody understands. But something that is sure is that it is always someone that will not be pleased. You can't satisfy everyone. But you don't want them to appeal the plan on the "wrong" reasons.

You have to listen to people and to meet them, explain. People communicate differently in different areas. In areas where people are high educated and know their rights it is sometimes harder to explain and make them understand your point of view, often the engagement is high and they are good in expressing themselves.

**What are the good things with open meetings? (00:28,45)**

To have the discussion. I rather have a bunch of angry people there than none. It is easier to explain and discuss things together at a meeting than in a text document (samrådsredogörelse). If there are people with different opinions, everyone gets new input and understanding for each other's point of view.

How do you prepare yourself for the public meetings? (00:29,15)

I ask myself:

What will people ask about? What will make people upset?

How do I answer that?

Who do I need to help me with the answers? People from other administrations at the municipality.

It is so important to have colleagues from other administrations there. Sometimes it is good to have the developer there as well but some-

times it is just a problem. It depends on if the plan is controversial or not.

**What about politicians, should they be present? 00:33,45)**

We had no politicians present at the meetings in Partille. Could have been good to have them there sometimes. They could have explained why they did take a decision or not, in a better way than us officials could. But I'm not sure that they want to participate at the meetings.

**How do you make sure that you collect the info and use it later? (00:34,55)**

Write it down. But if it is at the public presentation (samråd), it is a bit late. It is hard to implement it in the plan when you already have a proposal. But now with the new standard procedure you can have a public presentation (samråd) without any proposal, just some sketches. Then you make the proposal and sent it out a second time for the public to make comments and then the politicians can adopt the plan. That's a good change in PBL.

**How do you handle questions that are not related to the specific plan for discussion? (00:36,28)**

Try to make an answer, try to explain. If I'm not the right person I try to get them in contact with someone that knows, or try to find an answer and then come back to them.

But sometimes these questions are annoying and you don't think it is your responsibility to answer it, and you just want to leave it. Mostly you react like that due to time pressure. I don't have the time to answer all questions that are not related to my plan.

I think it would be better if the municipalities had someone that worked with communication, and arranged for example safety walks in different areas. This could solve a lot.

**Interview 6,2017-04-04**  
**Planning architect**  
**Mia Börjesson**

**How long have you been working as a planning architect?**

I graduated in 2011, then I worked at different places for a while. In 2013 I started to work as a planning architect in Karlstad municipality. Last year in October I started here at Radar.

Dialogue and communication is my main interests. I have both been working with detail plans but also projects that has more focus on dialogue, such as new design for a square or another public spaces.

What do you think is important for planning with trust? (00:01,05)

People see the municipality as one unit, which creates problems at the public meetings because it is impossible to know everything that happens in a municipal organization and give the right answer to the question. I think it is important for the municipalities to have an organization that works with these issues, to communicate with its inhabitants and can coordinate the collaboration between the municipalities ongoing projects.

Then of course you as the municipality's representative have a responsibility. You have to listen and follow up. The following up and feedback is crucial for the trust. Doesn't matter if you have good intentions if you don't explain how and why you have come to the decision, proposal or similar.

To make clear what is possible to affect or not is also very important, so people doesn't expect to influence things they don't have the opportunity to. To have as open process as possible, and to have it as soon as possible. Talk to people before you have a proposal, because when you have a proposal you have a frame and that will limit you.

**How do you at Radar work with public participation? (00:03,12)**

We have one ethnologist that work with social aspects and the dialogues. It is good for both the external dialogues but also for our internal dialogues at the office. It gives us a very clear focus on social aspects.

How much we work with dialogue differs from case to case. We are dependent on the clients so it is partly up to them, but we always see the citizens as our main costumers. We have a clear profile of including the social aspects in our plans.

Usually we do the proposal that the municipalities use at the public presentations (samråd), and they hold the meeting themselves. Sometimes they update the proposal themselves as well, before it is adopted. But we do also have some other projects as well with more responsibility for the meetings and the whole process. We do the public presentations, have workshops etc.

### **How often do you have public meetings? (00:05,45)**

Not that often at Radar but when I worked at the municipality I had more. We didn't work with any revolutionary ideas. But we tried to plan the meetings in a good way.

First, we tried to have the meeting in localities at site. It is important that people feel welcome and have access. To invite them to the municipality does something to the power perspective. Then the time is important, to have the meeting when people can come, after office hours.

When I was working in Karlstad we were also rebuilding/renovating the town hall (kommunhus). We had a lot of discussions about how the building could be more welcoming and contribute to a better meeting with the inhabitants, which kind of rooms and furniture we needed etc.

It is important that the room fits the meeting, not too big but neither too small. It is of course hard to know how many will attend. How to furniture the room is also an important aspect, make the room feel nice and including.

In Karlstad we had traditional public meetings, but we also had open houses so people could come and discuss the project in a more informal way. But of course it is best to start having meetings early in the process, before you have any proposal.

We also tried different ways of communicating with the inhabitants, one way as to put up signs in the area telling that we were working on a plan there.

Another tricky part is the delimitation of stakeholders according to PBL (Fastighetsförteckning). When you do this delimitation, you decide who is going to have all the information that it sent out and who has the right to appeal the plan. It is not an easy decision. The municipality has a general approach to the delimitation that you apply to all the plans, but is not absolute. The municipality wants to limit the number of stakeholders to those considered directly affected. But at the same time, you want to open up the process and invite people within the wider community.

### **What are the challenges with public meetings? (00:10,35)**

To communicate what you are aiming for and to listen to people, to create a good conversation. To come deeper than the first impressions, to come further to take care of the opinions and to make the meeting constructive.

The opinions are often about other things than the proposal. People are often afraid of losing what they have, abundant parking for instance, and their reaction is that they don't want anything to change. The opinions are reflecting their feelings and it makes it hard to dis-



cuss the “real issue”. Sometimes they don’t have proper arguments for their opinions, which makes it hard to have a constructive discussion. People that come to meetings are sometimes upset and it is important that they feel that they are listened to and that you understood their point of view.

To prevent these reactions, I think it is important to have an open process early, before you have a proposal. The reason for the reactions is often that people are not prepared for anything to happen. They weren’t asked or informed and then there is a proposal that looks finished. It is important to create a relationship to people affected by the plan early on and to work on that relationship throughout the process. You have to be aware of how you meet people and their opinions. You can’t be defensive, you have to open up and really listen and try to understand what they mean. Try to have a discussion about what could be done differently.

### **How do you prepare yourself? (00:21,45)**

I think a lot about what pictures I show. How do I communicate the purpose of the plan, while communicating that it is a proposal in progress. It is a hard balance. But one thing is sure, the detail plan drawings are not communicative, you have to have other illustrations that show the changes.

Then I think about how I can explain the proposal, it is hard because it is just proposals. I have to explain that it is examples, and nothing finished. I also try to explain what we want to create in a broader sense. What will this change contribute to in the neighborhood and the surrounding environment? How is it connected to the rest of the town? I try to explain the process behind the proposal and how we came to the solution.

Then I think about which questions will come, and how I can best answer them.?

Another important aspect is the room where the meeting is held. Will it fit the meeting, is it too big or too small, or is it perfect? How to furniture it in a good way?

I also think about if it is possible to do something more of the meeting. Can we have a workshop? Or should it be just a regular information and discussion?

### **How do you make sure that you collect the info and use it later? (00:33,18)**

It is easier when the process is not controlled by PBL. Without the controlled structure of the administrative planning process, it is easier to be more creative and create your own processes. You may use webpages, apps etc. You feel that you have more freedom.

PBL creates boarder and structure of how the plan should be communicated. The text document (Samrådsredogörelsen) is very important but a bit boring and maybe not that communicative. When you write it you filter things. It is hard to show how the opinions have been handled. PBL makes the process and the communication stiff, and that's a problem when it comes to dialogue and building trust. The text document may fit the written opinions better than the meetings. But when you have a meeting it is so important to take notes and to add them to the text document (samrådsredogörelse), then people can see that you have listened and how you took care of the discussions at the meeting. It is important to show that you listened to the critique and tried to meet it in a good way, with respect.

**How do you handle questions that are not related to the specific plan for discussion? (00:39,12)**

Open dialogues are different from the meeting (samråd) for a specific plan for these questions. If you have a meeting for redesigning a square you can be sure that you will have a lot of varied questions. But a meeting around a specific plan is not really the same, there the questions often relate to the plan in one way or the other. Questions are easier than opinions. If you get a question you can give to the right person, either you do it yourself or you give the person that asked the right contact information. But opinions are harder, there may not be a solid answer to it and they usually need to connect to a process not to get lost. You have to try to have a discussion and listen to the person. It is of course important not to give an answer to a question if you don't know the correct answer. Then it is better to direct them to someone who can, or get back to them with the answer yourself.

This is a tricky aspect of meeting the inhabitants. But I think that it is important that the municipality has an organization for handling these kinds of questions. It is partly a structural issue, municipalities tend to be organized in separate departments. It is easier to make this work in smaller municipalities than in larger. In a small municipality, it is easier to know who works with what and what is going on in the different administrations. But things are happening right now, many municipalities work with these issues and developing apps, webpages etc. with the aim to take care of the questions and opinions.

But try to know what resources you have at the municipality and know who works with what. Then you can connect the questions to the right persons. And be clear in your communication.

**Interview 7, 2017-04-06**  
**Planning architect**  
**Joel Petersson Berge**

**How long have you been working as a planning architect?**

I started working at the municipality of Orust in the autumn 2012. Since November last year I am working at the municipality of Lerum.

**What do you think is important for planning with trust? (00:01,18)**

I think that trust is related both to the municipality as an organization, to the planning process as an issue that are part of the municipality. The planning process can be a way to create and maintain trust to the municipality as a whole.

The fact that the municipality owns the planning process and has the monopoly is good, but it makes it very important to have a trustful process. The process has to be equal and fair in every case. That is also important for the municipality in general, to treat people equal and to have fair processes. I think it is important to implement that on a comprehensive level. To create rules or guidelines that are part of the comprehensive plan and other steering documents and has consequences. It is very important that the rules are followed. The rules should for example regulate what kind of plans to work with, and motivate why or why not certain plans are prioritized. It is important to have a priority list and to follow it, to make it clear to the developers which plans are prioritized and not and why.

So, one part is to have a clear structure of how to handle different plans etc. The other part is when you as an official meet the inhabitants and what you say they can affect or not. If the aim is to involve people early in the process it is important to really talk to them early. Perhaps before the decision to make a detail plan is made. It can be part of the planning process for the comprehensive plan because it sets much of the rules for the coming detail plans. If you have dialogue in the detail planning process it is important to explain the frames, what are already decided in the comprehensive plan and what is possible to affect here. When you already have a political decision with a purpose for a plan, it is hard for the inhabitants to affect the plan in a wider extent. That has to be communicated so they understand why they can't affect somethings.

**How do you at Lerum work with public participation? (00:06,18)**

Don't really know but the ambition is to be Sweden's leading municipality in environmental issues. Participation is a big part of that. We try to identify which opportunities we have for dialogue in each project, but it differs from case to case.

One example is that we had an open meeting before the process for a detail plan started. We informed about the project and explained the frames for what could be affected or not. But we have no clear model

for it.

**How often do you have public meetings? (00:06,48)**

Not that often right now, because I just started.

**What are the challenges with public meetings? (00:11,58)**

Before you go to the meeting you don't know who will be there, so it's hard to know how you can present the project in a good way. Power relations, it is always hard to hear everyone, especially in open meetings with a lot of people. There are always some persons that make their voices heard and some that don't say anything. This is a problem if the aim of the meeting is to get a feeling of what people think of the proposal. If there is just a few that told their opinion you will miss a lot. The open meetings is good when you want to give the same information to a lot of people. But not as good if you like to pick up peoples opinions, it is common that you just get a few opinions. You can off course encourage all of the participants to say something, but I think that is very hard on a big meeting. It is easier to do that in a small meeting with a few persons, then you can ask everyone what they think.

I think you rather should see the open meeting or samråd as one occasion to give information but complement it with other activities. Write down who said what, and even more important who didn't say anything. Then you can contact them and have other types of meetings, to get their point of view.

**How do you prepare yourself? (00:07,18)**

It is hard to know how who will show up and not. But I try to get to know who will come. Usually you have talked to some people about the plan earlier, you have some contact persons. I ask them if they will come and if they know anyone else that will come. Because if I know who will come it is easier to make a good presentation that has something that is interesting for everyone. It is important to make a presentation that suits the participants and the meeting.

I have one example from Orust when we did somethings that made the meeting successful. It was a plan for an area that didn't have a municipal water and sewer system, but they would get it in connection with the plan. We had a public presentation (samråd) together with officials who are responsible for the water and sewer development, we also had one political representative present. Before the meeting, we talked to each other and made a presentation together. It was good because all of us was prepared for what the other would say, and we had agreed on the content. It was a successful meeting because we had a good presentation and good answers to the questions, thanks to the wide representation from the municipality.

It is also important to think about the things around the meeting, it is

not just a presentation. It is important that everything works properly and that you behave in a professional way. For example, it is important to make sure that the technique works well, but also that the room is big enough and that you have fika. Maybe coffee a sandwich if the meeting take time just after working hours for example. It is important that people feel welcome.

And off course it is important that your presentation is on a level that people understand and can get something out of.

Think of the questions that are important to discuss and try to bring them up without steering the meeting too much. It is also important that no group takes over the meeting, try to keep it open.

### **How do you make sure that you collect the info and use it later?** (00:23,02)

I don't have a concrete method, but I think about it a lot. I have been to a lot of smaller personal meetings and at them I always try to re-connect and explain how I have used the things we discussed. I take notes at the meeting then I try to use it in the plan if it is possible, but sometimes it is not. Then I call or email the participants and explain how and why I have or have not implemented their suggestions in the proposal. Then they know what will come on the public presentation (samråd), and there will be no unexpected proposals. Another way to do it is to have two meetings. At the first meeting, you have discussions and collect information on the second meeting you have implemented the information in the plan proposal, you describe how and why/why not and have a discussion around it.

Another way is to have an open meeting where you give information about a project, to make sure that everyone gets the same information. Then you have interviews with people that participated, it is a good way to get a lot of knowledge and create a relation to people in the area.

But that is harder to do in a bigger group. There you have to use other medias to communicate. One way is to use the municipal webpage. I am not sure that it is the best way but I think it can work if people are engaged in the project, at least someone will look at the webpage and the information can spread that way. But it is not a super sufficient way to communicate.

### **How do you handle questions that are not related to the specific plan for discussion?** (00:28,32)

If you are well prepared, you know what will come and you have someone there that can answer it.

But if there are questions that related to the purpose of the meeting it has to be discussed at another occasion. I think it is important to be clear about the purpose of the meeting and why some questions shouldn't be discussed there. But take notes and contact information

to the person who has the question and talk to them later.  
You can try to answer to questions you don't know the answer to, I have seen successful examples. But I wouldn't recommend it. You have to be honest and tell that you don't know the answer and refer to the person that know the answer, or you take the responsibility to find the answer and contact the person when you have it.

It is hard to have good strategies for open meetings. It depends so much on the atmosphere at the meeting and the persons that are present, which kind of strategies you need.

But in general:

Be prepared, what questions will come?

Have more representatives present, politicians and officials.

Be clear with the purpose of the meeting.

Have a neutral facilitator, sometimes it is beneficial but not always necessary

Then you have to have personal strategies. How do you behave professional? You always have to try to understand the other person and their point of view.

It is also important to be aware of the power relations, and make the participants understand that you know.

## **Interview 8, 2017-04-19**

### **Planning architects at the municipality of Lerum.**

**Stina Gustafsson and Henrik Olsson**

#### **How long have you been working as a planning architect?**

Stina one year and Henrik six years.

How do you at Lerum work with public participation?

In different ways. We don't a specific method, but we try several methods. It is not specifically the planning office that is working with participation, it is several administrations at the municipality.

In Gråbo we are working with a co-creation group and everyone is welcome to be part of the co-creation group. It is the co-creation group that invite the municipality to meetings and decides the agenda for it, the process is led by them. It is a good initiative that worked quite well, but it had some problems when the project manager dropped out.

In Floda and in Lerum center another method is used, BID- Business Improvement District. Ans we have also worked with Cultural planning in some projects.

#### **How often do you have public meetings? (00:01,32)**

Max 2 a year. On your own but sometimes more, with others.

What do you think is important for planning with trust?

The meeting with the citizens, to be humble, easy-going and open for questions. Try to give good answers or pass the question to the official that has the answer. It is important to give the question to the right person. It is more effective to give the questioner contact information to the right official rather than find out the answer yourself and get back to the questioner, it is easy to forget to come back with the answer.

The feedback is very important, to listen and to explain how you used the information you got from the citizens.

It is also important to have the politicians with you at meetings. They can explain things about the budget etc. that you as an official can't. Money and budget is an important aspect, and us as officials gets the directions from the politicians so it makes things clearer if they can be there and explain why they took this or that decision. It is also important to have officials from other administrations present at public meetings, they can help with answers to questions that are not related to the specific plan.

Another thing that is of value is to use meetings such as kommundelsträffar to communicate your planning projects and to get input. These meetings have political representatives there and other officials, it is a good occasion to have discussions. To put the specific planning project in relation to other on-going projects are important. In Gråbo they used a timeline with every meeting they had concerning Gråbo and a summary of it.



### **What are the challenges with public meetings? (00:12,02)**

One big challenge is the representativity, to reach as many people as possible. Usually the meetings are over represented by people that has a strong socio-economic status. It is a problem because the discussions gets narrow and just about the questions they are interested in, we need a broader representativity to get the whole picture.

It is fun to have public presentations with a lot of people attending, it can give good input and good discussions.

But in cases when people are upset it is good to have a neutral place for the meeting, not a small room at the municipality, and it is very important to derive the questions to the responsible official as early as possible, and again it is important to have politicians present.

It is also hard to stop a plan if it is started no matter how upset people are. The politicians have decided to do the plan and there is a huge request for housing, but that is hard to explain for people that are upset. In these situations you as a planning architect get stocked in-between many interests and you have to try to defend and explain the plan on several fronts.

### **How do you prepare yourself? (00:20,32)**

Try to know which questions will be relevant for the meeting.

Think of which atmosphere you want. Do you want to have a presentation like a lecture at the university, or do you want to have a more relaxed meeting with discussions in smaller groups? Do you want people to walk around in the room and look at different maps? How do you furniture the room in a way that suits the aim for the meeting?

One thing that we have worked with is Open house. We have had a presentation with pictures and text that is showed in the background, and we had maps that we can talk around with the citizens. It created good conversations and constructive discussions. This concept is good because you reach a lot of people, for example those who doesn't like to speak in front of a big group. You get the "small" conversations but everyone is able to get the same information from the presentation showed in the background. It is also easier for people to show up when they don't have a specific time they have to be there, they can come and go as they wish.

How do you make sure that you collect the info and use it later?

Summaries what have been said, we take notes and use it in our further work with the plan. But we don't have a specific method to do it, it is up to each person. We also try to make it clear that it is that questioner write down their comments in a letter and send it to us if it is important for them to have the question and our answer on paper. If they send a written comment to us, it has to be part of the official document, samrådsredogörelse, there we explain how we handle the question or opinion in the further work. Sometimes we had a summary of the public presentation, samrådsmöte, in that text document as well.

**How do you handle questions that are not related to the specific plan for discussion? (00:32,15)**

Ad hoc solutions, there are no common way to do it. But always give contact details to the official that knows the answer. It is better than saying that you will come back when you got the answer, it is easy to forget. You talk with the responsible official and get them in contact with the questioner if it is a stakeholder that you work with a lot in the process, then it is easier to remember and keep in contact.



