

# The Park of the Future is Never Finished:

citizen participation in the making and managing of  
Hyllievångsparken

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*Framtidens park är aldrig färdig:  
Medborgarmedverkan i skapandet och skötseln av Hyllievångsparken*

Hedvig Murray

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Framtidens park är aldrig färdig: medborgardelaktighet i skapandet och skötseln av Hyllievångsparken

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## **A note to the reader.**

This paper is written in British English, except when quoting directly from papers written in American English. While this paper is written in English, most of the key documents, and all the interviews and meetings were conducted in Swedish. Swedish is not my mother tongue so may be the sources of some misunderstandings. Key terms are included in Swedish and then translated. This is because some of the nuance can be lost in translation.

Finally, I am dyslexic. Despite spell-checks and proofreading, there are bound to be mistakes that I just can't see. I ask for your consideration and understanding.

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# Abstract

Hyllie is an area in Malmö that is rapidly urbanising. Malmö Stad's vision for Hyllie was that it would become a climate-smart district, and 'Hyllie's largest park' would be 'The Park of the Future'- an innovative park that would meet residents' needs. A dialogue process was held to identify these needs, and they were used in a design competition to come up with a design proposal. The park is currently being built, and has already been nominated and received awards, in part due to citizens' participation. This research aims to understand, describe and evaluate citizen participation (civic and physical), during the making and managing of the park (place-making and place-keeping phases). This is done through the analysis of key documents, semi-structured interviews, an observation study and participant observation. A key finding of the research is Malmö Stad's Design Competition Guidelines emphasised civic participation during the place-making phase, and physical participation during the place-keeping, and this had follow-on effects. Furthermore, the decision to outsource the design may have resulted in an ambitious vision that has been challenging to realise given the park's governance and management model.

'Utopia is a literary invention of a place so perfect that it can't exist in reality. But that's exactly what we should be striving towards. Of course you can't realize utopia in a single flash. What you can do, however, is make sure that every time you are called upon to design a building or an urban space, you have to make this little fragment of the world more like the way you wish the world to be.'

Bjarke Ingels, from *The Ideal City* (2021)

'It's not the plants that are difficult, it's the people'

Clare Joy, community food grower, London 2007

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# Introduction

For fifteen years, I passed Hyllie on the train, but I never stepped off. To me, it felt like a no man's land between Malmö and Kastrup, Sweden and Denmark. It was only because of my Master's that I finally did. When I first stepped off the train at Hyllie in 2024, it felt very new and devoid of people. The train station was new, as was the shopping centre, arena, offices, apartments, trees, squares, parks and playgrounds. There was no sense of history or place. But just a few hundred meters from all this, I noticed the striking juxtaposition: fields were still being cultivated. Since that first visit, I've learnt that the soil here is world-class, and people have lived and farmed here for over 4000 years, and the village of Hyllie has its roots in the 1100s (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]).

Hyllie is in Malmö municipality (*Malmö Stad*), around 7 km south of Malmö Central Station. It is one of the municipality's largest development projects. The vision to develop the southern parts of Malmö has been around since the 1960s (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). But it wasn't until 1991, when the decision was made to construct the *Citytunneln*- an 11km train line that would link Malmö and the Öresund bridge, and consequently Sweden and Denmark- that the vision began to be realised (Wikipedia, 2025). Hyllie was to become the first/last stop between the countries. Building work began in 2005, and the train station opened in December 2010 (Wikipedia, 2025).

The vision was that:

*Hyllie will be the Öresund region's most climate-smart area and form an attractive city center with lots of greenery that attracts both national and international residents and businesses.'* (Malmö Stad, 2019: 7 [internal material]).

Since then, Hyllie's farmlands have been dug up and built on, and a new town is growing in their place. As a geographer, these dichotomies fascinated me, and as a budding landscape architect, I wanted to learn how urban open spaces, and in particular public parks, could contribute.

## Brief introduction to Hyllievångsparken

Part of the vision for Hyllie included building 'Hyllie's largest park' (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). A 6.5-hectare

*stadsdelspark*<sup>1</sup>, just south of the station. The vision was the park 'will be a "park of the future" and contribute to creating a green Hyllie. It will have the same dignity as any of the parks in the inner city and contribute to making Hyllie a natural destination for all Malmö residents.' (Malmö Stad, 2017:6 [internal material]).

This was to become Hyllievångsparken. A fundamental concept, for the team working with the park, was that it should meet the needs of the residents and should be designed in co-operation with them (interview, MS2, 2024). To do so, Malmö Stad ran a 'Dialogue Process' to understand residents' needs and in 2018 held an international competition to design the park (interview, MS2, 2024). While a dialogue process was quite normal for

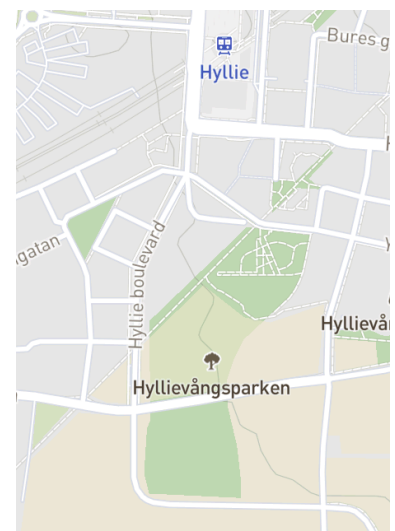


FIGURE 1: MAP SHOWING HYLLIEVÅNGSPARKEN RELATIVE TO STATION (VATTENATLAS, N.D.)

<sup>1</sup>'stadsdelspark' connotes that the park is often the largest in a district, and has greater significance

development projects in town, it was more unusual for this kind of project (interview, MS2, 2025).

## The Dialogue Process

The dialogue process involved a series of 3 workshops with a focus group made up of a representative group of residents including children, as well as developers and local organisations (Hyllie stadsdelspark- Drömmar och behov, Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark, n.d. [internal material]). Malmö Stad contracted ÅF<sup>2</sup>, a consultancy firm, to run these workshops (email correspondence, MS2, 26th February 2025). The first workshop happened before the launch of the design competition, and the second during the competition. The third workshop was held after the winning team was announced. It was stipulated in the design competition guidelines that the material from the dialogue process must be used in the design proposal (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). During the final workshop, the winning team presented the design to the focus group, and the group gave their feedback regarding the extent to which they felt their needs were reflected in the design, and were missing (*Hyllie Stadsdelspark- Framtidens park är aldrig färdig, Workshopfinal* n.d. [internal material]).

## The Design Competition

As stated in the Design Competition Guidelines, the aim of the competition was to:

*'produce a park proposal that is well-designed and innovative. ...It should also meet the dreams and wishes that emerged from the dialogue process carried out in autumn 2017. The proposal should be able to last for a long time, be flexible and able to handle future changes and needs, and be open to citizens' initiatives.'* (Malmö Stad, 2017:5)

The design competition was finalised in late 2017.

### *And the winner is... The Park of the Future is Never Finished*

In August 2018, it was announced that a team led by Nyréns Arkitektkontor had won the competition with the concept: 'The park of the future is never finished'. (See figure 2 for their overall design, and figure 3 and 27 for the concept drawings that were in their proposal).

After having won the competition, Nyréns closed down their Malmö office, but some people involved in the project started Plot Studio and continued work on the park. Nyréns, Plot, Ekologigruppen, Marcus Abrahamsson Arkitektur, Luxera, Fojab and Lindersplantskola developed the concept into a *gestaltningsprogram*, or design guidelines, and a *målbildsplan*, or a project vision (Plot Studio, 2019 [internal material], Plot Studio 2023 [internal material]). These documents were the basis for the implementation.

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<sup>2</sup> A reference list of actors can be found in Appendix 2



FIGURE 2: WINNING DESIGN FOR HYLLIEVÅNGSPARKEN BY NYRÉNS ARKITEKTKONTOR, BASED ON MANY OF THE IDEAS FROM THE DIALOGUE PROCESS (NYRÉNS, 2018) NAMES TRANSLATED BELOW

<b>Fruktlunden</b>	The Fruit Orchard	<b>Utegymslingan</b>	Outdoor gym Trail
<b>Pallarkojan</b>	The Scrumpling Hut	<b>Maderna</b>	Sunken Meadowlands
<b>Allmogeå kern/ Blomsterägen</b>	The Fields and Flowering Meadows	<b>Picknickplatsen</b>	The Picnic Place
<b>Parkhyllan</b>	The Park Shelf	<b>Experimentängen</b>	The Experimental meadow
<b>Parkens Hjärta</b>	The Heart of the Park	<b>Pimpad Hagmark</b>	The Pimped Pasture
<b>Kiosk/Café/Växthus</b>	Kiosk/Café/Greenhouse	<b>Bäcken</b>	The Stream
<b>Temalekplatsen</b>	Themed playground	<b>Ridstigen</b>	The Riding Path
<b>"Lilla Hyllie"</b>	"Little Hyllie"	<b>Skyfallssänkan</b>	The Torrential Rain Pond
<b>Klätterskogen</b>	The Climbing Forest	<b>Skjularpaviljongen</b>	The Shelter Pavillion
<b>Klättertornet</b>	The Climbing Tower	<b>Möjlig Skridskodam</b>	The Possible Ice-skating rink
<b>Vattenspegeln</b>	The Water Reflection	<b>Framtidsskogen</b>	The Forest of the Future
<b>Inre Loopen/ Utegymslingan</b>	The Inner Loop/ Outdoor Gym Trail		



FIGURE 3: CONCEPT DRAWING OF 'THE HEART OF THE PARK', LOOKING ACROSS THE STORMWATER POND TOWARDS THE GREENHOUSE, CAFE AND KIOSK. (NYRÉNS, 2018).

## Implementation

One of the early ideas was that the implementation of the park would be implemented in stages. This idea was developed during 2018, partly as a consequence of participation being a key component of the winning concept (Malmö Stad, 2024 [Internal material]). The original implementation plan divided the park into 5 stages with an 8-year guarantee time, to allow the contractors more time for participation, activation and creative management (Malmö Stad, 2024 [Internal material]). This was an unusual and innovative approach (Interview, MS2, 2024).

It was hoped that the park would be awarded the status of a 'besöksanläggning' or visitor facility/attraction. But in 2023, the decision was made that it was not suitable, which impacted staffing, budgeting, programming and the possibility for citizen participation (Afrý, 2025).



FIGURE 4: IMPLEMENTATION STAGES AFTER MALMÖ STAD, N.D. [INTERNAL MATERIAL] BASE MAP BY PLOT STUDIO 2025

FIGURE 5: STAGES OF THE IMPLEMENTATION PLAN AFTER (MALMÖ STAD, 2024 [INTERNAL MATERIAL]).

Stage	Original completion date
Stage 1 northern section exc café	2021
Stage 2 earthworks and paths	Summer 2023
Stage 3 themed playground	Winter 2023
Stage 4 planting inc guarantee	2030
Stage 5 café	2027



FIGURE 6: UPDATED DESIGN OF HYLLEVÅNGSPARKEN FROM 2025 BY PLOT STUDIO, 2025 [INTERNAL MATERIAL]

As of the time of the observation study, most of the design above has been implemented, and discussions about the café are ongoing (Interview, MS1, 2024). The outdoor gym, activity areas and bridal path hadn't been implemented.

## Awards and Recognition

On 4th September 2024, the park won Malmö Stad's *Stadsbyggnadspriset*, The City Building Prize, in part due to its focus on sustainability and citizen participation (Malmö Stad, 2024 b). This was the first time a park has been awarded the prize (Malmö In The Making, 2025). On 11th March 2025, the park was nominated for the *Landmärket*, or Landmark, prize by Sveriges Arkitekter in part due to the dialogue process and the staggered implementation plan (Sveriges Arkitekter, n.d.)

## Brief introduction to the dissertation

In 2024, the initial implementation, also known as place-making, was mainly done, and the park was moving into a maintenance phase, also known as place-keeping. Malmö Stad saw this as an appropriate moment to evaluate the park. From the winter of 2024 to spring 2025, Malmö Stad contracted Afry, a consultancy firm, to conduct a *delutvärdering*, or mid-way evaluation, of the park, focusing on the implementation and contracting.

## Starting point

Malmö Stad sent a proposal for a dissertation to SLU, to be carried out in cooperation with them (See Appendix 1). They wanted to understand how Hyllievångsparken was being used and proposed using the method of a two-week observational study of Hyllievångsparken. In the proposal, the park was described as 'developed in close cooperation with residents in the area' and that 'the park is intended to be further developed based on the needs of the residents' (Malmö Stad, n.d (b):1).

## Personal appeal

When I read Malmö Stad's proposal, it appealed to me. With over 7 years of experience designing and running community food projects in the UK, including in public spaces and parks, I was interested in learning more. Plus, after a year or so of studying how landscape architecture works in theory, I was keen to understand how it works in practice. I approached Malmö Stad about conducting the observational study during the winter. They said they hadn't thought of doing it at that time of year, but that it would be interesting.

## Research Aim and Questions

This research aims to understand, describe and evaluate citizens' participation in the place-making and place-keeping phases of Hyllievångsparken. To meet this aim, a structure developed by Fors et al (2015) will be used. They make a distinction between two types of citizens' participation (civic and physical) during two phases (place-making and place-keeping). Civic participation means being involved in decision-making, for example, the dialogue process. Physical participation means being involved on site, for example, tree planting. See the following section for more details (People, Parks and Governance).

### Research Question 1: Civic Participation

1a. What were the intended and actual ways citizens civically participated in the place-making phase of Hyllievångsparken?

1b. What were the intended, actual and possible ways citizens could civically participate in the place-keeping phase of Hyllievångsparken?

## **Research Question 2: Park usage/ Physical participation**

2a. What were the intended and actual ways citizens physically participated in the place-making phase of Hyllievångsparken?

2b. What were the intended, actual and possible ways citizens could physically participate in the place-keeping phase of Hyllievångsparken

## **Structure/Reading instructions**

To answer the research questions, firstly comes a description and a justification of the approach, methodology and methods used. Secondly, a theoretical background to public parks, place-making and place-keeping, governance and management of parks, and citizen participation. Thirdly, the results of the research. Fourthly, a discussion and evaluation of the results, referring to the aforementioned theories, reflections and areas of further research. Finally, comes the conclusion.

## **Limits to the research project**

This research focuses on citizens' participation of the general public, but it does not look into children and school children's participation in the park. While children have participated both civically and physically in the park, Malmö Stad suggested that, based on a change in staff at the schools, it would be challenging (meeting, MS2, 2024).

This research is not a design proposal, and so does not go into detail about changes to the physical site. This would be very interesting to do, especially using a participatory approach with citizens, but it was beyond the remit of Malmö Stad's proposal.

## **Relevance of the study**

Although part of my motivation is personal, my hope is that the research is relevant to practitioners and academics interested in citizen participation in new public parks, and how this links to the governance and management of public space.

### *For practitioners*

My hope is that the research is relevant for practitioners: primarily, practitioners at Malmö Stad, in particular those working directly with Hyllievångsparken; secondly, practitioners working in other municipalities in Sweden; lastly, practitioners outside of Sweden.

For those working in Malmö Stad, my hope is that the observational study provides useful data and a repeatable method that can be used in the future. The method could be repeated at other times of the year, even if it wasn't possible to do it over two weeks. Beyond the observational study, the research identifies some of the strengths and weaknesses of citizen participation in the place-making phase and raises issues surrounding citizen participation during the place-keeping phase. Both these aspects could be used as part of the iterative design process of the park.

For practitioners in other municipalities, my hope is that Hyllievångsparken is an inspiring and interesting case study. In Sweden, there is a need to build an additional 523,000 houses between 2024 and 2033 (Boverket, 2025). To adhere to the 3-30-300 principle, where residents should be no more than 300m from a green space, there is a need for additional green spaces (Green Cities,

2022) that can fulfil an ever-growing range of functions (Boverket, 2024). Hyllievångsparken has been recognised for its innovative vision and approach, including to citizen participation. As such, this research is a case study that could help to inform and inspire other practitioners and thus build capacity within the profession. This is particularly relevant at a time of budget cuts when there may be fewer opportunities to meet others (Sunding, 2025).

For practitioners outside of Sweden, this research could be of interest to those are interested in citizen participation in public parks, but have a different public space management model. Sweden has a particular model that is both more state-centered than countries like the United Kingdom and the United States, but also more market-centered than some of the other Nordic countries.

Aside from Hyllievångsparken as a case study, my hope is this research can also bridge the gap between academics and practitioners. Through evaluating the park using relevant theories, which practitioners might not have the time, access or inclination to read and make sense of, I hope to support their work.

### *For academics*

My hope is that this research is relevant as a case study for academics too. The park is currently being built, and due to a lag time in academic research and publication, there are relatively few published academic articles or books about the park. This research can contribute to our understanding of parks in Malmö, and it is not very often that a public park of this size or in a new city district is built. Despite Malmö Stad's eagerness for citizens to participate in the park, it has been challenging. It is an interesting case study of a new park with ambitious and innovative aims, but faces the challenges with citizen participation in part because of its context, design and governance and management model.

## Methodology and Methods

### Approach

With an undergraduate degree in geography, my approach to landscape architecture, and consequently this research, is interdisciplinary. I have a geographer's lens on landscape, and see it as space and place, as physical and socio-spatial, as constructed and perceived. Through my masters, I've come to learn that, like geography, landscape architecture is a discipline that straddles 'the three great empires of academia: the natural sciences, the social sciences, and the arts and humanities' (Thompson, 2017:40). With this background, my approach also draws on critical theory while also being reflexive, wanting to be conscious of my subjectivity and how that impacts the research and the knowledge I am creating. As a result of all of this, I have chosen to write in a more informal tone, and to use 'I', more often than is usually the case in academic research.

Hyllievångsparken appealed to me because it offered an opportunity to 'examine the complex relationship between the academic discipline of landscape architecture and the profession that goes by the same name' (Thompson, 2017: 39). This also impacted how I carried out the research, diving into Malmö Stad's internal material first, before coming back to theories later.

## Methodology

As my approach draws from Thompson's different 'empires', this impacted my choice of methodology and methods. I chose to combine primary research (conducting fieldwork) and secondary research (analysing others' research). The secondary research often provided background information, and the primary research allowed me to go more in depth. To answer my research questions, I chose a 'mixed methods' methodology: combining quantitative and qualitative methods (Tobi, 2017). This is also known as triangulation. As such, it fits with Roe's view that 'landscape architecture research is not 'a' discipline, rather a disciplinary field which uses many different methodologies and methods' (Roe, 2017: 66).

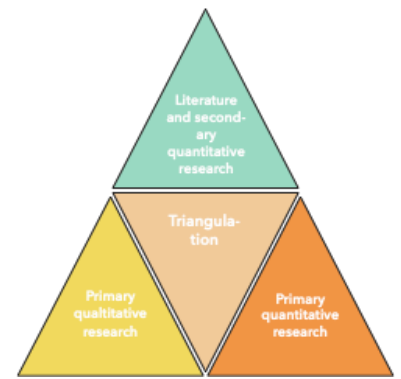


FIGURE 7: MODEL OF TRIANGULATION RESEARCH METHODOLOGY. OWN

## Methods

In this section, firstly, comes a summary of the methods used to answer each research question, including the approach and the methodology. Secondly, comes an explanation of each method in greater detail. Further reflections can be found in the Discussion section. Various people are referred to in this section (see Appendix 2 for a summary including organisation and roles).

Research question	Methods	Primary/ secondary	Methodology
1a. What were the intended and actual ways citizens civically participated in the place-making phase of HVP?	Analysis of key documents	Secondary	Qualitative
	Semi-structured interviews	Primary	Qualitative
1b. What were the intended, actual and possible ways citizens could civically participate in the place-keeping phase of HVP?	Analysis of key documents	Secondary	Qualitative
	Semi-structured interviews	Primary	Qualitative
2a. What were the intended and actual ways citizens physically participated in the place-making phase of HVP?	Analysis of key documents	Secondary	Qualitative
	Semi-structured interviews	Primary	Qualitative
	Observational Study	Primary	Quantitative
	Participant observation	Primary	Qualitative
2b. What were the intended, actual and possible ways citizens could physically participate in the place-keeping phase of HVP?	Analysis of key documents	Secondary	Qualitative
	Semi-structured interviews	Primary	Qualitative

FIGURE 8: SUMMARY OF RESEARCH QUESTIONS, METHODS, AND METHODOLOGY

## Analysis of documents and literature

The key documents analysed were internal documents from Malmö Stad, including the design competition brief (Malmö Stad, 2017); the documents from the dialogue process (*Hyllie stadsdelspark- Drömmar och behov, Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark*, n.d.; *Hyllie Stadsdelspark- Behov och rumslighet, Workshop 2 Hyllies nya stadsdelspark*, n.d.; *Hyllie Stadsdelspark- Framtidens park är aldrig färdig, Workshopfinal* n.d.) and Nyrens' concept (Nyréns, 2018). These documents, and others, were provided by Malmö Stad.

From these documents, key themes and examples relating to citizen participation were identified and compared, both to each other and to what has happened on the ground.

Key literature about the history of public parks in Sweden and Malmö, place-making and place-keeping, citizen participation, in particular in urban open spaces and theories and models of public space management informed the formulation of the research and are referred to in the theory and discussion sections.

## Meetings and Interviews

Meetings provided background information, an opportunity to ask questions to more than one person, give updates on the research. I was invited to join the meeting in December as participation and programming in the park was going to be discussed by the team directly involved in managing the park and also with other involved in programming within Malmö Stad.

Meeting	Date	Organisation	Aim/content
Meeting 1	28th October 2024	Malmö Stad	Background information
Meeting 2	19th December 2024	Malmö Stad	Participation and programming in the park
Meeting 3	13th January 2025	Afry	Update on findings
Meeting 4	16th January 2025	Malmö Stad	Update after observational study
Meeting 5	16th April 2025	Malmö Stad	Questions about participation in the past and future

FIGURE 9: SUMMARY OF MEETINGS

One-to-one interviews were conducted to ascertain in-depth information and to provide a safer space for a person to speak freely. The interviews were semi-structured. Different sets of questions were posed to the individuals based on their roles (Brinkmann & Kvale, 2018). Before each interview, a set of questions was prepared. Starting with closed, factual questions and leading to the open-ended ones. This was done to build rapport and trust with the interviewee. The interviews were conducted in Swedish. Swedish is not my mother tongue, so some misunderstandings may have occurred. This was mitigated by repeated back key information to check if accurate, and asking interviewees if I could follow up on an interview.

Date	Organisation	Aim/content
2nd December	Malmö Stad	Role in the park, perception of citizen participation
3rd December	Afry	Update on evaluation
9th December	Malmö Stad	Role in the park, perception of citizen participation
11th December	Malmö Stad	The community food project
11th February	Hyllievångsparkens odlingsförening	The community food project

FIGURE 10: SUMMARY OF INTERVIEWS

## Observation

### *Site visits and participant observation*

According to Gehl, direct observation is a critical tool when studying public life (Gehl, 2013). Therefore two site visits of the park were conducted before the observational study. The aim was to familiarise myself with the park and to observe participants. An observational study was also carried out, and quantitative data was collected. This observational study was combined with participant observation and qualitative data was collected.

#### **Site Visit 1**

Conducted on 12th November 2024. Unguided.

Having spent time reading key texts and meeting with Malmö Stad, the aim was to familiarise myself with the site, see what had been implemented and observe people. An hour or so was spent in the park walking around, observing and taking notes. The visit also informed my interviews and shaped the observational study.

#### **Site Visit 2**

Conducted on 27th November 2024. Guided by Malmö Stad

The aim of this site visit was to introduce the team from Afry to the site to Afry, and I was invited to join. Afry are carrying out a midway evaluation of the park.

**Participant Observation Week 1:** 15- 21st December

**Participant Observation Week 2:** 2- 8th January

## Observational Study

A two-week observational study was carried out.

Week 1: 15- 21st December

Week 2: 2- 8th January

It was Malmö Stad's suggestion to carry out the study to understand how people used the park. Some of the variables were: areas in the park, user groups, times of day (including daylight and dark), day of the week, and holiday vs non-holiday. A quantitative methodology was chosen to create a repeatable method and data set.

The park was divided the park into five areas (see figure 11):

Area 1: <i>Fruktlunden</i>	The Orchard
Area 2: <i>Flexibel odlingsyta</i>	Flexible Growing Area
Area 3: <i>Biergarten</i>	The Beer Garden
Area 4: <i>Temalekplatsen</i>	The Playground
Area 5: <i>Picknickplatsen</i>	The Picnic Area
Area 6: <i>Framtidsskogen</i>	The Forest of the Future

The study was designed so that:

- The observation lasted 1 hour (a reasonable limit in the winter)
- 6 minutes were spent in each area, plus 4 minutes between areas
- Users were divided into different user groups:
  - dog walkers, adults and children, exercising, young adults, seniors, walking through, other
- In each area, the number of people in each user group was counted
- Additional notes were made, for example, double counting and participant observations
- The plan was repeat the process at 8 am, 10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm and 4 pm, every day of the week for the first week, with the possibility of reducing the hours in the second week.

Before carrying out the study, a description of the process (see Appendix 3) and the data collection form (see Appendix 4) were sent to Malmö Stad for feedback.

## Reflective diary and reflective reading journal

During the research, a reflective diary and reading journal were kept. These were used to capture doubts, insights and questions arising during the research and reading process. They were useful during the write-up and particularly in the discussion section.

## Futures Thinking Approach and Foresight tools and methods

To answer my research questions about 'the possible ways citizens could civically and physically participate in the place-keeping phase of HVP', I developed 3 future scenarios using a Futures Thinking approach and adapted Collaborative Foresight tools and methods (Seminar, Media Evolution, 2025, 11th February). Previously, I have used these tools in interdisciplinary teams, and



FIGURE 11: OBSERVATIONAL STUDY AREAS 1-6. BASE MAP BY PLOT STUDIO 2025.

while it would be really interesting to do this with people involved in the park to inform strategic planning, this is beyond the scope of this dissertation. Instead, I have adapted the tools and methods and developed the different scenarios myself.

Futures Thinking is 'a discipline of systematically looking at possible (or even impossible) futures' (Stockholm Resilience Centre, 2025). Collaborative Foresight was developed by Media Evolution in Malmö and they define it as an 'inclusive, community-based, open-source and evolving way to work with the future. It draws on and contributes to the fields of strategic foresight, futures thinking, futures studies, speculative design and participatory design' (Media Evolution, 2024). What follows is an outline of the process used.

Three principles underpin Collaborative Foresight: futures are plural; futures are imagined; futures are created (Seminar, Media Evolution, 2025, 11th February). These principles encourage me to develop different scenarios, rather than trying to identify the most likely future.

Collaborative Foresight often begins with Guiding Questions that inform and steer individual and group work. I developed two guiding questions:

- how might citizens civically and physically participate in Hyllievångsparken in 2035?
- how might the park be governed and managed in 2035?

'Scanning the Horizon' is a Collaborative Foresight tool to identify signs of change which can be done individually and/or in groups. I didn't use this tool, but through my evaluation, I identified various factors that might impact citizens participation. I then used these signals/factors to imagine three different scenarios with different levels of citizen participation and management. I present these scenarios firstly, as a table (Figure 33) and secondly, as three short stories (with the aim to help them come to life').

# Parks, People and Governance

In this section, four main topics will be introduced and explained, including some of the developments within those topics. Firstly, the history of public parks in Sweden; secondly, the phases of making a public park, also known as place-making and place-keeping; thirdly, citizen participation; and finally, governance and management of public spaces, in particular public parks. These will be referred to in the discussion section to evaluate citizens' participation in the park.

Before diving in, a note on key terms. In part due to taking an interdisciplinary approach to this research, and in part due to the evolving nature of knowledge, in this section, different terms are used but refer to the same thing. For example, when discussing 'the park', some people refer to it as a public park, others a public green space, a piece of green infrastructure, an urban open space or an urban green resource. Equally, some authors will use the term 'users', others refer to them as customers, the public, citizens, the community, etc. In this section, I have tried to use the term the author(s) use.

## The historical changes of public parks in Sweden

To understand and appreciate how Hyllievångsparken is ambitious and innovative, it is useful to look into the history of public parks in Sweden. The first public parks in Sweden were designed and implemented in the 1860s (Nolin, 1997). Before that, some grounds owned by the royal family were open to the public, but they weren't designed as public parks. Although the term 'park' has remained the same, what it means hasn't. Ownership, the forms and functions, who designed them, the choice of plants and what that signified have changed. For this paper, firstly, the changing aims and intended users in early and contemporary parks will be described; and secondly, the changing ownership, governance and management. This is relevant to understand and evaluate Malmö Stad's aims and vision, as well as Nyréns/Plot's concept for Hyllievångsparken.

One of the first public parks in Sweden was Hoglands Park, in Karlskrona (Nolin, 1997). Knut Korsberg designed the park in 1860 for the bourgeoisie, as a '*place for strolling where the locals could take their Sunday stroll, visit acquaintances, listen to music and admire the magnificent flower groups*' (Nolin, 1997: 188). By contrast, on 30th April, 1893, the first *Folkets Park*, or People's Park, in Sweden opened in Malmö (Folkets Hus och Parker, nd). It aimed to improve the physical and moral health of the working classes (Nolin, 1997). As such, it was common to find playgrounds, libraries and museums inside of these parks, as well as providing alternative meeting places that would encourage men away from drinking dens to a more sober life (Nolin, 1997). This would become a movement with People's Park opening up all around the country (Folkets Hus och Parker, nd).

Many contemporary parks echo back to this history. It is still common for people to go to parks for a walk, meet friends, or listen to music, but parks have a broader range of aims and intended users. Parks are often portrayed as ways to tackle society's wicked problems: everything from our sedentary lifestyles (Motomura, 2024) and social isolation (Mullenbach, 2022), to climate change (Heckman, 2017) and biodiversity extinction (Kernaghan & Sturgeon, A, 2024). This can be seen at the local scale, but also at the regional scale, in the European Landscape Convention (Council of Europe, 2000), and at the global scale, in the Sustainable Development Goals (United Nations,

n.d.). As such, in my opinion public, parks can be seen as reflections of societal and cultural values and aspirations.

Not only have the functions and users of parks changed, but so has the ownership, governance and management. Some of the earliest public parks were often owned by successful businessmen with philanthropic goals, like Beijers Park in Malmö (Wiström, 2024). In the early 1900s, this began to change, and many were donated to municipalities, in part because of the high costs of managing and maintaining them (Wiström, 2024). Malmö Stad is the largest landowner in the municipality and owns the lands that the public parks are built on (Malmö Stad, 2024 c). Not only has ownership changed, but also the governance and management. In the beginning, the state managed the parks with in-house teams of designers and park keepers (Wiström, 2024). In the 1980s, this began to change as a drive for economic efficiency meant that aspects were contracted out to the private sector, also referred to as New Public Management (Sunding, 2025). This will be covered in more depth further on in this section.

## The phases of creating public spaces: place-making and place-keeping

The process of creating high-quality public spaces, like public parks, can be conceptualised in two phases: place-making and place-keeping (Dempsey and Burton, 2012). Place-making can be thought of as the *'creation of places which people want to visit, experience and enjoy'* (Dempsey and Smith, 2014: 13) and place-keeping as the *'responsive long-term management which ensures that the social, environmental and economic quality and benefits a place brings can be enjoyed by present and future generations'* (Dempsey et al, 2014:9). Thus, place-keeping includes management, maintenance, governance, partnerships, funding, policy and evaluation. If seen as two phases, then they have different timescales. Place-making is for a defined period, and place-keeping is ongoing.

Dempsey and Burton (2012) propose 3 ways of conceptualising the place-making and place-keeping process (see figure 12). Firstly, two separate processes (a), two processes that overlap (b), or they are part of the same process (c). These may seem quite abstract, but organisational structures, workflows and roles often reflect one of these models. Consequently, this has an impact on whether there is a transition between the phases, and how smoothly that goes.

Dempsey et al (2014) argue that place-making has *'taken centre stage in urban landscape planning and design'* and that place-keeping has been under-prioritised and overlooked. They go as far as to say that *'once the capital has been spent, the extent of place-keeping can have a very real effect on what keeps a place special. Place-keeping is what brings people back to places again and again'* (Dempsey, 2014:2). Given this tendency to overlook place-keeping, the next section will identify and describe some of the relevant theories about governance and management of public space.

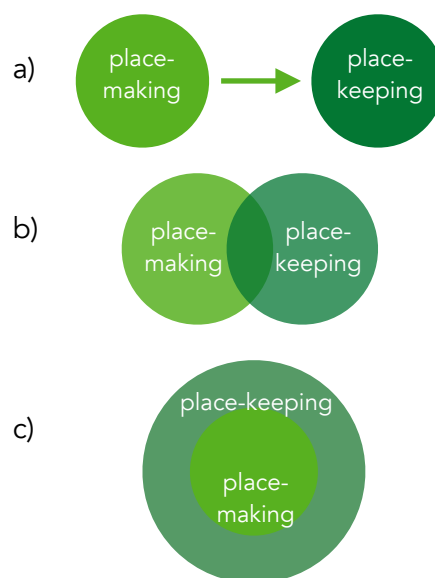


FIGURE 12: THE CONCEPTUALISATION OF PLACE-MAKING AND PLACE-KEEPING AFTER DEMPSEY & BURTON (2012)

## Governance and Management of Public Space and Urban Open Spaces

Before going any further, one of the recurring themes in the literature about governance and management of public space is the lack of clear and shared definitions of key terms like governance and management! While the governance and management of public parks is interdisciplinary, different disciplines use different terms and definitions, which can result in misunderstandings.

Arts and Visseren-Hamakers define governance as *'the many ways in which public and private actors from the state, market and/or civil society govern public issues at multiple scales, autonomously or in mutual interaction'* (2012:4, found in Jansson et al, 2018: 956). Jansson and Lindgren review the concept of management of urban landscapes and green spaces within landscape planning, urban forestry and park management. They propose a definition that urban landscape management *'be regarded as the activities performed by a management organization in order to maintain and develop existing urban green spaces for users'* (Jansson & Lindgren, 2012: 142). They go on to say that landscape management *'can encompass elements of planning and design but its focus is on dealing with existing structures through development and maintenance... our approach...extends the focus...to include the organizations managing that space and its users'* (Jansson & Lindgren, 2012: 142)

To conceptualise the management of public space, De Magalhães & Carmona (2009) present three models: the state-centred, the market-centred and the user-centred model. Each model describes the roles and relative importance of the different actors (state, market and users). Although this paper uses England as a case study, I have found these models useful when making sense of how the management of public parks in Sweden has changed over time. For example, the early parks that were owned and managed by philanthropists and businessmen (market-centred), in the early 1900s parks were mainly managed by the municipalities with in-house teams (state-centred), in the 1980s, management began to be contracted out to private business (increasingly market-centred), and then in times of economic cuts backs and increased role for the community (increasingly user-centred).

These changes are not unique to Sweden, but a similar pattern is seen globally. These changes, or reforms, in public management have been conceptualised in three main models: New Public Management (NPM), New Weberian-State (NWS) and New Public Governance (NPG) (Krogh, A. H., & Triantafillou, P., 2024). 'Briefly put, NPM reforms aim to enhance public sector efficiency and performance by increasing market-based competition and performance management, NWS reforms seek to enhance public sector effectiveness by developing and sustaining user-oriented professionalism, while NPG reforms attempt to enhance public value creation by advancing collaborative relations across sectors and levels of society' 2024: p 3040

When it comes to the management of public spaces like parks, Randrup and Persson developed the Park Management model (see figure 11) in their 2009 paper. In the centre is the Urban Green Resource, in this case Hyllievångsparken, surrounded by the design process. Then come the actors and aspects, at different scales, that influence the management of the park.

For example, the shift beginning in the late 1970s and early 1980s can be seen as a change in aspects. Many Western countries were going through a period of economic stagnation, if not depression. This led to a round of public spending cuts. This, combined with other societal aspects changing (increased industrialisation and mechanisation), led to an increased reliance on the market to regulate the supply and demand of goods and services. This impacts the management of parks because, in a drive to be more economically efficient, private companies began to be contracted to carry out management roles that the state had carried out. This is often referred to as New Public Management. Thus, the actors changed, as did their roles. The state went from carrying out the work to ensuring it was carried out by others. Thus, governance and management are linked.

In 2009, Randrup and Persson compared and contrasted the roles of park authorities in Nordic countries. One conclusion they drew was that 'In Sweden, outsourcing has been going on even longer than in Denmark...and more than a quarter of park activities in Sweden are carried out by contractors, while in the other countries the corresponding proportion is considerably lower (Randrup and Persson, 2009:36).

In the shift from New Public Management to New Public Governance, one of the noted shifts was the increasing role of citizens in the management of urban green environments. Randrup and Persson (2009) conceptualised this in their Park-Organisation-User model.

In 2018, Jansson et al recognised that urban open space management was becoming 'increasingly influenced by varying governance arrangements for participatory co-development' and while governance and management are two important themes, 'their combination has so far been so little addressed' (2018: 952). They used Randrup and Persson's Park-Organisation-User model and

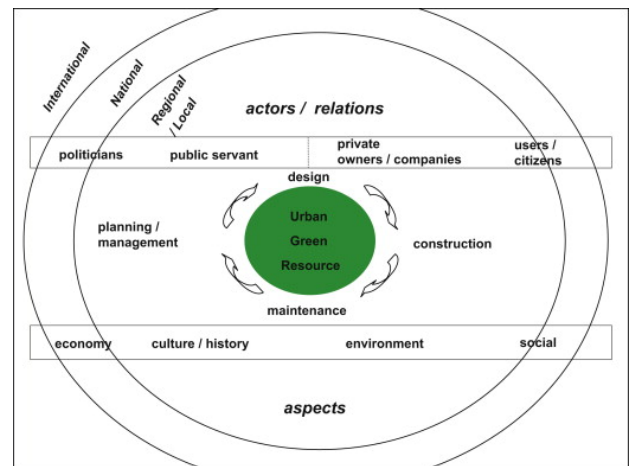


FIGURE 13: PARK MANAGEMENT MODEL (THE PM MODEL). RANDRUP & PERSSON (2009)

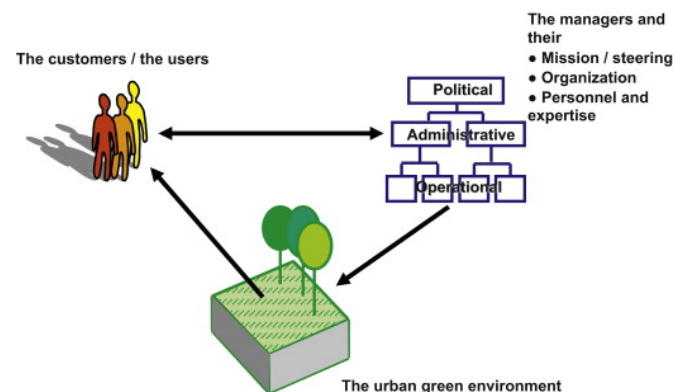


FIGURE 14: THE PARK-ORGANISATION-USER MODEL RANDRUP & PERSSON (2009)

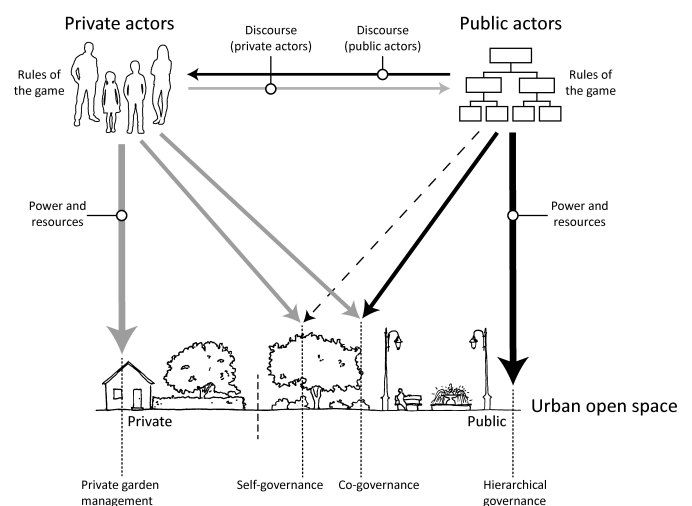


FIGURE 15: THE COMBINED GOVERNANCE AND MANAGEMENT MODEL (JANSSON ET AL, 2018)

combined it with the Tetrahedron 'policy arrangement model' to create their own combined 'Governance and Management Model'

In this section, some of the relevant theories and models for conceptualising the changing governance and management of public spaces, including public parks. I will now go on to introduce some of the models and theories for conceptualising the role of citizens, otherwise known as Citizen Participation.

## Citizen Participation

Much like 'public park', there are different terms that are at times used interchangeably in the literature. What is referred to by some as citizen participation, others refer to as public participation or civic participation.

Just as there are different terms, there are also different nuances in the definition of citizen participation. For this paper, I'll use this one:

'Citizen participation may be defined as a process in which ordinary people take part – whether on a voluntary or obligatory basis and whether acting alone or as part of a group – with the goal of influencing a decision involving significant choices that will affect their community.' (André, nd: 1)

One of the best-known models of citizen participation is 'Arnstein's Ladder' developed by Sherry Arnstein in 1969 (see figure 16) (The Citizen's Handbook, nd). This depicts different degrees of participation in the planning process in the US (The Citizen's Handbook, nd).

In 1994, David Wilcox wrote *The Guide to Effective Participation*, primarily for community activities and professionals wanting to get others involved in 'social, economic and environmental projects and programmes' (Partnerships, n.d), in which he simplified Arnstein's Ladder. Others have been developed, as outlined in *Sveriges Kommuner och Regioner* (2023).

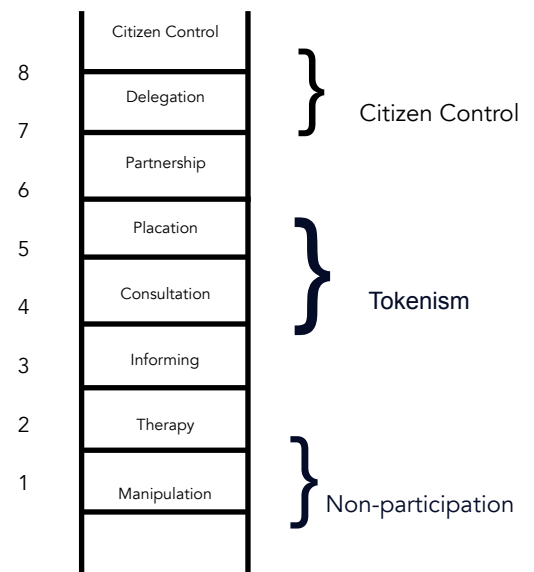


FIGURE 16: ARNSTEIN'S LADDER (1969) DEGREES OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION AFTER (THE CITIZEN'S HANDBOOK, ND).

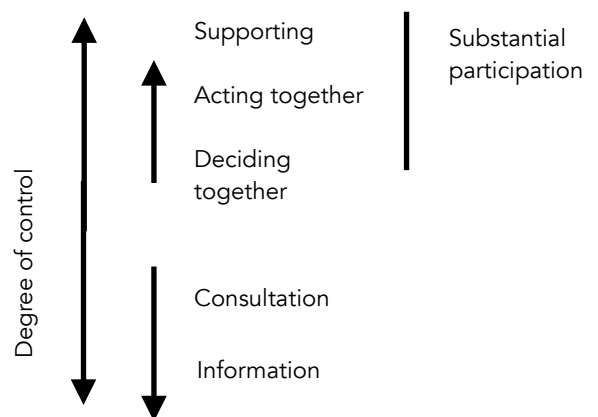


FIGURE 17: WILCOX'S MODEL OF CITIZEN PARTICIPATION (1994), FROM (PARTNERSHIPS, N.D.)

## Citizen participation in urban green spaces

When it comes to citizen participation in urban green spaces, Fors et al (2015) make the distinction between two different types of participation: civic and physical. Civic could include voting, sharing ideas, and contributing to a design process, whereas physical could include tree planting, bulb planting or scything meadows. They also makes the distinction of participation happening during two phases: place-making and place-keeping. See figure 18

Phase	Type	
	Civic	Physical
Making	e.g design or plan input or negotiation over Master plan decision	e.g. construction of new site including e.g. tree planting
Keeping	e.g. input in management decisions; fundraising and lobbying	e.g. tree assessment: maintaining vegetation (including training in doing so)

FIGURE 18: TYPES OF PARTICIPATION AFTER FORS ET AL (2015)

In the literature, there are many benefits to civic participation. Increased involvement leads to: better understanding of needs; access to local knowledge; increased buy-in from citizens/the community; increased usage and satisfaction. The benefits of physical participation are: increase workforce; free labour; potential to either tap in or upskill the community; increase how much people engage and care; increased buy-in and ultimately increased usage and user satisfaction.

However, there is also a critique of user participation in urban green spaces. Fors et al (2015) argue that is there is a lack of proof for the arguments presented above, and as such, the arguments are taken for granted. They argue that it is unclear whether citizen participation improves green spaces or if it is more for the benefit of the people themselves. Another critique is that the process of citizen participation can be carried out in such a way that it is unrepresentative of the community, or could even be discriminatory/non-inclusive of certain sections of the community (Douka, 2025).

Another critique of citizen participation is when it is given lip service, also known as citizenwashing. This is defined as “the illusion created by a public or private actor of acting on behalf, or for the benefit of, all or a representative number of citizens. It is an undemocratic strategy which gives the appearance of involving the public in decision-making without actually taking its views into account. When exercised by public authorities or politicians, this practice is used to legitimise decisions by wrongfully appropriating the authority citizens carry as a group in a democracy.’ (Martins et al, 2024: 4). Here, participants may believe they have some influence in the decision-making, when in fact they don’t, nor was there an intention that they would.

The degree of citizen participation depends on power structures and relations. Public spaces, like public parks, depend on governance and management. According to Buijs et al (2016), they see green infrastructure as ‘interconnected network made up of a mosaic of different green spaces varying in character and ecology’, and they argue that to realise the potential benefits of active citizenship, governments need to adopt ‘an enabling and stimulating governance style’, or ‘mosaic governance’.

# Results

This section aims to describe the intended and actual ways citizens participated in the place-making and place-keeping phases of Hyllievångsparken (HVP), starting with civic participation and moving onto physical participation. Work began on the park in 2015, and a lot of work has gone into the park during this time. It isn't possible to describe all meetings and events the park. This dissertation focuses on the intended ways as described in the Design Competition Guidelines, Nyréns concept, some additional documents plus interviews. The actual ways are based on interviews and meetings, plus the observational study and participant observation.

Organisation	Role in the park	Impact on research
Afry	The consultancy that carried out a mid-way evaluation of the park.	Wrote mid-way evaluation of the park, with a focus on the relationship between Malmö Stad and the private sector, and procedures ( <i>arbetsprocessen</i> ). (Afry, 2025)
Ekologigruppen	A consultancy that was a partner with Nyréns and Plot in developing the gestaltningsprogram or Design Guidelines. Co-presented the concept during Workshop 3 of the Dialogue Process with Nyréns	
Hyllievångsparkens Odlingsförening	The Association that runs the urban food growing project	Were interviewed.
Nyréns Arkitektkontor (Nyréns)	Won the design competition with the concept 'The Park of the Future is Never Finished'	Designed the concept for the park
Odlingsnätverket Seved	Contracted to establish if there was interested in a food growing project, and if so, to help establish it	Wrote reports about the establishment of the food growing project
Plot Studio (Plot)	Landscape architects who developed the design after Nyréns	Wrote the Design Guidelines, Project Vision,
ÅF	The consultancy that ran the Dialogue Process	Wrote reports about each workshop as part of the Dialogue Process

FIGURE 19: ORGANISATIONS INVOLVED IN THE PARK AND THIS RESEARCH

<b>Organisation, role (as relates to this research)</b>	<b>How they contributed to the research</b>
Malmö Stad. Landscape architect.	City-wide perspective on participation, across multiple projects
Malmö Stad. Landscape architect. Hyllievångsparken. Involved since the beginning.	Wrote the initial dissertation proposal, sent documents, participated in numerous meetings and interviews, and email correspondence
Malmö Stad. Engineer and project manager. Hyllievångsparken	Contributed to meetings, email correspondence.
Malmö Stad, Folkets Park	Involved in meeting about participation and programming in the park
ÅF. Held Dialogue Process workshops.	Wrote the documents detailing the dialogue process
Malmö Stad. Responsible for the maintenance of the north area of the park. Will be responsible for the whole park	Gave their perspective about participation during place-keeping
Malmö Stad, Folkets Park	Involved in meeting about participation and programming in the park
Malmö Stad. Norra Grängesbergsgatan Festival	Involved in meeting about participation and programming in the park
Hyllievångsparkens Odlingsförening. Member and committee member.	Local resident. Been involved in the community food project since the beginning, now part of the committee
Malmö Stad. Supports community food growing projects in Malmö	Gave a city-wide perspective on community food growing projects, and more details about this project
Odlingsnätverket Seved. Consultant who evaluated interest in a community food growing project, and supported the establishment of the project	Wrote the reports about the community food growing project.

FIGURE 20: PEOPLE INVOLVED IN THE RESEARCH, THEIR ORGANISATIONS AND ROLES

## Civic participation during place-making

In this section, citizens' intended and actual civic participation will be described. Starting with Malmö Stad's intended aims and process as outlined in the Design Competition Guidelines, followed by how citizens were actually involved in the Dialogue Process. Next comes Nyréns' concept and and finally, civic participation during the initial implementation phase.

### 1. Malmö Stad's Design Competition Guidelines

Malmö Stad's intended aims and process for civic participation during this phase are stated in the *tävlingsprogram*, the Design Competition Guidelines (Malmö Stad, 2017 [Internal material]). Their intended aim for the park was that

*'The new park will be a "park of the future" and contribute to creating a green Hyllie. It will have the same dignity as any of the parks in the inner city and contribute to making Hyllie a natural destination **for all Malmö residents**'* (Malmö Stad, 2017: 5 [Internal material]). My emphasis. Here, they also make clear who the intended users will be: residents from all over Malmö.

They also stated their intended aim and process for designing the park. Their aim was that the design was done **'in dialogue with the people of Malmö'** (Malmö Stad, 2017: 5 [Internal material]), and this would include a Dialogue Process. They clearly explained that the Dialogue Process involved a focus group of around 60 people meeting twice, to share 'how they see a future park in Hyllie. What is missing in Hyllie today, what dreams and expectations do they have for the future park?' (Malmö Stad, 2017: 5, [Internal material]). It stated that the focus group is made up of Hyllie residents, developers and business people. Furthermore, under the 'Conditions' section, the first condition is 'Dialogue Process'. Here it stated that 'the competitors must clearly show and describe how the material from Workshops 1 and 2 has been taken into account' and the result were included in the appendix of the guidelines (Malmö Stad, 2017: 18 [Internal material]). Furthermore, there will be a 3rd meeting/workshop with the winning architect in the autumn of 2018 (Malmö Stad, 2017: 18 [Internal material]).

They also stated their aim that the winning design should be

*'well-designed and innovative...It should also meet the dreams and wishes that emerged during the dialogue process carried out in autumn 2017...The proposal should be able to last for a long time, be flexible and able to handle future changes and needs, and be open to citizens' initiatives.'* (Malmö Stad, 2017: 6 [Internal material]). Thus, making clear that civic participation in the park would continue beyond the Dialogue Process.

### 2. Malmö Stad's Dialogue Process

Malmö Stad hired ÅF, a consultancy firm, to run the Dialogue Process and hold the three Workshops (email correspondence, MS2, 2025). Each workshop was written up, and those reports are a key source in this section.

Prior to the workshops, a demographic survey of Hyllie was carried out, and then a representative group of participants were invited to join the Dialogue Process (*Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Drömmar och behov*, n.d. [internal material]). The participants were divided into groups for the workshops, which also were a representative mix (*Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Drömmar och behov*, n.d., [internal material]).

	<b>Workshop 1.</b>	<b>Workshop 2.</b>	<b>Workshop 3</b>
Date	9th November 2017	7th December 2017	18th October 2018
Theme	<b>'Drömmar och behov'</b> <b>Dreams and needs</b>	<b>'Behov och rumslighet'</b> <b>Needs and spatiality</b>	Framtidens park är aldrig färdig' The Park of the Future is Never Finished
Aim	Participants identify their dreams and needs	Prioritise the needs from Workshop 1, and describe the desired spatiality	Winners present the concept design and get feedback
	39 participants	35 participants	27 participants

FIGURE 21: SUMMARY OF THE DIALOGUE PROCESS WORKSHOPS

### Workshops 1 and 2

Workshops 1 and 2 were structured so that participants had time to reflect individually before working in smaller groups. At the end of the workshop, the smaller groups came together, and the whole group discussed and voted on different ideas (*Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Drömmar och behov*, n.d. [internal material] and *Workshop 2 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Behov och rumslighet*, n.d., [internal material]).

### Workshop 3

Representatives from Nyréns and *Ekologigruppen* presented the concept to the focus group, highlighting how the needs identified in Workshops 1 and 2 informed the design (*Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Workshopfinal*, n.d. [Internal material]) The focus group then discussed whether they felt their needs were reflected in the concept or whether they were missing. The outcome was that 'all participants in the focus group were very positive about the winning proposal, *The Park of the Future is Never Finished*. Many discussions could be traced back to the needs that emerged during previous focus group meetings' (*Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Workshopfinal*, n.d.: 8 [internal material])

When asked why Malmö Stad chose to hire an external firm to run the Dialogue Process, the reply was that they "didn't have the capacity" to do it, and that there is "a real skill to doing this kind of process, particularly asking the right questions. It's important not to ask people what they want but what they need" (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025). They said they didn't see any disadvantages to an external firm doing the workshops, aside from many cost.

## 3. Nyréns' Concept

Nyréns's concept, *The Park of the Future is Never Finished*, won the design competition as it best met the design brief (interview, MS2, 2024). One of their main ideas was that 'creative management and user participation can spark fascination about how nature changes over time' (Nyréns, 2018: 1, [internal material]). There are many examples of participation in the concept. One example is 'The Heart of the Park'. Here, 'Malmö's best greenhouse' is connected to a cafe, and nearby is a kiosk (Nyréns, 2018:3, [internal material]). The greenhouse-cum-café is 'an

important meeting place at all times of the year' (Nyrens, 2018:3, [internal material]). Inside the greenhouse people grow food, borrow books and games. The kiosk sells produce and products made from food grown in the park. The buildings are surrounded by fruit trees and raised beds. Although they make no distinction between different types of participation, it is clear that citizens would need to civically participate for this idea to be realised.

#### 4. From Concept to Initial Implementation

Following Workshop 3, Nyréns shut down and Plot Studio took over. Plot developed the ideas from the concept into a *gestaltningsprogram*, or Design Guidelines, written on 20th June 2019. In the Design Guidelines it states that

*'through the dialogue process, the city demonstrates high ambitions for participation and engagement. The idea of 'The park of the future is never finished' takes over where the dialogue process ends and invites continued participation, attracts engagement, fascination and new dreams about the good life while continuously changing over time. The dreams that Malmö residents have expressed during the dialogue process will thus provide strength in the continued work on the park, not only until the first sod is broken but in a changing future movement without end.'* (Plot Studio 2019:10 [Internal material]).

This quotation encapsulates Plot's view of the importance that Malmö Stad and they themselves put on participation throughout the process, and their intention to embed it into the park.

When it came to how citizens were actually involved in the initial implementation, some areas were developed with groups of citizens. One group of local school children contributed with ideas for the playground, and another with ideas for the 'active meeting place' in the forest in the southernmost area (Site Observation 2, MS2, 2024). However, as children are not the focus of this dissertation, these areas will not be described further. Another way citizens participated civically during the initial implementation was in the food growing project.

##### **Hyllievångsparken Stadsodlingsförening**

Even before the concept of the park was developed, food growing was seen as a way to engage citizens and activate the site (Interview, MS2, 2024). Around 2020, the idea for a urban food-growing project formed. There are many such projects around the city. These projects are on land that is owned by Malmö Stad, and initiated and run by local residents, by way of a *Stadsodlingsförening*, or Urban Food Growing Association. Unlike all the other projects in Malmö, in this case it was Malmö Stad that initiated this project not local residents (Interview, MS6, 2024).

In the spring of 2021, Malmö Stad contracted Odlingsnätverket Seved, a local food growing network, to gauge whether there was local interest in such a project and, if so to support the establishment of an association with the aim that the association would take responsibility for the project (Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening, 2021 [Internal material]). It should be noted that this took place during the COVID pandemic and is likely to have impacted people's involvement (Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening, 2021, [Internal material]).

After marketing and flyering the local area, 67 private people and a local school, *Hyllievångsskolan*, expressed an interest in being involved in the project (Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening, 2021 [Internal material]). 54 people were invited to the first meeting, and 27 people showed up. Malmö Stad were pleasantly surprised that so many were interested

(interview, MS2, 2024). As a result of this process, citizens voted to start and run the *Hyllievångsparkens Gemensamhetsodling Ideell Förening*, also known as *Hyllievångsparken Stadsodlingsförening*.

According to an interview with a local resident who has been involved with the project since the beginning and a committee member, the Association has a committee, and members pay a small fee to join. When they join, they are assigned individual raised beds to grow in (interview, OT1, 2025). If people no longer want to continue growing, then they inform the committee. The committee then contacts people on a waiting list. There is also a process to elect members of the committee. The committee has the responsibility to fill posts and submit accounts and yearly reports to Malmö Stad. The committee also initiates 'Community Days' where they get together to look after the communal areas. This is an example of civic participation.



FIGURE 22 : THE URBAN FOOD GROWING PROJECT, WITH INDIVIDUAL RAISED BEDS, FENCE AND SIGN. 17TH DECEMBER 2024.

The group received initial and ongoing support from Malmö Stad. Initially, Malmö Stad supplied the raised beds, soil and the toolbox. The project is located next to the Pick Your Own section. Initially, there was no fence or other demarcation between the two areas. Later, based on the request of the group, a fence and a sign were put up. It was noted that this group has a different relationship to Malmö Stad than the others: that they expect more help than other groups (interview, MS6, 2024 and interview, MS2, 2024).

The local resident said there are and have been several challenges with the project: 1) non-members picking members' food, 2) a lack of interest from members in attending community days, 3) a lack of interest from members in running the Association (Interview, OT1, 2025). In general the association and municipal staff are hopeful but uncertain whether the initiative will continue.

When Malmö Stad was asked how citizens could contribute with ideas and feedback during the place-making, the reply was that their approach was to 'have big ears', meaning that they told people they were open to ideas and feedback, and they were flexible (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025).

## Civic participation during place-keeping

Work on and in the park is currently transitioning from place-making to place-keeping. During an interview, Malmö Stad staff were asked how they saw citizens' participation in the future, one replied saying "We have tried a lot, but it's not really our competence or mission. It's up to someone else to make a decision about that." (interview MS2, 2025). When asked who could do it, they replied that there are many who could do it within Malmö Stad like people involved in *dialog och samverkan*, dialogue and collaboration, or *besöksanläggning*, visitor attraction (interview, MS2, 2025). They also explained that 'investment money' should be used on things that 'will be there for a long time, not participation' (interview MS2, 2025)

One of things staff involved with the project have done is to work with other people and departments within Malmö Stad. During one meeting, staff from different projects met to discuss participation and local development in Hyllievångsparken. Prior to this meeting, there was an understanding that they would be able to support Hyllievångsparken, but during the meeting it seemed like that maybe wasn't actually possible (meeting, MS1 et al, 2024). One member of staff repeated was the importance of having "feet on the ground" and talking to people about what they wanted. Later, when asked if it anyone who worked directly in the park had a 'social role' as part of their job, for example someone who a *kommuntekniker* who was not only allowed but encouraged to talk to visitors another member of staff said "no, we really wanted to, but it's hard to do in reality" (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025).

During the 19th December meeting, some ideas were discussed for events they wanted to hold in the park including a Spring Festival where they could ask visitors for feedback about the park, and could ask people about what is grown in the Pick Your Own area. They also mentioned a repeating the Food Truck Festival which they had held in 2023 and felt was successful.

From the site observations, there is a lack of information in the park regarding opportunities for civic participation in the place-keeping phase. For example, signs how to give feedback and complaints, information about meetings. From the participant observation, although not counted, a proportion of visitors were not speaking Swedish amongst themselves.

The initial implementation phase is coming to an end, and with that comes a change in personnel, with responsibility being handed over to the maintenance (*drift*) team. Members of the maintenance team have been involved in the park's development for some time, and this is believed to smoothen the transition. To conclude, it is unclear how Malmö Stad intends for citizens to civically participate in the park in the future or who will be responsible for it.

## Physical participation and park usage during place-making

In this section, citizens' intended and actual physical participation will be described. Starting with Malmö Stad's Design Competition Guidelines and Nyréns Concept, followed by how citizens were actually involved during the initial implementation.

### The Design Competition Guidelines

As demonstrated in the 'Civic participation during place-making' section, Malmö Stad had a clear aim and process for citizens to civically participate in the park. However, there is no equivalent aim or process for citizens to physically participate in the initial implementation phase.

## Nyréns Concept

As it wasn't specified in the design competition guidelines, unsurprisingly it wasn't written about in detail in Nyréns concept either. There are lots of examples of physical participation but barely any specifically during the place-making phase, there a mention of planting the meadow as well as 'Children's' Days and Integration Days are invitation to plant easy-to-grow seedlings and become a symbolically important start for The Forest of the Future' (Nyrens, 2018: 5 [Internal material]).

On the last page are 'Calculated costs', and in the footnote in the penultimate line states *'Creative management involves activities for the public with the aim of inviting participation. Development activities take place primarily in the first dynamic and maintenance-intensive years to make the park everyone's park from the start. Over time, creative management increasingly transitions into the city's other events, such as forest days, integration projects and the activities of the cultural school'* (Nyréns, 2018: 6).

## Initial Implementation

As mentioned in the previous section about civic participation during the place-making, citizens have been involved in the Urban Food Growing Project. However, it was Malmö Stad that did the initial implementation of the project (building the raised beds, adding the soil, installing the benches, fence etc) rather than the members. Similarly with the Pick Your Own area, citizens didn't physically participate in creating the space, but they are free to pick the flowers i.e. in the maintenance.

The only example of citizens physically participating in the place-making phase was that some school children were involved in planting a few trees in 'The Forest of The Future' (see figure x). However, as this research doesn't focus on school children this won't be described further.

Although few references to citizens physically participating were found in the texts about the park, during an interview, one staff member said that the contractors showed less interest in engaging with citizens than hoped (interview, MS2, 2024).

## Physical participation and usage during place-keeping

In this section, citizens' physical participation is described. Starting with the intended ways citizens would physically participate in and use the park as found in Malmö Stad's Design Competition Guidelines, The Dialogue Process and Nyréns' concept and Plot's Design Guidelines. This is followed by how citizens are actually using and physically participating in the park based on the observation study and the participant observation.

### 1. Malmö Stad's Design Competition Guidelines

The *tävlingsprogram*, Design Competition Guidelines, contains many examples of how Malmö Stad intended the park to be used and by whom (user groups). There are so many that they were analysed and four themes were identified. They are: that the park should be 1) for everyone, 2) used all year round, 3) used in lots of ways, 4) open to citizens' initiatives.

#### **For everyone**

In the Design Competition Guidelines the park isn't named as Hyllievångsparken yet, it is referred to as 'Hyllie's biggest park' giving an indication of the intended scale and users of the park. Here the vision isn't a park for local residents instead it 'should have the potential to attract visitors from all over the city' and 'all people should feel welcome regardless of age, gender or origin and have the opportunity to meet in a natural way' (Malmö Stad, 2017: 17 [internal material]).

#### **All year round**

The intention is that the park 'will attract visitors throughout the year' (Malmö Stad, 2017: 17 [internal material]). It is a park to be used during all the seasons not just the summer months.

#### **Used in lots of ways**

*'The park should encourage movement, spending time outdoors and playing – and in this way contribute to the health of Malmö residents. There should be something for everyone'* (Malmö Stad, 2017: 17) [internal material]. This quotation indicates Malmö Stad's intended uses and users.

#### **Open to citizens' initiatives**

While the municipality had a vision for the park, there is also a clear emphasis that it should 'be able to handle future changes and needs and be open to citizens' initiatives' Malmö Stad, 2017 p 6 and that 'the park should attract participation and temporary events.' (Malmö Stad, 2017 p 17). This implies a link between physical and civic participation.

### 2. The Dialogue Process

During Workshop 1, participants reflected on their dreams and needs. One of the outcomes was a *'need for an experience and activity-rich park'*. Some of the activities included:

*'Activities between generations - Cultural experiences, music, theater, literature - Small stage where quiet music is played in the evenings, and entertainment for children during the day - Ice skating rink - Coffee breaks both summer and winter - Being able to grow food in the park, raised beds - Walking-friendly - Walking areas where even a wheelchair can roll without getting stuck - Paths where you can feel trees and bushes from a wheelchair - Places for free play - Running - Drinking fountain - Meeting animals - Climbing - Coffee shop'* (Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: *Drömmar och behov*, n.d: 10, [internal material]).

### 3. Nyréns' Concept and Plot's Design Guidelines



FIGURE 23: CONCEPT DRAWING OF 'THE HEART OF THE PARK': LOOKING ACROSS THE STORMWATER POND TOWARDS THE GREENHOUSE, CAFE AND KIOSK. (NYRÉNS, 2018).

Nyréns used the ideas from the Dialogue Process, and developed them into the Concept. The concept begins with Figure 23. It then goes on to explain the six main ideas of the concept. The first idea is that **'Hyllie's biggest park harnesses the power of constant change'** which they explain as 'creative management and user participation opens the eyes and fascination for nature's changes over time...Here, the annual flower displays can stand side by side with the labyrinths from clearing days and hut-building competitions.' (Nyréns, 2018: 1 [internal material]). Their second idea is that **'Hyllie's biggest park is impatient, some things can't wait'** exemplifying the idea by saying 'the park is developed in stages and in combination with temporary elements invite participation. The park of the future is created by everyone!' (Nyréns, 2018: p1).

The final idea is that **'Hyllie's biggest park constitutes the heart of Hyllie and is for all of Malmö'**. 'Here, a multitude of diversity, a green creative force, a buzz of bees and a chance for everyone to get soil under their nails is created. In the middle of the park, Malmö's largest greenhouse is being built - a cultivation node and district garden that will also become the area's cultural hub for all forms of creation and creativity. This is where you will be seen and where you want to be when you are in Hyllie!' (Nyréns, 2018: 1 [internal material]). From these it is clear how fundamental they saw participation to the park, and most of these examples are of physical participation in the place-keeping phase.

Having described the six main ideas, they then introduce the 3 stages in more detail. Stage 1 is the northernmost area, 2 is in the middle and 3 is the southernmost area. These stages will now be described highlighting the different intended users and uses.

## Stage 1



FIGURE 24: STAGE 1 WITH THE FRUIT ORCHARD, FLOWERING MEADOW, THE HEART OF THE PARK AND THE THEMED PLAYGROUND. FROM NYRÉNS CONCEPT, 2018.

Some of the intended uses and activities in this area were: scrumping apples; sitting and drinking coffee; borrowing a ball, eating ice-cream; eating lunch; growing, harvesting, picking and exchange food; walking and cycling (Nyréns, 2018 [Internal material]).

The main features in this area are:

1. *Fruktlunden*, The Fruit Orchard.
2. *Allmogeåker/blomsterängen*, The Field/Flowering Meadow
3. *Parkens hjärta* The Heart of the Park
4. *Temalekplatsen "Lilla Hyllie"*

### 1. The Fruit Orchard

There is no description of The Fruit Orchard in the concept, so it isn't clear how they intended citizens would use it or could participate in it. However, in the *gestaltningsprogram*, Design Guidelines, (2019) it is described as a 'lush, gently undulating hilly landscape a romantic fruit grove à la Nangijala' where you could picknick under the fruit trees (Plot, 2019: 14). The Fruit Orchard 'invites hard work and joint activities such as guided tours/courses in fruit diversity, planting, tying up (tying down), pruning, harvest parties, harvesting/jam/juice/pressing/baking, and various other workshops.'

### 2. The Flowering Meadow

There is no description of this area in the concept, so once again it isn't clear they intended citizens would use or participate in it. In the *gestaltningsprogram*, Design Guidelines, this area is

no longer a Flowering Meadow but a 'Flexible Growing Area' with a volleyball court. This area is described as having 'generous spaces for growing food, Pick Your Own flowers, fruit and berries or for events such as markets and pumpkin festivals' (Plot Studio, 2019: 13 [internal material]).

### 3. The Heart of the Park

The 'Heart of the Park', as the name suggests, is a key feature in the concept. It is made up of a greenhouse which is connected to a cafe, with a smaller kiosk nearby. 'The greenhouse is not just a greenhouse, it is a social meeting place with no equivalent in Malmö today' at all times of the year (Nyréns, 2018: 3 [Internal material]). They describe the greenhouse-cum-café as a place to grow food but also a place to borrow books and games, lie in hammocks, shelter from the wind, have events like regular events like growers' evenings and language cafés, as well as book releases, a farmers market and festivals. The kiosk sells produce grown in the park and products made from the produce (think jams and juices) (Nyréns, 2018 [Internal material]).

### 4. Themed Playground- "Little Hyllie"

There are two main parts to the playground: the Building Playground and the classic playground. In the Building Playground, are material like willow branches from the trees were pollarded which can be used to build and weave. Then every weekend staff come with other materials and tools and help the kids build stuff (Nyréns, 2018 [Internal material]).

## Stage 2



FIGURE 25: STAGE 2 FROM NYRÉNS CONCEPT FEATURING THE CLIMBING FOREST AND TOWER, THE PICNIC AREA, THE FIELDS AND MEADOWS (NYRÉNS, 2018)

In this section are three main features (the description and the map are a little different): *Klätterskogen och Klättertornet*, The Climbing Forest, and Climbing Tower; *Picknickplatsen*, 'The Pimped Pasture Perfect for Picnic's; and the *Allmogeåker och äng*, The Peasants field and meadow.

### The Climbing Forest and Climbing Tower

This area is intended for children to climb and explore in: climb in the trees, climb in the tower, slide down, sit in the hanging chairs. (Nyréns, 2018 [internal material]).

### The Pasture

This area is a where the grass is cut short, and is sheltered by some trees that offer a windbreak, mimicking a pasture. It is intended for picnics, playing games and having breaks (Nyréns, 2018 [internal material]). In the Design Guidelines, it also mentions that planting and haymaking as activities (Plot Studio, 2019 [Internal material]).

### The Fields and Meadows

In contrast to The Pasture, this area is a combination of cereal crops and flowering meadows (Nyréns, 2018 [Internal material]). The Pastoral Fields are sown with crops like oats, wheat, rye and buckwheat, as they once were in Hyllie, and so add to the cultural and education values. In the summer, The Flowering Meadows have paths cut through them, and smaller glades for picnicking and they are scythed at the end of the summer. They go on to say that

*'as the park and Hyllie grow, the flower fields can be converted into permanent meadow areas, cultivation areas or activity areas as needed...Scything or horse-drawn mowing can become a popular feature in the park.'* (Nyréns, 2018: 4 [Internal material]).

### Stage 3



FIGURE 26: STAGE 3 FROM NYRÉNS CONCEPT FEATURING THE FOREST OF THE FUTURE AND THE PARK SHELF (NYRÉNS, 2018).

This section is the most naturalistic and has two main features: *Framtidsskog*, The Forest of the Future and *Parkhyllan*, The Park Shelf.

### **The Forest of the Future**

In the summer the forest is shady and cool, and in the winter you can meet here and skate on the pond. There is outdoor gym trail that can be used all year around, as can the Shelter Pavillion. This is the area for peaceful activities and connection with animals like 'yoga, qigong and organised activities such as bird watching and tree safaris. There is also the possibility of building a riding trail through the forest... additional areas can be temporarily fenced off to make room for sheep, goats or chickens' (Nyréns, 2018: 5).



FIGURE 27: CONCEPT DRAWING OF THE FOREST OF THE FUTURE AND THE PAVILION WITH THE OUTDOOR GYM IN THE FOREGROUND. NYRÉNS, 2018: P6

### **The Park Shelf**

The Park Shelf is a promenade that runs along the park. It's intended to be an edge between the park and the city, a place for meeting people, playing ping-pong, boules and marbles. Picnicking with friends and neighbours. There are also outdoor gym activities station along the promenade:

'These mini places are inviting and playfully designed with a focus on movement and play without any requirement for performance. It is easy to step in and out of activities and choose how much you want to participate, which encourages everyone to be active and creates the conditions for an inclusive environment. The form and function of the shelf varies, both seasonally and over time' (Nyréns, 2018: 5 [Internal material]).

# Actual usage: Observational Study

## Users

<b>Week 1 (non-holiday)</b>	<i>Dog</i>	<i>Kid(s) &amp; adults</i>	<i>Exer- cising</i>	<i>Young Adult</i>	<i>Seniors</i>	<i>Walking through</i>	<i>Other</i>	<b>Total*</b>
2024-12-15 Sunday	15	49	2	0	0	13	0	<b>79</b>
2024-12-16 Monday	16	48	3	0	1	18	1	<b>87</b>
2024-12-17 Tuesday	13	76	3	5	3	27	3	<b>130</b>
2024-12-18 Wednesday	12	14	2	3	0	15	1	<b>47</b>
2024-12-19 Thursday	13	20	0	6	0	11	0	<b>50</b>
2024-12-20 Friday	15	75	4	4	0	14	2	<b>114</b>
2024-12-21 Saturday	21	61	1	2	0	3	2	<b>90</b>
<b>Total*</b>	<b>105</b>	<b>343</b>	<b>15</b>	<b>20</b>	<b>4</b>	<b>101</b>	<b>9</b>	<b>597</b>
<b>Week 2 (holiday)</b>								
2025-01-02 Thursday	15	180	0	0	0	7	0	<b>202</b>
2025-01-03 Friday	17	65	2	1	0	5	0	<b>90</b>
2025-01-04 Saturday	8	119	1	0	0	1	0	<b>129</b>
2025-01-05 Sunday	9	167	2	3	0	13	1	<b>195</b>
2025-01-06 Monday	11	9	0	0	0	2	0	<b>22</b>
2025-01-07 Tuesday	7	9	27	0	5	2	1	<b>51</b>
2025-01-08 Wednesday	13	38	2	4	0	4	8	<b>69</b>
<b>Total*</b>	<b>80</b>	<b>587</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>8</b>	<b>5</b>	<b>34</b>	<b>10</b>	<b>758</b>

FIGURE 28 : TOTAL USERS PER DAY AND WEEK

\* The 'total' is not the total number of people in the park per day, rather the sum of the number of people counted per area during the 6 minutes in that area, repeated at regular times (08.00, 10.00, 12.00, 14.00, 16.00) per days. After 2nd January, based on very low numbers, the 08.00 was no longer included). So, for example, people may have been counted more than once, if they moved between areas.

One of the factors that may have impacted usage is the weather. A record of the weather during the two week study can be found in Appendix 6.

## Analysis

Week 1 (non-holiday)			Week 2 (holiday)	
User group	Weekly total		User group	Weekly total
Children with adults	343		Children with adults	587
Dog walkers	105		Dog walkers	80
Walking through	101		Walking through	34
Young adults	20		Exercising	34
Exercising	15		Other	10
Other	9		Young adults	8
Seniors	4		Senior	5

FIGURE 29: WEEKLY TOTAL RANKED BY USER GROUP (HIGHEST TO LOWEST)

During week 1 and 2 the park's largest user group was children and carers, but the number increased from 343 during the holidays. Dog walkers were the second biggest user group during both weeks, with a decrease during the holidays. Walking through were the third biggest group over both weeks, with a large decrease during the holidays, presumably many working through either worked locally, or spent their holidays elsewhere. Young adults, exercising and other were in the bottom four groups, but their order changed between the weeks. Seniors were the smallest group, over both weeks.

## Area

Week 1	Orchard	Flex	Beer garden	Play-ground	Picnic area	Forest	Total
2024-12-15 Sunday	4	3	22	36	9	5	79
2024-12-16 Monday	34	6	19	12	15	1	87
2024-12-17 Tuesday	7	5	30	56	24	8	130
2024-12-18 Wednesday	5	7	6	10	15	4	47
2024-12-19 Thursday	3	5	13	17	7	5	50
2024-12-20 Friday	14	8	18	57	11	6	114
2024-12-21 Saturday	6	2	21	49	8	4	90
<b>Total</b>	<b>73</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>129</b>	<b>237</b>	<b>89</b>	<b>33</b>	<b>597</b>
<b>Week 2</b>							
2025-01-02 Thursday	10	8	61	104	15	4	202
2025-01-03 Friday	13	7	22	34	7	7	90
2025-01-04 Saturday	3	3	23	93	4	3	129
2025-01-05 Sunday	6	9	22	136	22	0	195
2025-01-06 Monday	5	0	1	6	8	2	22
2025-01-07 Tuesday	0	2	16	16	13	4	51
2025-01-08 Wednesday	8	7	7	39	7	1	69
<b>Total</b>	<b>45</b>	<b>36</b>	<b>152</b>	<b>428</b>	<b>76</b>	<b>21</b>	<b>758</b>

FIGURE 30: TOTAL USER PER AREA

## Analysis

Week 1		Week 2	
User group	Weekly total	User group	Weekly total
Playground	237	Playground	428
Beer Garden	129	Beer Garden	152
Picnic area	89	Picnic area	76
Orchard	73	Orchard	45
Flex Growing Area	36	Flex Growing Area	36
Forest	33	Forest	21

FIGURE 31: WEEKLY TOTAL RANKED BY AREA(HIGHEST TO LOWEST)

Most frequented area was the Themed Playground and around the Climbing Tower.

## Summary of results

### *The place-making phase*

As described in the Design Competition Guidelines, Malmö Stad's intended process for citizens to civically participate in the place-making phase of Hyllievångsparken was through a 'dialogue process' with a focus group representative of Hyllie's residents (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). In the Guidelines it stipulated that the design teams must demonstrate that they used the results from the dialogue process. (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). Malmö Stad contracted the Dialogue Process out to ÅF, and they ran the workshops.

Nyréns Arkitekter won the design competition as their design best met the design brief, including using ideas from the Dialogue Process. Participation was one of the main ideas of their proposal. There were many examples of physical participation in the proposal, but little written about how this would happen. The focus group had the opportunity to provide feedback regarding the extent to which they felt their needs were met in the proposal. According to the report from the 3 workshop, all the participants felt like their needs were reflected in the design (Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Workshopfinal, n.d.). The winning proposal was seen as a mandate, and was further developed into the Design Guidelines and later implemented.

What wasn't clear in the design competition was if or how Malmö Stad intended for citizens to physically participate in the place-making phase of the park. According to one staff member, there was hope that the contractors and would involve citizens would physically participate in the place-making phase but that they were less engaged in this aspect than hoped. As a result, most of the initial implementation was carried out without the community's direct involvement, including in the food growing project.

Malmö Stad had an idea to have an urban food growing project in the park. This is the first time this type of project has been initiated from the top down rather than from the grassroots. There was a lot of initial interest in the idea, and an association was formed. The association has faced challenges such as food being taken, decreasing interest in running the association and more. At the time of writing, it is unclear whether the Association will continue.

### *The place-keeping phase*

As described in the Design Competition Guidelines, Malmö Stad had a vision for who (the users groups) and how (usage) they intended the park would be used. However, there wasn't a clear aim or process for on-going civic participation during this phase. Nyréns concept contained lots of ideas about usage and physical participation, but nothing about the mechanics of how this would work (who organises the food growing and flower picking, the scything of meadows etc?).

As per the observation study carried out during the winter, the two largest user groups are children and adults playing in the playground, and dog walkers. The two areas that are the most visited are the playground and the beer garden.

The park is currently moving from a place-making to a place-keeping phase, and with that comes a change in personnel. It is also unclear whose role, if anyone's, it is to support or facilitate citizens participation in the park. It is also unclear whether the necessary resources are in place to achieve the innovative and ambitious aims of the park.

# Discussion

There are so many things I could discuss about Hyllievångsparken, and many are linked to one another, making it challenging to structure. Ideally, I would want to discuss these with you while walking around in the park, or over a cup of coffee in the café. Instead, I'll try and do it on paper. The discussion begins with an evaluation of the intended and actual ways that citizens participated during the place-making and place-keeping phases of the park. References will be made to the literature about the history of public parks in Sweden, citizen participation, place-making and place-keeping, and governance and management. Next, my personal evaluation from having worked as a practitioner designing and running community food growing projects, including in public parks. Followed by a discussion about possible ways citizens could civically and physically participate in the park in the future. This is done through exploring three scenarios with different governance and management. After this, I step away from Hyllievångsparken and end with questions that I have been asking myself concerning public parks and landscape architecture, and reflections on the process of this research and further research.

## Evaluation of citizens' intended and actual participation

### Citizens' participation in the place-making of Hyllievångsparken

In this section, the intended and actual ways for citizens to civically and physically participate during the place-making phase in the park will be compared.

#### *Design Competition vs Design in-house*

Malmö Stad's decision to hold a Dialogue Process and a Design Competition, rather than design the park in-house, has undoubtedly altered both the design of and citizens' participation in the park. Malmö Stad aimed to produce a design that would meet residents' needs and be innovative (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). When viewed from a public space management point of view, this decision concerning which actors were to be involved impacted the park management model (Randrup and Persson, 2009). Seen through another lens, it impacted the degree to which the park was state-centred, market-centred and user-centred (de Magalhães & Carmona, 2009). While it is not usual to include these actors, this, in combination with the focus on citizens' participation, may also have led to a cascade of unforeseen consequences, including how challenging it would be to realise it.

#### *The Design Competition Guidelines*

In the Design Competition Guidelines, Malmö Stad stated their intention to run a Dialogue Process and a Design Competition (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). This happened, and both will be evaluated shortly. By using Fors et al's different types of citizen participation, this reveals that Malmö Stad had a clear written intention for civic participation during this phase, but not for physical participation (Fors et al, 2015). This may have contributed to the challenges with citizens' participation in the initial implementation. With hindsight, it would have been useful to stipulate that the design proposal must include not just ideas about participation, but also how these could be implemented.

## *The Dialogue Process: workshop 1 and 2*

The Dialogue Process was held by Åf, a consultancy firm. From my research, I would say that due care was taken to ensure that both the focus group and smaller groups were representative of the community (*Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Drömmar och behov*, n.d [internal material]). The overall process and individual workshops seemed well-structured and democratically run with participants voting on ideas (*Workshop 1 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Drömmar och behov*, n.d [internal material], *Workshop 2 om Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Behov och rumslighet*, n.d, [internal material] and *Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Workshopfinal*, n.d. [internal material]). As such, the Dialogue Process seemed to have successfully identified the needs of a representative group of Hyllie's residents.

Choosing an external consultant to run the workshops was made because of a lack of capacity (both time and skill). While one member of staff felt there were no disadvantages to this, another named that cost may be one (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025). Some of the advantages of external actors may be their expertise and impartiality, however, these can potentially be disadvantages too. I think these need to be acknowledged to be mitigated. Firstly, an external actor running the process may mean those involved don't build the skills and capacity to the same extent, and the downside of impartiality is potentially being a step removed from the process, and thus building less trust with the members of the focus group. Both skills and trust are critical to meaningful citizens' participation.

## *Nyréns Concept, Design Guidelines*

Nyréns' concept was based on the design brief from Malmö Stad and the results of the Dialogue Process. The concept emphasises the importance of participation, and gave examples. However, through looking at it using Fors et al's different types of participation during different phases, it becomes clear that there are few details about how civic or physical participation would happen place-making but painted a picture of lots of participation in the place-making phase (Fors et al, 2015). This may not be surprising at the concept stage, but these details weren't elaborated in the Design Guidelines either. Innovative ideas without practical suggestions are harder to implement. In order for these suggestions to be both innovative and implementable, it requires a deep organisational knowledge of Malmö Stad plus other local organisations. This may be challenging for an external actor.

## *Workshop 3*

Both participants and staff at Malmö Stad were happy with the process and the resultant design by Nyréns/Plot Studio (*Hyllies nya stadsdelspark: Workshopfinal*, n.d. [internal material]; interview, MS2, 2025). As such, the process achieved its aim of designing a park based on the needs of residents.

## *Initial implementation*

What wasn't included in the Design Competition Guidelines, and subsequently in the Concept, was how citizens should be involved in the initial implementation, including the relationship with contractors. Malmö Stad staff mentioned this was an intention, but this hadn't happened as hoped (interview, MS2, 2024).

## *Urban Food Growing Project*

The idea of using food growing as a way to engage citizens and activate the site has been around since the early days (Malmö Stad, 2024 [internal material]). Although the idea for the Urban Food Growing Project wasn't in the concept, it did appear in the Design Guidelines (Plot Studio, 2019 [internal material]). Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening were contracted to evaluate if there was interest in the project, and if there was, to support the establishment of an Association. Based on the reports, the process was thorough and allowed for a range of citizens to get involved in the project; there was an interest in the project, and thus the Association was established (Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening, 2021). The Association is still running, but has experienced problems: people stealing food, a lack of interest in the community days and running the Association (interview, OT1, 2025). Some of these problems were seen to have been exacerbated by the project being next to the Pick Your Own area, the initial lack of fencing and the initial lack of signs (interview, OT1, 2025). Some of these issues were flagged up in Odlingsnätverket Seved Ideell Förening's report (2021). It is unclear if or how the Association will continue in the future.

Overall, during the place-making phase, I would say that Malmö Stad achieved its aims, with a few notable exceptions. Using Fors et al distinction between civic and physical participation, it is clear there was more of an emphasis on civic participation in this phase, compared to physical participation. It is also clear that the different initiatives are at different rungs of Arnstein's ladder (The Citizen's Handbook, nd). Some of the initiatives, like school children planting a few trees in The Forest of the Future, could be seen as symbolic, others like the Dialogue Process are a form of consultation (The Citizen's Handbook, nd) and the Urban Food Growing Association is a form of citizen control. Arnstein's Ladder could be used as an evaluation tool to identify where different initiatives are on the ladder, and if initiatives missing from certain rungs.

At this point, an ambitious aim has led to a complex governance and management structure appearing with many actors, areas and phased implementation. One consequence of this is actually that it may diminish citizens participation. One example of this is the Urban Food Growing Project vs the Pick Your Own project. They are both within the same 'Flexible Growing Area' but the Urban Food Growing Project is closer to self-governing and the Pick Your Own is more hierarchical (Jansson et al, 2018). As a result, different 'rules of the game' apply in these different areas but these would have been challenging to understand, especially because of the lack of fence and signs. A first-time visitor should be forgiven for not knowing how they should get involved, or getting this wrong, but unfortunately that can negatively impact their their own participation and others.

## Citizens' participation in the place-keeping of Hyllievångsparken

### *Design Competition Guidelines*

In the Design Competition Guidelines, Malmö Stad stated the intended users and usages (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). According to the main themes identified in the guidelines, they wanted the park to be for everyone, to be used in lots of ways, at all times of year and open to citizens' initiatives. Ambitious.

Based on the observational study, different user groups do use the park, but it was predominately children and adults, both during the holidays and the non-holidays. This is not that surprising given that The Climbing Tower and Themed Playground offer more to do in the winter compared to the Pick Your Own area or the Fruit Orchard. There are also certain groups with very low numbers, for example seniors and young adults. Again I don't find this surprising given the lack of facilities for those user groups.

As for being used at all times of the year, based on my experience doing the Observational Study, despite what it says in the concept, the park is still very exposed to the wind and there is no where in the park that you can sit when it is raining, and very few places that are sheltered from the wind. For a stadsdelspark, that was intended to be both dynamically changing and used all year round, there are very few facilities or activities that encourage use in the winter time. There isn't much to do in the Fruit Orchard, Flexible Food Growing Space at this time of year. Very few people sat at the tables in the Biergarten, and only one family barbecued during the two weeks I was there. Based on my observations from the park, it would be hard for a first time visitor to know that the park was open to citizen's initiatives. This is due a lack of information in the park about this aim, or the procedure for sharing ideas about initiatives.

From a historical perspective, Hyllievångsparken aims combine those of Hogland Parks (Nolin, 1997) with those Folkets Park (Folketshus och Parker (n.d)) and with some additional ones. Added to this, the user group is also broader, aiming to attract everyone from all over Malmö (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]). This is another way that the aims for the park are ambitious.

Despite not being awarded the visitors attraction status, there is still a drive within Malmö Stad to activate the site through events in the place-keeping phase (meeting, December 2024). Although programming doesn't necessarily lead to citizens' participation, events can increase usage and attract new users. Plus programming can be include citizen participation depending on the type of event or programming. For example, as part of this year's Spring Festival, people planted out summer flowers (email correspondence, MS2, May 2025). The themes from the Design Competition Guidelines, could be useful when brainstorming and planning events in the park. For example, what could be the ways to attract Seniors into the park in the winter, or young adults during the holidays?

### *Nyréns Concept*

There were lots of ideas, primarily for physical participation, in Nyréns concept. However, there weren't a lot of details about how this could work (Nyréns, 2018). It is too early to say whether these aims will be realised.

One of the benefits of using Fors et al (2015) distinction between place-making and place-keeping is that it mirrors the organisational structure at Malmö Stad between the initial implementation team, *exploatering*, and the maintenance team, *underhåll och drift*. Using this, a pattern emerges that there is a greater emphasis on physical participation in this phase. However, physical participation requires some degree of civic participation, and also is impacted the governance and management model. Buijs et al (2016) argued for the need for a mosaic governance style that was enabling and stimulating. As the park moves from the place-making to the place-keeping, there are many unanswered questions about citizen participation in the future.

It is also not clear who is responsible for citizen participation in the park, or whether there are strategic goals related to citizen participation. If these are not clarified and put into place, the park is less likely to reach its aim of being the innovative Park of The Future, and will turn out to be more like the parks of yesterday.

## My personal evaluation

In some ways, the story of citizen participation in Hyllievångsparken can be seen as a relatively straightforward one, almost like an equation. Malmö Stad's aim was to create a park that meets the needs of the residents. To ascertain those needs, they ran a dialogue process, and to design based on those needs, they held a design competition. So logically, dialogue + design = a park that meets the needs of the citizens. Malmö Stad has been recognised for having an ambitious aim, an innovative process and for the resulting park.

Not to detract from that, but the story becomes a lot more complex and nuanced by using Fors et al (2015) matrix of types of participation (civic and physical) during different phases (place-making and place-keeping). Malmö Stad didn't make an explicit distinction between these two types of participation in documents like the design competition, but I would recommend that they do. A very simplified model of citizen participation in Hyllievångsparken might look something like this:

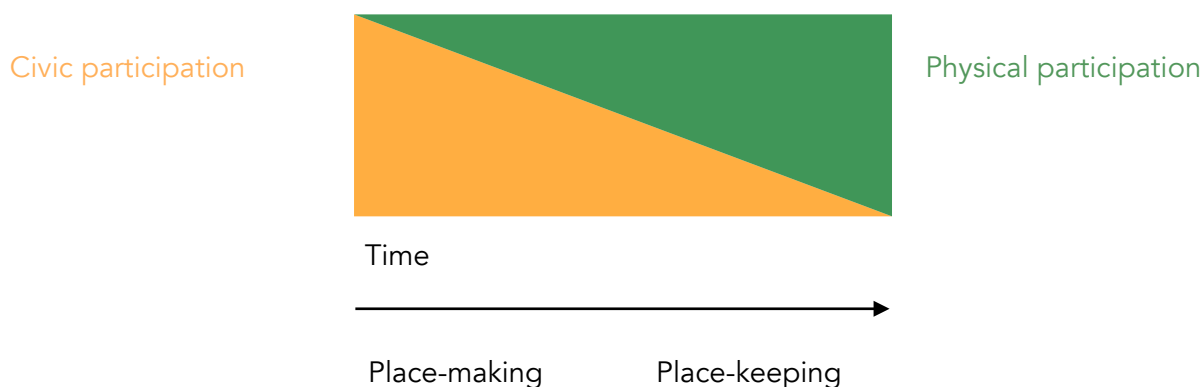


FIGURE 32: MODEL TO DEPICT CITIZENS' PARTICIPATION IN HYLLIEVÅNGSPARKEN WITH TIME

At the beginning, in the place-making phase, there is more civic participation in the form of the dialogue process, and, in the place-keeping phase, there is more physical participation (including usage). I am not arguing that this is the ideal model for citizen participation, I think physical participation requires civic participation.

Although it is a very simple model, it can be useful in thinking and planning as focus in the park shifts from place-making and into place-keeping. Historically, place-keeping has been overlooked and under-funded, and rather assumed it will continue to maintain what was implemented during the place-making phase (Dempsey et al, 2014).

In the case of Hyllievångsparken, there are many ideas in the Design Competition Guidelines and Nyréns Concept and Plot Studio's Design Guidelines that are yet to be realised. What follow is my personal evaluation of the factors that will influence citizens' participation in the place-keeping phase.

### *Clear strategic aims*

From my research, a pattern appears. A lot of work that has gone into citizen participation in the park and in many ways Malmö Stad achieved its aims with the Dialogue Process and the Design Competition. However, I haven't been able to identify clear strategic aims or goals related to citizen participation. Clear aims are needed, and will make future strategic planning and programming easier.

### *Budget and resources for place-making*

To achieve those strategic aims, there needs to be a budget and resources for citizen participation in the place-making phase. If not, it appears more like citizenwashing than meaningful participation (Martins et al, 2024).

### *Clear responsibility for citizen participation in the park*

There is a lack of clarity around who is responsible for citizen participation in the place-keeping phase (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025). This is important as it was one of Malmö Stad's aims of the park, and also a key theme in Nyréns Concept (Malmö Stad, 2017 [internal material]; Nyréns, 2018 [internal material]. Malmö Stad staff have done a lot of work around participation and they are the first to admit it has been challenging and it is now someone else's responsibility (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025).

### *Strategic partnerships with the citizens: establish a 'Friends of Hyllievångsparken' Group*

During my first meeting with Malmö Stad staff, one person mentioned setting up a Friends of Hyllievångsparken could be useful (meeting, MS2, MS3 & MS1, October 2024). This really surprised me as I thought this kind of group would have already been in place. I am basing much of this from my personal experience of designing and supporting a community food growing project in a public park in Brighton, UK. I've come to understand that these groups are more common in Great Britain than they are in Sweden.

A Friends group is a model, and a form, of partnership between local authorities or municipalities and "the community" (Burton and Mathers, 2014). Friends groups are usually voluntary groups made up of local residents who have an interest in a park or piece of land. Friends groups have different roles, depending on the group and the members. One of the benefits of the group is that efforts are better organised, and the municipality has a clear way of working with the community. A Friends group may run events or projects in a park, with permission from the authority or municipality. A Friends group may have sub-groups that focus on different areas or themes.

In the case of Hyllievångsparken, Malmö Stad may need to initiate this process through running some open meetings about the park. The Friends group could be a body Malmö Stad comes to with ideas and ask for feedback, vote on ideas. A Friends group can also organise and coordinate physical participation in the park: for example guided walks, or scything days, or harvest festivals. The Friends group could have different sub-groups for example, food growing, events, children's play, nature.

Given that most volunteer work in Sweden happens through an Association, I think a Friends group could be a good cultural fit. Friends groups are not without their challenges, and one is that they are not always representative of the community. A "certain type" of person is inclined to participate in this kind of way. If this isn't feasible, then other forms of partnership should be developed.

### *From New Public Management to New Public Governance: establish a Park Board*

Citizen participation in the park is demanding innovative changes for the governance and management of the park. One step would be to create a Park Board with representatives from the community, Malmö Stad, maintenance team and contractors, and potential other representatives like people from local housing association, schools or business. This Board would have more strategic and decision-making function. It would also for greater communication and co-ordination between different actors in the park.

### *Use throughout the year: temporary and dynamic*

I think usage of the park in the winter would increase if it was more dynamic. An example of this is 'The Heart of the Park' area. The cafe, greenhouse etc haven't been built yet, instead there are two volleyball nets. A good example of something temporary. However, I am not sure how well used these are during the summer, but no one used them during the two weeks I was in the park. This is unsurprising as it was both cold, and really exposed to the wind. What is more, it creates an 'out of season' feeling, that really it is a park designed to be used during the summer rather than all year round. I think it would be better if these were put up in late spring and were up until mid autumn, but then something else happens here at other times of year. The nets could be taken away and just be a sandy area for free play, or maybe it turns into an area to play boules in the autumn.

Unsurprisingly, I didn't see anyone picnicking in the picnic area either. What else could you do with this space at other times of year? A temporary larger dog park? This might appeal to the dog users, who were a consistent user group, especially as the one in the park has been gradually reduced in size with more plantings. Ideally one with a place humans could shelter when it is raining and windy. Even if the park isn't a 'besöksanläggning' I would hope more could be done that could be more 'dynamic' with 'temporary uses.

### *Continue citizens' participation in future iterations of the design*

Iterative Design is inherent to the concept 'The Park of the Future is Never Finished'. Given the aim that the park should meet the needs of the residents (Malmö Stad, n.d (b), I think citizens should continue to participate in future iterations: both in evaluation and also contributing ideas. However, alongside the Big Ears approach Malmö Stad is currently using (interview, MS2 and MS3, 2025) there needs to be a clearer, more open process more like the Dialogue Process with a focus group. The weakness of the Big Ears approach is that the views may be unrepresentative of the community, non-inclusive or at worst discriminatory (seminar, Douka, 2025).

### *From Urban Food Growing Association to Community Food Growing Project*

Based on my personal experience, I am not surprised that the Urban Food Growing Association is facing challenges, some of them (like waning interest in taking on committee roles) are common for these sorts of projects. But I think the context, both in Hyllie and being in a public park, brings

its particular challenges, and these are further compounded by the model, the location and the design of the site. When the project was first described to me, it struck me as a mini-allotment in the middle of a public park, next to a Pick Your Own area, without fencing or signs.

I agree with Malmö Stad that food growing can be a way to activate a site and build community. Personally, I think it would have been better, and could be better, if Malmö Stad used a different model. If the Association ceases to run, I think this could present an opportunity for a different kind of food growing project, where participation and community building take a more central role (and there may be less frustration when food is taken, which inevitably happens in such a project).

Instead of a Urban Food Growing Project it could be a Community Food Growing Project, with the explicit aim to build community and social integration. Malmö Stad could either employ or contract someone to run the project. For example, running weekly sessions during the growing season, and maybe fortnightly or monthly sessions during the non-growing season. The sessions could be for a few hours (day and time depending on target audience). The project leader could support volunteers from the community to come and tend the beds, harvest some of the produce and also socialise. With time, this could evolve into a self-governing project, if the community builds the organisation capacity and could access funding. I think this model would help community building in Hyllie, something that is particularly challenging in new towns. I also think that it would work better because of the location next to the Pick Your Own area.

Having worked in other community food growing projects, I would also change the design of the site to facilitate community building. Currently, there are two benches in the project area (see figure 22) but they are placed end on. An alternative could be to place the benches so they are facing each other, or to have a flexible seating area, or seats in a circle for either fika or meetings to be held. Other additional elements could facilitate community building like a table, fire pit or a bbq.

### *Clearer communication*

Regardless of how citizens participate in the place-keeping phase, I think it would be beneficial to have clearer communication in the park as well as online. When I first arrived at the park, I wasn't even sure if I was in the right place because there was no sign. Even though it isn't a visitor attraction, I think it would benefit from having a clearer visual identity, taking inspiration from Folkets Park, a map, signs, and information events, meetings and about how to participate. It would also be beneficial to have regular open meeting where the community to get updates from Malmö Stad. Finally, it would be beneficial if this information is also shared online, for those who live nearby but maybe don't go to the park as often. Information is necessary, and in Wilcox's model is the step step, towards substantial citizen participation (see figure 17) (Partnerships, n.d).

## Possible ways for citizens to participate in Hyllievångsparken: the future or futures of the park

When it comes to thinking strategically about the future of citizens' participation in Hyllievångsparken, I will use the Futures Thinking approach and some of the Foresight tools and methods (Seminar, Media Evolution, 2025, 11th February). The guiding questions are: how might

citizens civically and physically participate in the future of Hyllievångsparken, and how might Hyllievångsparken be governed and managed?

One of the principles of Futures Thinking is that The Futures Are Plural. As a result, instead of trying to identify the most likely future scenario, the aim is to develop multiple future scenarios based on Signals of change from the past, present and the future. Previously, I have done this process collaboratively with interdisciplinary teams, and it would be really interesting to do this with people involved in the park. However, for this dissertation, I have used various signals from my evaluation to develop three different future scenarios for the park ten years in the future. These are not comprehensive descriptions, but rather different possible futures of the park, depending on how place-keeping happens. These scenarios could be developed further using the different levels in Randrup and Persson's POU model (Figure 14), but that is beyond the scope of this discussion.

<b>Signal</b>	<b>Future 1</b>	<b>Future 2</b>	<b>Future 3</b>
<i>Strategic aims and processes for participation</i>	None	None	Clear aims around usage, user groups, seasons, etc
<i>Responsibility for participation</i>	Malmö Stad decides it's no one's role	Malmö Stad doesn't make a clear decision	Malmö Stad decides whose role it is- the participation coordinator's*
<i>Budget and resources for participation</i>	None	None	Clear budget, time allocated to participation
<i>Place-making to keeping transition</i>	Bumpy	Relatively smoothly	Smooth
<i>Participation co-ordination</i>	No one does this role. Everyone has too much to do	The place-keeping team take on some of this role. People do their best, but there is miscommunication	Liaises and coordinates with citizens, maintenance, and management.
<i>Strategic partnership with citizens</i>	No long-term, meaningful partnerships	Some partnerships but it's not strategic	Clear goals re partnerships with citizens and well-running partnerships
<i>Strategic programming</i>	No connection between monitoring, evaluation and programming. Haphazard.	No connection between monitoring, evaluation and programming. Haphazard.	Clear connection between monitoring, evaluation and programming. System for citizens to contribute with ideas.

<i>Events and programming</i>	Events decided and organised by Malmö Stad.	Events decided and organised by Malmö Stad.	Events initiated and organised by Malmö Stad and citizens.
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FIGURE 33: 3 FUTURES FOR HYLLIEVÅNGSPARKEN

1st May 2035

## Scenario 1

As it's a *röd dag* (bank holiday), I took the dog for a walk down to Hyllievångsparken today. It's not often I go there these days. It was a beautiful spring day, but it was windy, so there weren't many people in the park. The trees in the orchard were flowering, but it looked like some of the trees had been damaged since I was last here.

The area that used to be the Pick Your Own and the Urban Food Growing Project is now beds with spring flowers- nice flowers, but just flowers. Wonder what happened with that Food Growing Project?

I had hoped to grab a coffee at the café, but it was shut. There were some families in the playground, and the kids were having a great time climbing in the trees and running around.

The areas which were once meadows are now just grassy areas. It's a pity, it used to be so beautiful when it flowered, but I guess it was too much maintenance.

A group of teenagers were in the forest. Who knows what they were doing down there? Up to no good, I suppose. But maybe better that they are there than at Emporia... at least they are outside. The trees have grown so much over the last ten years, but one thing that hasn't changed is how much dog mess there is all over the park. Why can't people pick up after their dogs and throw it in the bin?

## Scenario 2

As it's a *röd dag* (bank holiday), I took the dog for a walk down to Hyllievångsparken today. It's not often I go there these days after everything that happened with the Urban Food Growing Project. It was a beautiful spring day, but it was windy. I got there and saw that there was a "Spring Festival" on. Funny, I hadn't seen or read anything about it. But I saw there was a guided walk through the orchard, so we eavesdropped a bit and then kept walking. All the raised beds that were the Urban Food Growing Project have been taken away since I was last here. Wonder what will happen there now? A few volunteers were planting out flowers in the Pick Your Own area. Nice to see kids getting involved. Speaking of kids...there were loads of them around the playground. It's as popular as ever! The Climbing Forest never really became very forest-y, but there were lots of kids in the tower, and there was a kids' activity going on... looks like they were making something out of willow... The cafe has opened again after its winter hiatus, but there isn't much growing in the raised beds. There were some people from Malmö Stad at a stall by the cafe asking about my ideas about the park, but I didn't really have much to say as I don't come here as often now that the kids are older. But it would be nice if there were more events for them, maybe a concert or something?

## Scenario 3

Yesterday we celebrated Valborg in the park. There was the usual bonfire in the picnic area. It's a lot of prep for the Meadows sub-group and Malmö Stad's maintenance team to gather the branches and old grass, but it also clears things up in time for spring. And after all that work, you really deserve to celebrate with some of last year's apple juice. Despite all the posters and posts on the website, it's also a great opportunity to talk to people about the Spring Festival that kicks off on Saturday.

It's so nice to carry on this tradition. Every Saturday during May there are different events in the park. There are guided walks in the orchard, groups plant out the summer flowers, and all the raised beds getting some extra TLC before the seedlings grown in the greenhouse are planted out. Hopefully the weather will be good, because after a long winter it's so nice to see people sitting out on their blankets and picnicking.

These sorts of events wouldn't be possible without the partnership between Malmö Stad's Participation Co-ordinator and the 'Friends of Hyllievångsparken' group. The group was started years ago, and now it is well-established with different sub-groups for different areas and themes like the Meadows group, the Food group and the events group. The group meets every month in the cafe, and there are always representatives from Malmö Stad there sharing updates and contributing to the ideas.

Three members of the Friends group sit on the Hyllievångsparken's Park Board, along with representatives from Malmö Stad, including the maintenance team, as well as local businesses, schools and other interested groups. The Board contributes to decisions about the management and maintenance of the park. The Park Board meetings are held quarterly in the cafe, and non-board members are allowed to attend. Every autumn, they carry out an evaluation of the park, and then in the winter, when there is less physical work to do in the park, the Design Group develop the strategic plans for the year ahead.

Yes, it's a lot of meetings and work, but it feels worth it when you look back on photos from 10 years ago and then look at the website with the calendar for the year ahead. So much has happened since then! In many ways, the park still looks the similar to when it was first implemented... the same trees, just much bigger, the same playground, the same stream- but now it feels like our park rather than a park made for us.

## Reflections on public parks and landscape architecture

### *Are we asking too much of our public parks?*

It seems like the list of aims for our public parks is growing ever longer and longer. They have gone from being a place to stroll and meet friends, to a place to combat squalid living conditions and inebriation, to nowadays doing all of that a a whole lot more (Nolin, 1997, Folkets Hus och Parker (n.d.))! Are we asking too much of our public parks? If they are to meet all these aims, then these aims need to be prioritised into strategic plans and management.

### *Can a public park really be for everyone?*

I understand the political will to be for everyone, but in reality different user groups are prioritised through design decisions and through funding. Instead of aiming for it to be a park for everyone,

it may be easier to say that it is a park for the local residents. In the latter case, this can be defined and through an iterative design process and programming tweaks can be made to aim to for the users to be representative of the community.

*When is a design too innovative?*

Malmö Stad's aim was that Hyllievångsparken would be The Park of the Future, and that the for a design proposal would be innovative. But with innovation comes challenges. There is value in utopian visions and striving for innovation, but when is something too innovative? Is it too innovative when there aren't the necessary innovations and resources for the management and maintenance?

*Is there too much focus in landscape architecture on the design and not enough of the management and maintenance?*

On numerous occasions during my masters I've felt there is a hierarchy within landscape architecture: at the top are the skilled designers, and at the bottom the unskilled maintenance crews at the bottom, and managers somewhere in the middle. Where are the awards and prizes for managers and maintenance teams? But aren't designs without adequate management and maintenance are just pretty pictures, utopian fantasies that are nice to imagine but impossible to realise?

## Reflections on the process

You, and I, are coming to the end of this dissertation so now feels like an apt moment to reflect on the process.

## The value of the initial observational study for Malmö Stad

At various stages of this dissertation, I have questioned whether Malmö Stad wanted and/or valued an observational study. At one point, a member of staff mentioned that they had written the proposal a while ago, in a way that suggested it wasn't as relevant now. Malmö Stad also commissioned Afry to conduct a mid-way evaluation of the park. Citizen participation wasn't the focus of their evaluation, but it came up (Afry, 2025). Just before I was going to carry out the observational study, I asked if they wanted any particular data, and the reply was vague, saying some descriptions of usage would be useful. Equally so when I asked what information they wanted me to present back to them. After having presented it to them, I heard from another student that they thought it was 'the wrong time of year' for the study. Although I learnt a lot from observing the site and participants, this isn't exactly what you want to hear after having spent two weeks standing in a park in December and January. Maybe as a result of this, my dissertation focus broadened. I hope that Malmö Stad will find some use in the results.

## The process

People at Malmö Stad have been supportive and helpful. They sent me documents that turned out to be key, and I don't know how or if I would have been able to access them without their help. They also invited me on a guided visit, introduced me to the team from Afry, invited me to attend Afry's presentation of their evaluation, and sent me their report. A member of staff invited me to join a meeting about participation with other people at Malmö Stad. I am very grateful for their help and support, and I am also aware that they may, inadvertently, have acted as gatekeepers. This, in turn will have impacted this research.

## The observational study

I have had many reflections about the observational study. One of the critical reflections, and something I would like to do differently in the future, is the choice of the user group categories. At times, it was difficult to identify the correct category. When is someone a 'senior'? How do you tell if someone is 'walking through' the park or going for a walk?

## Further Research

Although this piece of research is coming to an end, there is further research that could be carried out. Despite my previous reflections, I think the observation could be repeated at different times of year to develop a better understanding of usage, and it could also be repeated before and after one-off events to compare usage. Another piece of research could be an evaluation of the park by users, through a focus group and interviews. Finally, further research could be done on citizens' participation in the place-keeping phase.

# Conclusion

At the start of this research, I wanted to learn more about how landscape architecture works in practice. What started as a 2-week observational study of how a park is used has evolved into an evaluation of the different types of citizens' participation during the place-making and place-keeping phases. At the end, I can look back and see just how much I have learnt, and how much I have left to learn. Thankfully, I am equally (if not more) fascinated in it and all its complexities, now compared to at the beginning.

Hyllievångsparken appealed to me because it sounded like the sort of place I believed we should be striving towards. Having studied how public parks could tackle society's wicked problems, I wanted to understand if this was happening in practice. Unsurprisingly, not all of the aims and visions have been achieved, and many challenges lie ahead for citizens' participation in the place-keeping phase of the park. I now have a deeper understanding of the challenges of achieving innovative aims and utopian visions, and just how critical a theoretical understanding of governance and management is to realising them.

While this dissertation has focused primarily on what happens inside the park, it would be remiss of the geographer in me not to zoom out a little. All around the park, construction continues. New flats, schools, and businesses continue to be built. Zoom out a little more, and we see Hyllie is on the outskirts of Malmö, an ethnically very diverse Swedish city. Zoom out a little more, and we see that Hyllie is the first/last stop on the train line between Denmark and Sweden. People stepping of the train here may live in Hyllie but may work in another country. All these factors impact citizens' sense of community and belonging, as well as their willingness and ability to participate. This context create specific challenges for citizen participation in this park. This context also means that a project like this is even more needed. For Malmö Stad to continue to achieve its aim of a park that meets residents' needs, Malmö Stad must continue with citizens civic and physical participation into the place-making phase.

At the end of this research, I believe for landscape architecture to achieve its more ambitious aims, there needs to be an increased collaboration between design, maintenance and management; between place-making and place-keeping, between theory and practice. Innovative designs without effective maintenance and management, won't be fully realised and they will remain expensive, pretty drawings, which is not what the world needs right now. Equally, maintenance and management needs to become more innovative to achieve increasingly ambitious aims. Landscape architecture must continue to strive to become more collaborative and interdisciplinary, in both theory and practice.

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# Appendix

## Appendix 1: Malmö Stad's Dissertation Proposal (in Swedish)



Malmö stad  
Fastighets- och gatukontoret

1 (1)

### Förslag till examensarbete, Hyllievångsparken

Hyllievångsparken är Malmös nyaste stadsdelspark och ligger i Hyllie i södra Malmö. Den är utvecklad i nära samarbete med de boende i området. Parken är tänkt att utvecklas vidare utifrån de boendes behov. Därför vill vi på Fastighets- och gatukontoret i Malmö veta mer om hur parken används idag.

Vi vill därför föreslå ett examensarbete med inriktning på att beskriva hur parken används. Vi tror att examensarbetet blir mest givande och mest användbart om det är väl avgränsat. Ur vårt perspektiv skulle det vara intressant att få en bild av hur parken används under en avgränsad tidsperiod, till exempel två veckor någon gång under året. Vi tror därför att en observationsstudie av parken kan vara en bra metod, det vill säga att studera vilka platser i parken som används, vilka typer av besökare som använder platserna, hur de används, osv.

Är du intresserad av att göra ett examensarbete om parken får du gärna höra av dig till Eva Delshammar ([eva.delshammar@malmo.se](mailto:eva.delshammar@malmo.se)) på Fastighets- och gatukontoret, Malmö stad.



## Appendix 2: Actors

In alphabetical order

<b>Name</b>	<b>Organisation, role</b>
Afry	Consultancy. Contracted to do a midway evaluation of the park. (Afry, 2025)
ÅF	Consultancy firm. Merged and later became Afry.
Ekologigruppen	Employee-owned consultancy group. Involved in developing the concept with Nyréns
Nyréns Arkitekter (Nyréns)	Won the design competition. During the process they closed their Malmö office, but the landscape architects involved in the park started Plot Studio.
Plot Studio	Landscape Architects firm. Took over from Nyréns

# Appendix 3: Information about the Observational Study

Hedvig Murray  
6th December 2024

## Hyllievångsparken data collection: an observation study

### Objectives

- To observe how different parts of the park are used
  - To identify the types of visitors in each area
  - To count the number of visitors per type in each area
- To compare how different parts of the park are used
  - The same area at different times
  - The same area on different days
  - The same area during the holidays/not
  - Different areas at the same times of day
  - Different areas on different days
  - Different areas during the holidays/not



### Methods

#### Systematic Observation

Utilising coding and a strict observational schedule, researchers observe participants in order to count how often a particular phenomenon occurs

If visitors notice someone who looks like they are doing research/"looks official" there is a risk that they might alter their behaviour. Therefore, the intention is to look and behave like a regular park user. For ex. instead of using a clipboard, I intend to record data on my phone.

How

2-week data collection

- 1 week in December (not during the Christmas holidays) week 50-51 (exact dates TBC)
- 1 week in January (during the Christmas holidays) weeks 1-2 (exact dates TBC)

December and January are colder and darker months of the year. The hypothesis is there are fewer visitors at this time of the year compared to the summer. The hope is that this method could be repeated at other times of the year, and this dataset could be used as a baseline.

### Schedule

Initially: 8 am, 10 am, 12 pm, 2 pm, 4 pm.

Could be reduced to 8 am, 12 pm, 4 pm

6 minutes in each location with 4 minutes to walk to the next location and find a spot

## *Locations*

1. *Fruktlunden med Pallarkojan*
2. *Flexibel odlingsyta*
3. *Parkens hjärta/Biergarten*
4. *Temalekplatsen*
5. *Picknickplatsen*
6. *Framtidsskogen*

## *Equipment*

- Phone
- Battery
- Cushion
- Thermos

In case people ask questions

- School ID
- Letter?

## *Potential user groups based on previous site visits*

- People walking dogs
- Parents/childcarers
  - Walking with pushchairs
  - Children playing
- Exercising/Joggers/tai-chi
- Young adults
- Seniors
- Other
  - People just walking through the park- no obvious activity,

## *Variables:*

- Weather
- Daylight length (lighting)
- Weekday/weekend
- Holiday/not

## *Limitations*

- Double counting: same people in different parts of the park.

## *Future Research*

While conducting the systematic observation, there might be the possibility to do some Participant Observation (i.e. in "real-life" settings where the researcher immerses themselves in the participant group over a period of time). This qualitative data collection, as well as the quantitative data from the systematic observation, could be used to identify particular users or user groups who could be interviewed in the future for more in-depth research.

Text to be copied and pasted

## Data Collection

Day            M T W T F S S

Location      1 2 3 4 5 6

Time

User Group	Number	Notes
People walking dogs		
Children with carer		
People exercising		
Young adults		
Seniors		
Walking through park		
Others		

Locations: 1. *Fruktlunden med Pallarkojan* 2. *Flexibel odlingsyta* 3. *Parkens hjärta/Biergarten* 4. *Temalekplatsen* 5. *Picknickplatsen* 6. *Framtidsskogen*

### *Other data to be collected*

- The weather on the day
- State which app was used
- The time of sunrise and sunset

The data collection form for the observational study

Date Time Weather	Area 1 Fruktlu nden	Area 2 Flex. odling	Area 3 Biergart en	Area 4 Lekplats en	Area 5 Picnicko mrådet	Area 6 Framtid ensskog	Notes
Dog walker							
Children with carer							
Exercising							
Seniors							
Young adults							
Walking through							
Other							
Total							

## Appendix 4: Key Terms in Swedish and English

Besöksanläggning	Visitor attraction. Term used within Malmö Stad to a place, like a park, with activities. For example, Folkets Park. Often these have more staffing and a specific budget for these activities.
Delutvärdering	A mid-way evaluation
Drift	
Exploatering	
Förening	Association
Gestaltningprogram	Design guidelines
Målbild	Project vision
Stadsdel	The area of the city, district
Stadsdelspark	Park but often the biggest in the area
Stadsodling	Urban food growing
Stadsodlingsförening	Urban food growing association, with a community not commercial focus. Also referred to as a community food growing association
Tävlingsprogram	Design competition
Underhåll	

## Appendix 5: Timeline

2017

- Design competition
  - Malmö Stad develop the design competition
- Dialogue process
  - Workshop 1 9th and 20th November 2017
  - Workshop 2 7th December 2017
- Start with food growing

2018

- August Nyréns Arkitektkontor win the design competition
- Workshop 3 18th October 2018 presentation of the concept design

2019

- Development of the *gestaltningsprogram* and contracting

2020

- Autumn Implementation of Stage 1 begins

2021

- Summer Implementation of Stage 1 completed
- 24th June Opening of Stage 1

2022

2023

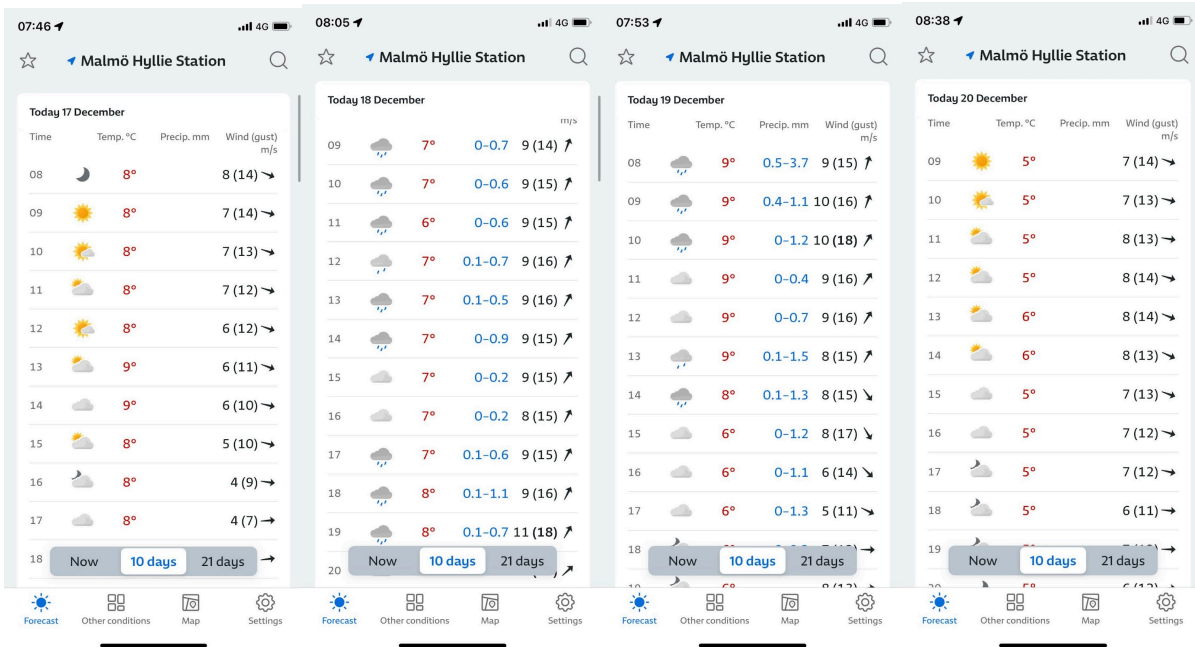
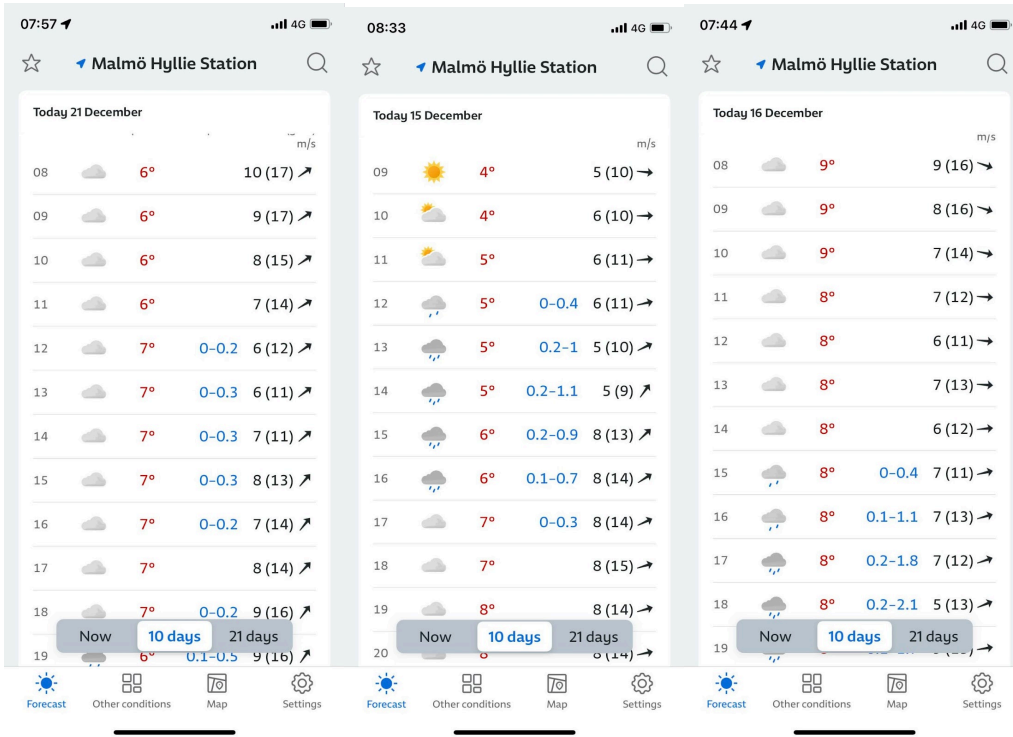
- Themed playground opens

2024

- May nominated for *Stadsbyggnadspriset*
- September won *Stadsbyggnadspriset*

# Appendix 6: weather during the observation study:

## Week 1



# Week 2

