



# Let's bike in the countryside!

Organised bike tour through local nature and history to sense of place and community

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Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences, SLU  
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# Let's bike in the countryside! Organised bike tours to explore local nature and history for sense of place and community

*Låt oss cykla på landet! Organiserade cykelturer för att utforska lokal natur och historia för att skapa en känsla av plats och gemenskap*

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## Abstract

**Background:** Several factors contribute to health and well-being, including physical activity in nature, and personal connections with meaningful places and local communities. Cycling is a popular leisure activity in everyday life, serving for pleasure, relaxation and exploration, and is often practiced in company. However, little research has been conducted into cycling in rural areas and the attitudes, perspectives and needs of the local population. While previous research has focused primarily on urban areas, the availability of recreational areas in rural regions requires more attention. Rural areas are not naturally conducive to satisfying and emotionally enriching outdoor leisure activities, and many rural regions lack accessible and attractive recreational spaces. Visiting historical sites can make experiences more vivid and intense, thereby enhancing a region's appeal and recreational value. Local history can foster connections between people and places; however, further research is needed on the role of places and the physical environment in promoting a sense of community. Therefore, it is important to examine the advantages of organised activities that combine nature experiences with local cultural history, and their influence on sense of place and community.

**Aim:** This study explores how an organised outdoor activity in places of local cultural heritage contributes to a sense of place and sense of community and what meaning participants attribute to the natural and historical environments.

**Method:** Seven qualitative semi-structured interviews were conducted to explore the phenomenon of an annual rural bicycle orienteering. To gain a broader picture, participants were asked to depict their experiences and feelings using cognitive maps. For evaluation, an inductive, meaning-based content analysis was employed.

**Findings:** Participants were emotionally touched by learning about the local history and visiting the specific places. One's own existence became embedded in the living conditions of past generations, fostering a sense of place and community in the process. Visiting familiar places, but also discovering new ones, leads to spatial orientation and emotional attachment. The diverse rural landscape with varied natural features is appreciated. The event, as a social activity, deepens experiences and strengthens the sense of community. Navigating together to the checkpoints provides security, and participants can reflect on the local history together. Chats with locals can arise during the tour, and the event remains a popular topic of conversation afterward. Cycling is a popular leisure activity and an excellent way to explore places and landscapes. Together with orienteering, it is a captivating combination of physical and mental challenges, leading to a sense of fitness and accomplishment. Conscious exploration and slow immersion in the environment foster familiarity with the area and the development of local knowledge, which in turn strengthens sense of place and the community.

*Keywords: culture, countryside, place attachment, residents, cycling, orienteering, green activity, recreation*

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# 1. Background

## 1.1 Introduction

A challenge for society and local communities is to make life in rural areas attractive, vibrant, stimulating, satisfying and therefore sustainable. Above all, social and cultural factors are important here in terms of the emotional connection residents have to their hometown and community. Considering the lack of accessible and appealing local recreational areas in many rural landscapes, examining initiatives that aim to make a difference is interesting.

Therefore, I investigated an organised outdoor activity which brings participants into contact with local cultural places, and thus building and strengthening emotional connection to these places and to their community. The event under investigation focused on discovering cultural sites in natural surroundings by bicycle orienteering, an activity that offers people physical and mental benefits while simultaneously connecting them with nature. I wanted to test my assumption that the event was a sustainable activity to foster a strong emotional connection to places and the village community, thus significantly and positively advancing rural life.

As a social worker in Frankfurt, Germany, I was employed at an institution for unaccompanied minor refugees. Building relationships and organizing leisure activities were important tasks, often including stays and activities in nature as well as visits to cultural and historical sites. I noticed how this offered the young people relaxation and fun, gave them a lot of interesting information about their new living environment in a major German city and strengthened their social relationships with the staff and the other residents.

I came to Sweden in 2012 and have lived in the countryside ever since. I love nature, enjoy hiking and am interested in the history of the region and the stories connected to the places, people and events that have shaped the lives of the inhabitants and the landscape.

Later, during my tourism studies, I learned about the importance of cultural heritage sites not only for tourists, but also for locals in both urban and rural areas. The historical anchoring of cultural heritage, visible in places underline the attractiveness and authenticity of an area. Cultural heritage sites can give exciting insights into the history of a place, but also into the region or the country. They convey understanding and knowledge, meaning and value, and illustrate social

and cultural processes (Lindner 2015). Visiting cultural-historical sites can offer the opportunity to put yourself in the shoes of a person or situation and thus getting emotionally and intellectually involved. In this way, history is passed on and kept alive (Aronsson 2010). The connection to a specific person or an important event conveys authenticity and a relationship (Lindner 2015). Recognizable history can be educational and identity-forming and thus promote social development (Aronsson 2010).

The cultural cycle orienteering, which this study focuses on, takes place annually in a neighbouring village. It is an event that combines experiencing nature with discovering local cultural history. I know from personal experience that it can be difficult to find these places on your own and learn about their history, which is why I really appreciate being able to get to know these places as part of the tour. Through the uncomplicated approach, these bike tours are basically suitable for everyone and are primarily about getting out into nature and experiencing something beautiful and educational at the same time, without sporting performance or competition. Since the event is primarily aimed at residents and the tours therefore take place in the immediate vicinity of their homes, people get to know their own surroundings from a new angle. Each tour leads to a series of cultural and historical checkpoints that tell the story of the local history and allow participants to discover the extraordinary in the ordinary.

I learned about the cultural bike tour in my neighbourhood quite by chance and decided to give it a try to see if I liked it. Personally, I had never considered orienteering before, as I have no interest in competitive sports, especially not in connection with outdoor activities, and I wasn't aware that non-competitive orienteering events like this cultural bike tour did exist. When I was taking part, it quickly became clear that this particular type of bike orienteering combined many of my interests, and by the time I started my thesis, I had already participated four times, which means I completed a total of twelve laps of about twenty kilometres each and learned about 120 historical sites and their stories. I was surprised at the many wonderful opportunities for cycling tours off the beaten track and particularly fascinated by all the small but intriguing glimpses into local cultural history that can be found almost everywhere.

All this has sparked my desire to learn more about the experiences, feelings and thoughts of other participants through a study. To my knowledge, this event is unique in its format. The publication of the results will hopefully help ensure that this cycling tour continues in the future and can serve as a good example for other village groups to organize similar events.

## 1.2 Life in rural areas

As in many other countries, rural depopulation is a problem in Sweden (Tillväxtanalys 2009). The country has one of the lowest population densities in Europe. With a few exceptions, rural settlements are widely dispersed (Niedomysl & Amcoff 2011). Although there is no uniform definition of 'rural area' in Scandinavia or Sweden, low population density and distance from urban centres are the most common criteria. Accordingly, a rural area is defined as one that can be reached from urban areas with a population of more than 3,000 within five to 45 minutes by car (Nordregio 2010). In 2008, 21 percent of Sweden's population lived in rural areas (Tillväxtanalys 2009). Due to differing definitions, statistics from different sources are difficult to compare. However, to present more up-to-date figures, I am referring to data published by Statistics Sweden in 2020. According to their definitions, 12.4 percent of the population lives outside 'localities', which are defined as towns with more than 200 inhabitants (Statistiska centralbyrån 2020).

Living in the countryside is attributed to many advantages. Many associate it with a peaceful and quiet life close to nature, some small-scale farming, growing one's own food and perhaps an active outdoor life (Hammarlund 2025). For most, a key argument in favour of rural life is tranquillity, which makes it easier to relax or work creatively. Nordström & Mårtensson (2001) state that some people appreciate country life because it allows them to more easily pursue hobbies such as horseback riding, gardening or animal husbandry. Many perceive country life as healthier, more ecological and generally more natural, and many parents claim that the countryside is a better place for their children to grow up. People with a long history in the area have stronger ties to the community and the environment, show a commitment to the traditions of the place and a willingness to preserve old buildings and to do so with historical awareness (Nordström & Mårtensson 2001). According to Johnsson (2025) people in rural areas can feel connected to a place through the history of previous generations. Earlier generations often lived there under much harsh conditions. They worked hard, lived in very basic circumstances and struggled for survival. Looking at the lives of these earlier generations, people appreciate what they have today and recognize that they lead comparatively good and simple lives. When one's own situation feels difficult, comparing it to the lives of people who lived in the same place at different times can foster resilience (Johnsson 2025).

Another advantage of rural life is often seen in the village community, consisting of neighbours, family and friends, with whom one often celebrates festivals and

maintains traditions. Often, people and their families have known each other for several generations, and people help each other in a way that is not common in cities which creates a kind of invisible bond that provides a sense of belonging and security (Johnsson 2025). Traditionally, village life was based on sharing values and lifestyles, fostering a sense of belonging to the place and the residents. Nowadays, residents have different interests in the local community. People who have recently settled in rural areas for various reasons often live under very different conditions and may not find this type of village life attractive or natural (Nordström & Mårtensson 2001). And people who are not well integrated into close-knit communities may feel lonely and isolated (Skerratt et al. 2017).

Life in rural areas is difficult in many respects. Living conditions are limited by challenges such as lack of housing, inadequate services and insufficient infrastructure (Hammarlund 2025). The number of community centres, grocery stores, schools and providers of services and transportation is decreasing and the local labour market limited (Tillväxtanalys 2009). Marcen et al. (2022) also describe a lack of access to quality services, facilities and programs, particularly in healthcare. They observed lower life expectancy and poorer self-reported health status among the rural population. Rural areas have a higher proportion of elderly than younger people, perpetuating a vicious cycle of inadequate infrastructure and services. Even slight population growth can therefore be crucial for village development and infrastructure improvement (Tillväxtanalys 2009).

Another disadvantage in rural areas are limited possibilities for leisure activities, which restricts opportunities for social interaction and personal development (Skerratt et al. 2017). Physical activity and sport are generally seen as a means of maintaining health, preventing future illnesses and improving the quality of life. Ironically, it is city dwellers who most often use rural areas for outdoor activities in nature, rather than country dwellers (Marcen et al. 2022). This is another reason why it is interesting to examine leisure activities in rural areas: how do they relate to relationships with place and people? To answer this question systematically, I will draw on the concepts of a sense of place and a sense of community, as they offer additional benefits that I believe are important and valuable for residents of rural areas. I will discuss these two concepts in more detail later.

### 1.3 Outdoor recreation in rural areas

More people are seeking out nature for recreation and physical activity (Gladwell et al. 2013). Experiencing green spaces and nature during physical activity contributes significantly to health and well-being (Stoltz et al. 2023). Easy and

nearby access to suitable green spaces tends to reduce perceived exertion, increase motivation for physical activity and connect it with healthy everyday habits (Gladwell et al. 2013).

Lehto et al. (2022) point out that urbanization and intensive land use have led to a decline in green spaces for recreation worldwide. The limited availability of natural recreational areas restricts choices, even in rural areas, indicating a potential deficit in leisure activities. Therefore, it is important to identify the need for recreational opportunities. In many cases, incentives for outdoor activities are needed, for example through good recreational infrastructure. In addition to the basic provision of suitable and accessible green spaces, features such as paths, rest and picnic areas and viewpoints, as well as features that influence emotional aspects such as a sense of safety in the environment, positively influence the frequency of outdoor activities (Lehto et al. 2022).

There is an underestimation regarding the recreational value of rural nature, which may be reflected in the assessment of legally defined nature conservation objectives in Swedish nature reserves. Outdoor recreation is given low priority in the spatial planning of Swedish municipalities (McCullough et al. 2018), and the objective of "outdoor recreation" was even less frequently mentioned in rural areas than in connection with urban nature reserves (Borgström et al. 2013).

In his comprehensive literature review Skriver Hansen (2021) shows that the concept of recreational landscape often lacks a clear and detailed description of its meaning. In particular, a detailed attention to different landscape relations, human-nature encounters and the relationship between landscape and place is lacking. Furthermore, there is a need to include recreational landscapes systematically as a concept within landscape and outdoor recreation-related disciplines (Skriver Hansen 2021).

Lehto et al. (2022) state that research on the availability of recreational areas has primarily focused on urban and peri-urban areas adjacent to cities, while few studies have included rural areas. This may be based on the assumption that rural areas have a high availability of natural areas suitable for recreation. However, as many landscapes are characterized by intensive agriculture and forestry, this assumption may be misleading (Lehto et al. 2022).

A challenge for researchers to investigate actual preferred landscape patterns of recreation seekers is reported by Hörnsten and Fredman (2000), as people typically use the available landscape, with distance being the most influential factor. On average, the most common outdoor recreational activities take place one to two kilometres from home (Hörnsten & Fredman 2000). The complexity of

recreation encompasses diverse activities, needs and preferences. A green space with the characteristics of proximity and landscape alone is not sufficient to satisfy all recreation seekers. As spending time in high-quality green spaces has been shown to improve health, it is important to understand what determines their quality (Lehto 2024) and which factors most significantly influence their recreational use (Lehto et al. 2022).

Research in environmental psychology has made a significant contribution to recent work on place attachment and related concepts but has not always been optimally suited to capturing the affective nature of place relationships and environmental connectedness (Lewicka 2011). Subjective perceptions, attitudes and understandings of the environment that might influence any nature encounter still need to be better explored (Sebastien 2020). This also means that it is important to research how the surrounding landscape can be made as attractive as possible for recreational activities for people living in rural areas.

People prefer everyday leisure activities such as hiking, cycling and gardening, rather than competitive physical activities such as sports (Ten Brink et al. 2016). Nevertheless, in 2022, 45% of Europeans never exercised (European Union n.d.) and 31% of adults worldwide did not meet the recommended exercise levels, a trend that is increasing (World Health Organization 2024). Nature encourages people to be physically active (Ten Brink et al. 2016). Promoting the social and enjoyable benefits of physical activity appears to be successful in this regard. Pleasure, fun, escapism and the excitement of a challenge are good motivators for exercise in nature (Gladwell et al. 2013).

Cycling is a common leisure activity. Three characteristics are important to make places attractive for cycling: (1) the actual ride with regard to, for example, length, difficulty and type of route; (2) the supporting services along the route such as good maps and easy signage; and (3) nearby attractions like historical sites and cultural uniqueness, but also rural areas and scenery (Parks and Trails New York et al. n.d.). Most people cycle purely for recreational reasons, for exploration and relaxation. They experience fresh air, social companionship, adventure and challenges, and in result feel better and happier (Chang & Chang 2009).

McKibbin (2014) investigated cycling as a healthy and sustainable holiday activity, especially day trips that promote relaxation and increase well-being. A beautiful and diverse landscape is the most important feature of a destination. Other characteristics that make a good cycling environment include circular routes in flat rural areas with quiet, traffic-free roads and greenways, as well as

visits to interesting places with historical and cultural attractions (McKibbin 2014).

Cycling is typically studied in the context of sport, tourism or as a means of transportation (Lee 2014). As Kircher et al. (2022) point out, little is known about cycling in rural areas and the needs of the local population. Research and policy on cycling focus mainly on urban areas and the findings are not always transferable to rural areas. The potential for increased cycling in rural areas, particularly as a leisure activity for the local population, is likely high. Hence, further research about users' attitudes, perspectives and needs regarding various aspects such as route attractiveness and cycling as a social activity is essential (Kircher et al. 2022).

Orienteering is an international sport (CISM Europe 2026). The oldest and most popular discipline is foot orienteering. Today, there are other orienteering disciplines such as skiing and mountain biking. Using a map and compass, participants navigate between checkpoints in unfamiliar, usually wild terrain (Svenska Orienteringsförbundet 2016a). Locations chosen for orienteering events are often selected for their natural or man-made beauty, and already at the first public orienteering competition in Sweden in 1901, two historic buildings were among the checkpoints (CISM Europe 2025).

In contrast to orienteering as a competitive sport, the goal of recreational orienteering is to offer everyone the opportunity to be outdoors, engage in physical activity, discover new places, connect with friends and family and simply to have fun (Svenska Orienteringsförbundet 2016b). For this purpose, the Swedish Orienteering Federation organises national recreational programs like Naturpasset, Hitta ut and Motionsorientering (Svenska Orienteringsförbundet 2026a).

In the next section, I present my research case, which ties in with various aspects that are described as missing in the existing literature: recreational bicycle orienteering in rural areas.

## 1.4 The place and case of a cultural cycle orienteering

This study explores a unique recreational cycling orienteering organised by a village association in southern Sweden, designed to convey local cultural-historical knowledge to the local population. It takes place in a rural setting in the county of Scania. The village community comprises 24 hamlets (Pettersson 2025)

and has around 750 inhabitants, approximately 50 of whom reside in the village itself (Olsson & Söderberg n.d.).



Figure 1. The event's location in Scania, Sweden (© Lantmäteriet n.d.).

The landscape consists of wooded hills as well as less cultivated and grazed areas around lakes and streams (Länsstyrelsen Skåne n.d.). The topography was shaped by the ice sheet and is characterized by meltwater ridges, moraine shifts, valleys, hills, slopes, stones, boulders and frost-cracked rock fragments of varying sizes (Thorsted 2014). A popular local destination for both locals and tourists is a large lake with rich wildlife and bustling bird life, offering a variety of landscapes ranging from beech and mixed forests to spruce forests and open cultivated areas (Visit Hassleholm 2025).

The cultural landscape of the area was settled already in prehistoric time where farmers could find suitable pastures and hay meadows along rivers and lakes. Forested areas were also used for agriculture and livestock farming after being cleared by burning. In the vicinity of the village, there is an area with petrified prehistoric fields, and several large burial grounds testify to settlement in the early

Iron Age (Länsstyrelsen Skåne n.d.). The village was first mentioned in 1222 (Wahlberg 2003) and its stone church, which was built in the 12th century can still be admired today (Svenska kyrkan 2025). Place names provide insights into the region's long history. The most recent and common place names date back to pre-Viking times; others originate from the Viking Age or the Middle Ages. Larger villages were located on the plains, while isolated farms and smaller settlements were common in forested areas. Arable land lay outside the settlements, and further away were pastures and meadows. The resettlement reforms of the 19th century led to the dissolution of old village centres and the development of new agricultural areas, for example by lowering the level of lakes. New fields were cleared and the resulting dry-stone walls can still be seen today. Around 1860, the railway line was built, and larger settlements sprang up around the village, promoting industry, crafts and tourism, but also altering the old cultural landscape. Small farms were closed and former pastures and meadows reforested (Länsstyrelsen Skåne n.d.). Still, the cultural landscape is characterized by various relics of its long history, such as old houses, large farm trees to which mystical powers were attributed, stone walls and remains of former watermills (Thorsted 2014).

Since 2021, the village association, a non-profit organisation of residents dedicated to promoting and developing their hometown, has organised an annual cultural bike tour. Their primary mission is to care for and preserve local cultural and historical monuments. They also organise events, sometimes in collaboration with other local associations. The cultural cycling encourages the public to explore the surrounding area of the village via various cycling routes. Designed as orienteering, participants must use a map to find the checkpoints themselves. Although prizes are awarded for reaching all checkpoints, the focus is not on sporting competition, but rather on reaching the cultural-historical sites and discovering their history (Farstorps Bygdegård 2015; Pettersson 2025).

The entire route is divided into three circular tours, each around 20 km long and leading to ten checkpoints. There is a letter at each checkpoint which must be entered into an answer form to take part in the prize draw. An additional challenge is to create a solution set using all 30 letters, for which an extra prize is awarded. Each round starts from a different location, but all of them lead at least partially through the village or one of its 24 associated hamlets. The focus is on discovering the history of local cultural sites close to home and even taking participating residents to many places in their neighbourhood that they didn't know existed (Pettersson 2025).

Map packages are sold cheaply, often directly from sponsors such as local supermarkets and shops (Pettersson 2025). Around 150 map packages were sold in 2021, the first year of the event, which was evaluated positively, given the assumption that most packages are used by more than one person, or even larger groups (Farstorps Bygdegård 2015). In 2024, 176 map packages were sold (Vittsjo Bjarnum 2024) and in 2025 around 150 packages. Participants in the bike tour mostly came from the village itself, but also from surrounding villages and towns (Pettersson 2025).

The activity is suitable for both beginners and experienced outdoor enthusiasts of almost all ages. It is offered from mid-May to mid-September and can be completed by anyone at their own pace and at a time of their choosing, alone or with others. It's not necessary to cycle all the laps or to complete each lap in one go. In contrast to mountain bike orienteering, any bicycle can be used. The biggest difference from most other recreational orienteering activities is that each checkpoint is located at or near a local cultural and historical landmark, and the corresponding explanations, sometimes illustrated with photographs, are included in the maps (Bauler 2024). This allows participants to learn about the history of the places they visit. The tours usually take place on small forest and field paths. Occasionally, they venture onto the road for a while. They are mostly in nature, but sometimes pass through a village or, very rarely, a small town.

In my study, I interviewed seven people about their experiences and feelings during the bike tour. In the method section, I will explain the composition of the participants in detail. In the next section, I will first clarify the objectives of the study and the research question.

## 1.5 Theoretical Framework

### 1.5.1 Sense of place

Space becomes place through acts of meaning attribution, such as identification and naming. In phenomenological geography, which focuses on the subjective, lived experience of place and space, meaning is acquired directly and immediately through lived experience, for example through the senses of seeing, smelling, feeling and hearing. However, it can also be acquired indirectly and conceptually, through collective narratives, symbols and art. Manzo and Devine Wright (2019) emphasise that a place's identity is mutable and constantly evolving. Place identity is both individual and collective, shaped by the everyday interactions and sensory experiences of individuals and groups, as well as by its representation and

symbolic significance. According to Sebastien (2020), place is a space that acquires meaning through cultural processes, social bonds, feelings and emotions, associating spatial structures with people's experiences. Consequently, places facilitate and mediate social relations, conditioning identity formation and behaviour.

A sense of place encompasses the attitudes, meanings, values, beliefs, feelings and experiences that individuals and groups have towards a particular environment (Ellery & Ellery 2019; Manzo & Devine-Wright 2019), arising through meaningful emotional experiences (Lewicka 2011). Individuals' understanding of and relationship with a place can also be based on community attachment and local sentiment (Ellery & Ellery 2019). Sense of place consists of two interrelated aspects: the individual's relationship with a place and community attachment (Cross 2001). These strong emotional ties to specific places significantly impact health and well-being, providing safety, emotional stability, security and opportunities for reflection (Rajala et al. 2020), as well as a sense of belonging and identity (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2019).

Raymond et al. (2017) point out the importance of explaining the underlying processes of immediate sensory experience and intellectual abstraction that result in the emotional significance of places (Raymond et al. 2017). There is a need to research the meaning of environment and sense of place in the connection between spatial structures and human experiences (Sebastien 2020).

As the organisers of the cultural cycling want to highlight the unique history and importance of places near the participants' hometowns, I will examine which factors influence the participants' emotions and whether specific circumstances foster a stronger bond with the visited locations. If these places become meaningful to the participants, it is worth examining how this process occurs and how it affects their relationship with the village.

### 1.5.2 Sense of community

A sense of community is a social attachment to a community of place. People share a sense of connection and identity with a community through geographical locations such as neighbourhoods or other spaces that support social interaction (Scannell & Gifford 2010; Tartaglia 2006). Natural environments support social interaction; individuals develop feelings like sense of place or place identity which strengthens identification with the local community and thus creates a sense of community (Ten Brink et al. 2016).

Being part of a community gives support, protection and purpose and has been associated with better physical and mental health. One becomes more resilient, can better cope with stress and master difficult situations (Theisen 2021). People with a very strong sense of belonging to their local community were almost twice as likely to report having excellent or very good health compared to people with a weak sense of community (Ross 2002). Furthermore, community belonging and engagement improve quality of life and well-being by reducing anonymity, loneliness, depression, anxiety and stress, while increasing a stronger sense of identity and self-confidence (Michalski et al. 2020; Park et al. 2023). However, the role of place and the physical environment in community dynamics is rarely mentioned in literature and more research is needed (Sebastien 2020).

The two concepts briefly presented here, sense of place and sense of community, overlap considerably. Particularly important for my work is that it's not just about appropriating the natural environment, but also about developing a feeling for local spaces and establishing or deepening social relationships.

### 1.5.3 Cultural heritage

Cultural heritage are all tangible and intangible expressions of human influence, including traces, remains, objects, constructions, environments, structures, activities, traditions and knowledge. The cultural environment is part of cultural heritage and encompasses the entire natural or built environment that has been shaped to varying degrees by various human activities and practices. It can be specified and delimited and includes physical elements such as individual facilities or remains, a small or large section of the landscape, a village or region, but also intangible phenomena such as place names or legends (Riksantikvarieämbetet n.d.).

The presence of historical sites increases the recreational value of an area and the likelihood of people visiting it (Agimass et al. 2017). When recreational areas are located within cultural landscapes, the experience is perceived as more vivid and intense. It allows one to better understand the history and use of the area (Brügge & Sandell 2021). Factors such as roots, history and origin contribute to the formation of bonds. People who know the history of a place and how their origins are connected to it develop a stronger, more meaningful connection to it, as they can empathise with the past and understand how it has shaped the present (Manzo & Devine-Wright 2013).

Lee (2014) states that the influence of destination attributes on the experience and frequency of leisure cycling is insufficiently understood and researched. While nature has most often been evaluated as a landscape feature in the context of

outdoor activities, the value of cultural-historical sites is rarely explicitly mentioned and still needs further investigation (Lee 2014).

#### 1.5.4 Nature experience

As humans have an innate connection to nature and are inseparably linked to their environment (Gladwell et al. 2013) nature experiences are crucial for human well-being (Bratman et al. 2019; Hartig et al. 2014). Even short visits to nature enhance positive emotions, provide a variety of direct and indirect health benefits and promote social cohesion (Ten Brink et al. 2016).

Nature offers great potential for promoting physical activity, as natural spaces provide attractive, accessible and social environments for everybody (Ten Brink et al. 2016). Physical activity in green spaces leads to positive short- and long-term health effects (Hartig et al. 2014; Ten Brink et al. 2016). Nature provides an environment that does not require our direct attention and therefore has stress-reducing and thus restorative properties. This promotes the restoration of attention, recovery from mental fatigue and allows for greater mental health (Gladwell et al. 2013).

Natural environments provide places for social interaction and therefore promote identification with the local community and greater community connectedness. Furthermore, the social benefits of nature experiences include social empowerment, social cohesion, social support, social capital, social inclusion and reduced social tensions (Ten Brink et al. 2016).

## 2. Aim

The aim is to explore how recreational cycling orienteering in a rural landscape can convey meaning, sense of place and sense of community to participants.

Research questions are:

1. What meaning do participants attribute to the natural and cultural-historical environments?
2. How does the activity contribute to participants' sense of place and sense of community?
3. What is the interplay between sense of place and sense of community?

## 3. Method

### 3.1 Research design

Environmental psychology takes a holistic approach, viewing humans and their environment as an inseparable system that influences and is influenced by the other. This discipline emphasises understanding the bigger picture as it integrates physical, social, cultural and psychological factors (Gifford 2014).

Qualitative methods are used to gain an in-depth understanding of the content of an experience and to explore the meaning of a phenomenon (Sebastien 2020). Therefore, adopting a phenomenological approach, I aimed to understand how people experience an organized recreational cycle orienteering in their living environment, including cultural-historical knowledge transfer on-site.

As part of an exploratory study to investigate the under-researched specifics of recreational bicycle orienteering in rural areas, I conducted qualitative interviews to gain deep, nuanced insights into participants' behaviours and emotions, as well as to capture the range of meanings they ascribe to places and how these meanings arise through experience (Sebastien 2020). My epistemological strategy for obtaining the necessary knowledge includes first the interpretation of specific individual narratives into patterns, themes and actionable findings. This is followed by inductive reasoning to derive theories and conclusions (Capella University n.d.).

The question of sample size depends primarily on whether relevant findings have been obtained, and phenomenological research can achieve representativeness and generalizability with a small number of participants. However, a study based on the phenomenological method should include at least three participants (Englander 2012). Ultimately, the number of interviews I conducted was seven. As two consecutive interviews did not yield any significant new insights, I decided that this number was sufficient. Apart from the interviews, the interviewees were also asked to create cognitive maps to visualize their experiences (George 2023).

Englander (2012) emphasises that personal life context, including aspects such as age and gender, can be essential in determining the perceived meaning of a phenomenon. While it would have been interesting in my study to interview a broad range of people as possible to obtain a broad range of perspectives, due to the limited number of participants, anyone with the necessary experience was

welcome to attend (Englander 2012). Furthermore, it should be noted that, due to the older demographic of rural residents and the nature of the event, a particular age group may feel particularly addressed and attracted.

## 3.2 Sample

Apart from the interview with the chairman of the organizing association, a total of seven participants of the event were interviewed in the context of the study. The only requirement for participation in the interview was that individuals had taken part in at least one of the five cultural cycle orienteering events between 2021 and 2025. It was not necessary for participants to have reached a checkpoint, completed a full circuit, or participated in a specific year. I also asked all interviewees to draw a cognitive map of the bike tour, and everyone except one person did so.

In my interviews, I hoped to speak with enough people to ensure that the group of participants in the cycling event was representative in terms of diversity and range of demographic characteristics, as well as opinions, feelings and perspectives. It turned out that mostly older women, who had lived in the village for a long time, responded to my request. After my third attempt to find potential interviewees, I decided to stop, as the probability of finding someone with a completely different background, different demographic characteristics or new unique experiences with the cycling event seemed low.

*Table 1. An overview of interviewees with demographic and spatial information and facts in relation to their participation in the cultural cycling and the interview.*

<b>Alias</b>	<b>Years of participation</b>	<b>Gender</b>	<b>Age</b>	<b>Village resident</b>	<b>Duration residence</b>	<b>Date of interview</b>	<b>Duration interview</b>	<b>Cognitive map</b>
Astrid	2021 - 2025	female	69	yes	44 yrs.	07.07.2025	53 min	yes
Erik	2022 - 2025	male	70	no	ca. 60 yrs.	11.07.2025	51 min	yes
Hamah	2022 - 2025	female	59	yes	ca. 25 yrs.	31.07.2025	35 min	yes
Lena	2021 - 2024	female	69	no	ca. 40 yrs.	31.07.2025	41 min	yes
Oscar	2021 - 2025	male	76	yes	76 yrs.	05.09.2025	26 min	no
Ronja	2021 - 2025	female	50	yes	8 yrs.	07.09.2025	24 min	yes
Selma	2021 - 2025	female	74	yes	ca. 50 yrs.	17.09.2025	48 min	yes

## 3.3 Interviews and cognitive maps

Each individual experiences their own reality. Semi-structured interviews are best suited to study the existence of multiple realities, the self-constructions and narratives of respondents, as different individuals or groups may perceive the

same phenomenon in diverse ways (Capella University n.d.). Seven semi-structured interviews with participants of the bike event were conducted in 2025. The recorded interviews lasted between 24 and 56 minutes. However, during the recordings, occasional short, more private conversations took place, for example when the interviewees asked me questions on my personal background. Occasionally, after creating a cognitive map, the interviewees added further oral information about the bike tour. This part of the conversation is not included in the time measurement.

Although one participant had consented to the audio recording, she initially seemed somewhat hesitant. However, she then spoke openly and with interest about her feelings and thoughts relating to the bike tour. She even allowed herself to leave a question unanswered initially and come back to it later in the conversation. After the recording device was switched off, she shared some additional thoughts about the bike tour. Once she had created the cognitive map, she explained it to me in detail of her own initiative.

After the interview, participants were asked to create a cognitive map of their tour, representing personal perceptions and memories. A cognitive map, also called mental map, is primarily a subjective psychological construct, but can also be represented as a physical map (ESRI n.d.). People's attachment to a place is also cognitive in nature, encompassing knowledge, beliefs and memories about the place, its inhabitants and the events that have taken place there. These give the place meaning, creating a mental representation of it. This personal visualization of spatial information includes structural and symbolic aspects, knowledge of the routes, personal experiences, emotions or views and other information, such as the history of the place and its special features (Denomme 2026, Scannell & Gifford 2014). The participants were free to choose how they presented their experiences. Their cognitive map could include physical features as well as perceived characteristics of a place, depict a larger area or a detail, be accurate or abstract, coloured or black and white, with or without written words. To create a cognitive map was entirely voluntary.

### 3.4 Data analysis

The interviews were evaluated using meaning-based content analysis, in qualitative research is a key method for analysing interviews. Interpreting the narratives of the participants in order to understand the underlying feelings, thoughts and experiences included a critical rephrasing that went beyond what was said and also took into account the interviewees' behaviour which was

recorded as field notes during and after the interviews, such as laughing, considering, hesitating, agreeing, nodding and pointing at something.

By paraphrasing the statements in a broader frame of reference and partially expanding the original text, also through the behaviour documented in the field notes, structures and relationships of meaning could be identified that were not immediately apparent in the text (Braun & Clarke 2006, Caulfield 2023).

After rephrasing the statements, I employed a general form of data analysis including coding and a subsequent step of inductive categorisation. In line with how Brinkmann and Kvale (2015) describe this type of qualitative data analysis, relevant meaningful units are identified and assigned keywords, this means considering the specific objectives of the study. These codes helped to structure and classify the narratives, making them understandable and comparable. The interviewees' statements were then divided into overarching categories that comprehensively reflected their experiences and meanings and allowed for inferences based on individual experiences to achieve more general validity. Similarities and differences were taken into account, and the texts and codes were repeatedly reviewed. While the analysis was initially more descriptive, it evolved into a more analytical procedure through repeated review and the incorporation of new assumptions and insights (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015). The material on each topic was then summarised and representative quotes reproduced for illustration purposes (Braun & Clarke 2006, Caulfield 2023).

The cognitive maps were evaluated using qualitative content analysis. Following Lynch (1960), this involved identifying the sketched elements, such as locations, paths, areas and intersections. Subjective emphases were also considered, for example which locations were depicted larger, in greater detail or more centrally. Finally, omissions were an interesting feature, revealing what was not represented, as this indicates low relevance or lack of knowledge. The aim was to clarify the dominant inner image for the participants in the cultural bike tour as a supplement to their narratives in the interview. If the individuals also gave oral explanations, I subsequently noted these down and included them in my analysis. Consequently, the analysis primarily consists of describing the depicted elements and scenes, which can then highlight certain aspects such as nature, social dynamics or structures.

### 3.5 Procedure and implementation

Following Brinkman and Kvaales (2015) procedure for conducting research interviews, I started with finding an interesting case with unexplored potential for interesting insights. The preliminary work for this study involved reviewing the relevant literature to establish the current state of research and potential areas for future investigation, and to identify applicable theoretical frameworks. For the literature search, I used publicly accessible sources and academic databases such as Google, Google Scholar, the university's library and the bibliographies of relevant articles. I searched for current studies and findings, particularly those of the most renowned authors in the field. However, there are only a few studies on my topic and some of the established theories were developed some time ago. Therefore, I also included relevant older articles. Due to the study's location in southern Sweden, the focus is strongly on Northern Europe. Although Swedish studies have received particular attention, a large proportion of international and English-language publications provide a broad geographical scope and comprehensive overview of the topic. The search terms were initially based on the objective and research questions but evolved during the reading and writing process as my understanding deepened and the scope of relevant concepts and theories became clearer. The key concepts, terms and theories presented there, which are related to my research, formed the basis for specifying the objective and research questions, as well as for developing the interview guide. The literature also provided insights into the potential significance of the event for the participants, with the intention of minimising bias and subjectivity in the results (George 2023).

The bicycle orienteering being studied appears to be unique in its focus on transmitting local cultural and historical knowledge. I was unable to find any literature on this specific topic. The better-known recreational bicycle orienteering events in Sweden are 'Skoj på hoj' and 'Cykeltrim' (OK Gynges n.d.). However, these do not focus on cultural and historical knowledge. Similar events involving free choice of transport include 'Hitta ut' (Svenska Orienteringsförbundet 2016b) and 'Naturpasset' (Svenska Orienteringsförbundet 2016b). A search for studies on these events also proved unsuccessful.

To gather as much background information as possible on the five cycle orienteering events to be held between 2021 and 2025, I conducted an online search. This yielded information on event announcements, the number of map packages sold, lists of prize draw winners and newspaper articles. I then expanded my search at the local library and online to add information about the location, its history and the natural environment.

In March 2025, first I contacted the chairman of the organising village association via text message and then followed up via email to introduce myself and inform them about my upcoming study. I also asked for the bicycle package for the first tour in 2021, assistance in recruiting tour participants as interviewees, advice on wording or content of my recruitment flyer to tour participants and agreement on distributing that flyer in the 2025 map package. I happened to meet the chairman twice in other contexts and took the opportunity to chat briefly and informally with him about the bike tour. In September 2025, immediately after the final event, I conducted a semi-structured interview with the chairman to gather more information from the organisers' perspective. This interview was scheduled for later in the year to prevent the organisers from revealing information about my study to potential interviewees in advance, which could have distorted the results. At the same time, I received the 2021 map set. I already had the remaining map sets, as I had completed these tours myself in the years 2022 to 2025. My own participation gave me a good understanding of the event, the various checkpoints and the surroundings and I was able to refer back to my photos and memories.

To understand the significance of the phenomenon under investigation from the participants lived experience and to ensure the research was reliable and valid, the entire process was carefully planned and conducted according to Brinkman and Kvale's (2015) methodology. Their seven-step approach to conducting research interviews includes thematizing, designing, interviewing, transcription, analysis, verifying and reporting. The interview process was defined, including decisions regarding the number of participants, participation criteria, recruitment strategies, potential interview locations, recording method and ethical guidelines (Brinkman & Kvale 2015). An interview guide was developed (Appendices XI, XII), which included an introduction to the interview process and thematic chapters containing relevant research questions and possible follow-up questions. This also provided an indication of the potential duration of an interview. The questions were designed to encourage detailed responses, facilitate further questioning and enable thorough subsequent analysis of the meaning behind the responses (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015).

The first two interviewees probably contacted me because of my flyer (Appendices V, VI), which the organisers included in the map package purchased by participants of the event. Two more people contacted me after my first Facebook post on 29 July 2025 in two local resident groups (Appendices VII, VIII), in which I provided more information about my study. A further three people responded after my second Facebook post on 4 September 2025 (Appendices IX, X). I met everyone at their homes, with one exception; one interview took place outside the village community centre. To ensure the

respondents' memories were fresh and clear, and therefore valid (Brinkman & Kvale 2015), the interviews were conducted as soon as possible after their participation in the 2025 event. Participants were also encouraged to share their experiences of the previous cultural cycling events. The interviews took place in July and September 2025. At the beginning of each interview, I introduced myself and explained the context and purpose of the study, the anticipated duration of the interview and how the data would be processed. With the respondents' consent, I recorded the conversations on my mobile phone. I started the interviews by asking a general question to stimulate conversation. After that, I followed the interview guide, adapting flexibly to the flow of the conversation. They were then asked to create cognitive maps, and six of them did so. After the interview, I made notes about my observations of the situation, mood and atmosphere, as well as the interviewee's behaviour. The interviews were transcribed immediately afterwards.

The interviews were evaluated to gain an overall impression, to identify the units of meaning expressed by the interviewees, to reproduce the dominant theme as simply as possible, and to analyse it with regard to the purpose of the study. Meaning analysis needs a good familiarisation with the data. I therefore read each transcript thoroughly, paying particular attention to the emotional and cognitive descriptions of the different locations and sections of the tour, as well as the social encounters, in order to understand the impact of the activity on the participants' perceptions, and their emotional connection to place, cultural heritage and local community (Braun & Clarke 2006; Caulfield 2023). To ensure the validity of the analysis, the interviews were interpreted in two steps: (1) self-understanding, a concentrated formulation of the interviewee's own interpretation of the statement and their perspective; (2) common sense, a rather critical interpretation of the content and also of the person (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015).

To verify the results, I checked for consistency and compared with existing research findings. I critically examined my own biases, provided comprehensive context to enable readers to assess generalisability and documented the entire research process transparently and comprehensively. The results were presented in a section tailored to the readers by using quotes to make the results clearer and more authentic and to distinguish my interpretations from the individuals' direct statements. These quotes substantiate my account of what was said, thus ensuring the comprehensibility of my research results and, consequently, the quality of my work. The most important results were concisely and engagingly formulated in the conclusion to provide readers with a clear understanding of my findings and the answers to the research questions, highlighting the new insights I gained in this field. This section was followed by a discussion of the results in relation to background literature and theories, which showed the meaning, significance and

relevance of my results in detail. Finally, I also summarised and reflected on the research process and addressed what the results do not reveal, before closing my paper with recommendations for future work on this topic.

Texts addressing the Swedish-speaking organizer and participants of the event were written in English and then translated into Swedish. The interviews were conducted in Swedish, and the transcripts were translated into English. Google Translate (Google n.d.) was used for the translations. The audio recordings were transcribed using the Word application (Microsoft 2025) and then carefully reviewed and edited to capture the exact wording and tone. To ensure my text was as clear, precise and error-free as possible, I used the DeepL writing assistant (DeepL n.d.). Once the content was finalized, I worked with the support of ChatGPT (OpenAI 2026) to improve my linguistic expression in the conclusions and my academic English in the discussion, thereby highlighting the analytical evaluation of the research results more clearly. The content and structure in that part are entirely my own work; no changes were made to the content, nor was any sensitive data altered. I also used Google AI as a search function to quickly find answers to questions related to the writing process, and I always checked this information against the given sources for accuracy.

### 3.6 Ethical considerations

In my ethical considerations particularly regarding the interviews, I mainly followed the guidelines of the Swedish Research Council (2017). Respectful and transparent interaction with the interviewees was essential. The interviewees were generally informed about the purpose of my study and the interview process (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015). I attached particular importance to the voluntary participation of the participants and their verbal consent, on the one hand, to recording the interviews and, on the other hand, to depicting their cognitive map in my work. At the same time, I provided detailed information on how data is handled. Participants also were informed that they could revoke their consent to participate at any time without giving reasons and that in this case, all their data would be deleted. In no respects concerning the interviewees and their data was an AI used. To secure confidentiality, pseudonyms were used to anonymize the participants (Swedish Research Council 2017). Other information, that might reveal their identity, was removed to exclude any negative impact on the participants' relationships and social lives (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015). I conducted the study as objectively as possible and tried not to influence the respondents. The questions were designed so that the participants should be able to freely express their views. The recordings will remain on my computer only,

and access to the data will be restricted to the supervisor or course instructor. Once the work has been completed and approved, the interview recordings will be erased and the mental maps destroyed (Swedish Research Council 2017).

### 3.7 Method reflection

By structuring the interviews more as conversations than question-and-answer sessions, I used my own experiences as input to guide the interviewees' thoughts toward aspects they hadn't yet mentioned. As a result, almost everyone subsequently provided more detailed answers about their experiences and feelings on the matter. Only one person generally agreed with me without elaborating, sharing their experiences in more detail only after the next question. However, I noticed that this approach helped the participants to open up more. I also became more personal and approachable, which led to a relaxed atmosphere with a lot of laughter. We had many similar experiences on the tour, and they often interrupted me with their own additions and stories before I could finish speaking or showed through nods, "Yes," or "Mm-hmm" that they understood what I was talking about and had had similar experiences. My examples triggered their memories and brought new perspectives to the conversation. Had I limited myself to asking questions, the answers would, in my opinion, have been less informative, less diverse and less detailed. At the same time, my subjective values, experiences and worldviews influenced the types of questions asked and the subsequent analysis of the findings.

The participants were similar in many ways, but also very different in some respects. With each interview, my wealth of experience grew, which I kept in mind for the subsequent interviews and which certainly influenced my questions. I think seven participants is a good number for painting a fairly balanced picture, as it seems they could represent the majority of the event participants. The sample contained both men and women, but mostly female long-term residents of the village. However, as the organizer told me, there are exceptions, such as people who buy the maps out of interest without participating themselves and participants who come from much further away because they are generally interested in such bike tours (Pettersson 2025).

For a while, I had hoped that an exceptional participant would come forward, preferably a young man of non-Swedish descent who had recently moved to the village or perhaps one of the many summer guests with a holiday cottage here. I thought that such a participant would complete the picture and perhaps also validate my own experiences as a newcomer. One must consider that a different

group of people might participate in an event than in an interview; perhaps summer visitors and newcomers are less likely to participate in an interview. I wouldn't rule out their participation. Regarding gender distribution, the organizer reported from his experience that it should be roughly balanced.

The conversations evolved and changed continuously during the personal interactions, meaning that each interview unfolded in a slightly different way depending on the specific situation and the individuals involved. It is important to note that my questions and statements significantly influenced the aspects of the topic addressed. A different interviewer would undoubtedly have taken a different approach, asked different follow-up questions, explored other aspects in more detail and reacted differently, for example by nodding or agreeing, all of which would have affected the flow of the conversation and consequently the interviewees' responses. The situation itself, the mood of the participants on that day and their personal relationship also undoubtedly influenced the scope and content of the statements. Therefore, the transcript is not merely a document, rather a tool for interpreting what was said in that particular context. It represents more than just raw linguistic data and was interpreted, clarified and expanded upon (Brinkmann & Kvale 2015).

As Swedish is not my native language, it is possible that I missed or misinterpreted subtle nuances and undertones in the interviews. Furthermore, a recording is rarely perfectly clear. Although I made every effort to transcribe the recording as accurately as possible, some hearing errors may have crept in. Some words were new to me, and I had to look them up in the dictionary. Here, too, there was a risk of an imperfect interpretation of the actual meaning. I then translated the interviews from Swedish into English. Since English is not my native language either, I cannot claim that the translation was always perfect. Other, unfamiliar words might have better expressed what the interviewees said. This can slightly have altered the subtext of the data. Nevertheless, it can generally be assumed that the interviewees' main points were accurately represented. Moreover, contextualizing the statements through additional methodological approaches allowed for the embedding and verification of the logic of the statements and mitigated the translation problem.

Since the participants were able to create the cognitive maps without any instructions, these provide a very personal, emotional picture of their experience with the bike tour and are a good complement to the reasoned statements in the interviews.

## 4. Result

### 4.1 Result interviews

#### 4.1.1 Shared experiences of place and its history

All respondents had already participated in other local cycling events but found the cultural cycling orienteering particularly “*fascinating*”, as it not only led them to cultural and historical sites, but also provided information about these places and their significance. Some participants already had a strong interest in local history, so this focus on the subject matter was an important incentive to participate. Analysis of the interviews revealed that the respondents did not merely speak of historical events represented in the landscape in a narrow sense. Rather, they referred to stories that connected material and immaterial forms of a collective memory. The participants combined the experience of the bicycle tour with the discovery of “rural richness”, creating an experience that fulfils them personally.

The interviewees were impressed that the organizers went to the trouble of searching for historical places and legends and were amazed by the great amount of interesting spots they did not know existed. One of the main features of the event seemed to be related to the activity of “discovering” and “uncovering” places and history, making the invisible visible to them. Participants thought it was exciting to discover countless historical traces. They proudly claimed that “[...] *there is a lot in our villages to look at.*” Even those who have lived in the area for a long time stated this: “*There are so many places that I didn't know about, never heard of.*” The surprisingly large number of historical sites in the area was fascinating to them, and they were reflecting about the fact that “[...] *there's actually a story behind everything.*” Experiencing these places and gaining an understanding of past living conditions created a personal connection. One felt being part of an ongoing history that links past, present and future:

“I mean, to be able to understand the future, I always say you have to know where you come from and what has happened in history, both in the small and the big.”

Participants were emotionally and intellectually touched by places that reflected larger societal or landscape changes. History felt more personal when it extended into the present day and aligned with an activity in their own lives.

Participants reflected on the importance of their cultural context and described how the stories helped them connect with the place. As one participant put it:

“[...] it enriches you and you get to hear old stories about houses, what they were like, and families, and how they lived [...] it's history, I think it's exciting [...].”

Several respondents expressed that they *"get touched"* by places that reflected a past harsh and deprived reality: *"These small crofts, how people could manage with so little arable land [...]."* Considering the resilience of these people invited them to reflect on their own lives.

It could feel important to them that the stories told are passed on and not forgotten. This was especially true in connection with checkpoints where there was not much to see, sometimes just *"[...] a big stone that was in the middle of the forest [...]."*

Experiencing traces of human activity, life and work was particularly valued. One person clearly stated that they preferred to take the tour in early summer, before the vegetation became too dense and began to hide interesting features:

“[...] it can be nice to see, when it is so well preserved, then you should actually cycle in May before it has started to grow too much [...] then you see more.”

The participants emphasised the importance of combining activity and learning during the tour. Experiencing local history in its specific location made the immersion more engaging. Some studied the map and the information about the checkpoints carefully before the tour, felt *"[...] really exciting to have a mission like this."* Getting an overview of the route and an idea of what to see and learn at each checkpoint created certain expectations that were then exceeded in reality:

“When I get to these places that I see on the map, I usually get an even more positive impression.”

#### 4.1.2 Emotional ties to the local community

My study shows that the participants' decision to attend the event depended heavily on whether they lived in the village or came from outside. Many participating residents had a strong interest in their village, were involved in clubs and associations and had a strong connection to their community. Participants mentioned the great village spirit among residents, stating that *"[...] the cultural cycling is part of what helps to promote this spirit."* According to their own accounts, the longer they have lived in the village, the stronger their personal connection has become. They believed it is only natural to support local initiatives by attending their events: *"[...] if I hadn't lived in the village, I would never have*

*cycled these cycle tours [...].*” Participation was a sign of appreciation for the organisers of the cultural cycling, as participants were “[...] *very happy that they started it and [...] hope they continue.*” However, people also felt obligated to use the opportunities offered so that the number of participants shows that such events should continue to take place in the future.

Some respondents stated that the invention of the event was something unseen and new. Even though there was already a lot going on in the village, there was a need for “[...] *really something outstanding, a completely different thing than what we're used to here.*” Participants praised the event as well received and stated: “*It has been a success.*” Thus, in the few years since its introduction, the bike tour has quickly become a new village tradition, and the annual participation was quite natural. The event's uniqueness and popularity strengthened participants' bonds with the community by giving them a sense of belonging to something special.

For residents, their local identity and sense of community was linked to knowing everyone and everything in the village. This included having good spatial knowledge. They appreciated that the bike tour took them to familiar places that they were happy to revisit, but they also enjoyed discovering areas that were still quite unfamiliar to them. Expanding their knowledge and experiences in this way strengthened their sense of community.

For participants who were not well integrated into village life, the bike tour had a different significance. As they familiarised themselves with the village and its surroundings, they developed a sense of orientation, security and safety, which made them feel more like locals, enabling them to develop a connection to the village and its community. Becoming familiar with the local history was also important to them, as it gave them the kind of knowledge that comes naturally to long-standing villagers, who may refer to people and places in conversation that were unknown to newcomers. An interviewee gave an example: “*The older ones often say this, 'Nils Persson in the cabin on the curve'.*” Those who don't know Nils Persson or where he lived may feel excluded from the community. The bike tour conveyed much of this shared knowledge, helped less established residents to feel more integrated and to identify more strongly with the village and its community.

Apparently, all participants rated the emotional aspects of the experience very positively. Everyone expressed a feeling of connection to the places and community, which had either developed or intensified.

### 4.1.3 Sensing rural landscape as a way to connect

The participants didn't need any particularly spectacular sights, as one person said: “[...] *bike tours in familiar nature, that's it, it's fun, really fun.*” All those interviewed perceived the varying landscape as appealing and beautiful:

“It's a very diverse nature when you cycle here. I think [...] there is everything from boring dark coniferous forest with mostly spruce. And then there is a nice beautiful deciduous forest with beech. And then there is open landscape and there are lots of animals.”

In the rural landscape, characterised by meadows, pastures and fields, they could observe farm animals such as horses, cows, goats or sheep during the tour. This vibrant nature was perceived as particularly soothing. Several interviewees highlighted the appealing interplay of abundant nature and a few smaller or older buildings during the bike tours. The sight of blooming gardens, well-kept houses and old farmsteads was a welcome change and conveyed a comprehensive picture of the rural community and its way of life. These settlements were often accessible via small, quiet roads through the countryside, which was perceived as relaxing and safe. One person put it this way: “*It is nice small roads. Very little traffic. And you get close to the farms.*”

During the tour, participants immersed themselves in the natural experience and perceived the landscape intensely. They appreciated:

“[...] really the whole, the whole countryside here. I love it here when there's a little forest and then there's a little field and then there's a little lake and then it changes and then there's a small village with a few houses [...] I have a hard time pinpointing just one specific place. I want a little bit of everything.”

The varied landscape creates contrasts that enhanced the experience:

“[...] these huge drifting blocks from the ice sheet. And there are really big differences in height. Beech forest and so on. These ravines, it's beautiful too.”

One of the participants describes what it felt like when the forest suddenly opened up: “*And then it's a really beautiful meadow or something*” perhaps even with a magnificent view: “*There are so many nice, yes, nature experiences [...].*” Places with exceptionally beautiful plays of light or enchanting views invited to pause, linger and enjoy: “*And the sun is shining, and then oh, but here I would stop for a while.*”

Many participants reported on their favourite places, locations that embody a special natural beauty, which was intensely perceived and remembered as very special, such as a small lake in the forest:

“[...] when you come cycling there in early summer there is a beech forest all around and then the sun shining through these green leaves [...] it's so beautiful there. [...] It's so lovely in the small, well, it's [...] a little oasis. [...] I think that's a gem.”

Sensory experiences played a major role in the tour and made it more intense “[...] *there are many things when you cycle, that you feel [...] you take in nature in a different way.*” Scents could be perceived particularly intensely: “*And then all the smells, oh, it smells like liquorice. And then you cycle on, oh, here it smells, it was some kind of mushroom.*” These sensory experiences linked places in memory, and the repeated sensory experience recalled the experiences and associated places of the bike tour. The changes in nature throughout the seasons were also experienced firsthand and formed a layer of meaning. Some participants deliberately spread the three routes over the summer to consciously experience the changes in nature.

Village, nature and history were perceived as a unified whole; they belong together because life in the countryside, then as now, is closely connected to nature. Most participants took the time to truly immerse themselves in nature. They were then in the moment and enjoyed the present. This was beneficial for body and mind, one could switch off because it was “[...] *the whole body, you de-stress [...].*” The participants felt that in nature they sensed that “[...] *there is something here, you feel calm and safe and relaxed. and the silence is there.*”

The participants cycled at their own pace to admire the scenery, picked berries or mushrooms, had a picnic or even went for a swim: “*We don't rush when we ride our bikes. Instead, we stop wherever we want.*” For many, this was simply part of a bike tour. Most of them preferred to spend the day relaxing in peace and quiet; being outdoors and taking the time to enjoy nature was “*really cozy.*” They experienced the positive effects of time and activities in nature and felt that “*nature is very important for health [...]*” as it demands nothing and thus provides relaxation and greater quality of life. In nature, they can think more clearly and solve problems, feel “[...] *the power of nature [...]*” and that “*It's great for your health [...].*” Being “[...] *outside and moving around. [...]* *makes me feel good, I'm sure it has an impact on my well-being.*”

Through cultural cycling, participants experienced the local landscape. They revisited familiar places but also appreciated discovering new ones. The beauty of nature and the diverse rural landscape with all its facets had a deeply beneficial

effect on the participants, who developed a sense of place in various locations in the surrounding area.

#### 4.1.4 Social aspects intensifying experiences with place and community

Participants described the bike tour as a welcome opportunity to spend a pleasant and sociable day in nature with their partner, family, friends or neighbours. Ideally, the tour became a shared experience; only if no travel partner could be found the trip was undertaken alone, or perhaps not at all. Not everyone felt confident enough to tackle the tour on their own, especially those with a poor sense of direction. Therefore, it was beneficial to team up with others and combine their individual skills. Together, they planned the route, explored checkpoints and overcame challenges. Cycling with a reliable companion provided a sense of security, which was especially important in unfamiliar surroundings, and completing the tour together felt as a real achievement. The Participants reported that joint excursions enriched the overall experience through collective joy, increased safety and mutual support, thereby deepening their feelings.

Thanks to its recreational nature, children and older people could also easily participate. While exploring the landscape and surroundings, the tour offered ample opportunity for chatting and exchanging ideas in a relaxed atmosphere. As one participant put it: *“I always cycle with someone. It’s more fun.”* The social aspect was therefore another essential component of participation.

The stories associated with the places were reflected upon together, which enhanced the sense of place. Sometimes groups placed great importance on ensuring that all participants received the cultural and historical information, and so someone would read it aloud at each stop. Shared experiences fostered new perspectives, and good moments became more intense when shared, creating memories that enhanced emotional well-being. For most participants, the bike tour had become a cherished tradition and was often perceived as a special weekend or holiday experience, where they took time for each other and treated themselves to something nice along the way or afterwards. These joint tours with other residents were entertaining and pleasant opportunities to deepen contact with the villagers and resulted in a greater sense of community.

Sometimes, one loses sight of the extraordinary in the everyday. Doing the tour with people who don't know the area well could be a real revelation, as they discovered its natural beauty. As one person put it: *“When you have beautiful nature around you, you take it for granted.”* The reactions and feelings of

participants from outside led to a renewed appreciation of the beauty of the surroundings and reinforced the sense of place.

Thanks to the route through the village, some participants maintained their contacts, as one participant explained: *“It happens that we bump into someone on the road or turn into a house where we know someone and go in to see if anyone is home.”* These social encounters contributed significantly to the emotional value of the tour as they maintained or strengthened the emotional bond with the villagers and thus with the village:

“It adds an extra spice to the whole thing. It's fun. It can be people you meet maybe three or four times a year. Or once every two years or something like that. Or people you've known since you were young and don't see anymore. And it's really fun when that happens.”

The participants welcomed additional social contacts during the tour; they were also happy to meet strangers along the way. They greeted and gladly took the opportunity for a chat: *“You always say hello, you should do that. I do that, I'm careful about that.”* Often, it was *“[...] residents out there who we stopped and talked to, and we told them that we were out cycling, about cultural cycling.”* One participant recounted a particularly lovely experience; during her coffee break on a sunny day, she observed a group of primary school children playing at an open-air museum. It was a heartwarming encounter and a wonderful surprise that left a deep emotional impression.

The rare encounters with other participants were perceived as particularly interesting and enriching. A sense of connection developed as everyone shared the same interests. Mutual support was a given, and it was incredibly exciting to review the trip together and hear about each other's experiences:

“Sometimes you come across others who are out on the same issue. And then you say, well, that check was difficult, but you have to look there and you will find it. So you help each other a little.”

These social encounters with residents and other participants positively influenced the entire tour experience; participants felt like they knew the villagers better, which in turn led to a deeper sense of community.

Even after the tour, the experience offered an opportunity for exchange, provided topics for conversation and allowed participants to share their experiences, for example at work, in clubs, with family, friends and neighbours. When several participants met, they reminisced, told anecdotes, such as how they couldn't find a particular checkpoint or were unsure about navigation, and exchanged experiences

by discussing which route they should have taken or where their favourite picnic spots were. In this way, the experiences are relived, which deepens the feelings towards the places and the community.

When participants talked to non-participants about their experiences,

"[...] there are many who are a little jealous that we have cultural cycling in the village. That's right. It's probably quite unique here in the municipality [...]."

Besides their own positive impressions of the tour, they also recognised from the reactions of others how special this event was. This realization, in turn led to an even closer connection to the community.

#### 4.1.5 The experience of cycling and orienteering

As the cultural bike tour focused on exploring local history and rural life, which was characterised by simplicity, poverty and a slow pace, the bicycle was the appropriate means of transport for exploring these places. It enabled participants to take in the rural landscape at a relaxed pace, processed their impressions and reflected on the feelings and thoughts that arose from the places and stories they experienced. Participants appreciated cycling because it allowed them to travel under their own power, they experienced their surroundings with all their senses and stopped whenever they wished to explore places more intensively. To them, cycling is associated with an intense, direct experience of nature that strengthens their emotional connection to the rural landscape. As one puts it:

"In a way, it's better when you're cycling, because then you take it at your own pace. [...] Then you stop and look at an interesting flower. [...] You see a beautiful place, then you might stop there."

The tour was a great opportunity for everyone to familiarise themselves with the surroundings: "*[...] I get to new places, that's what's valuable about cultural cycling.*" The tour offered everyone an excellent opportunity to get to know the area better, which was a key factor for some: "*I have no idea about a single village around here. [...] So I thought maybe I could learn.*" The tour improved one's sense of direction and broadened one's horizon. This greater familiarity with the area fostered a stronger connection to the village.

Most participants loved the feeling of having achieved something through their own efforts and appreciated the combination of physical exertion and nature experiences: "*It's great, it gives me exercise and I get out into nature. And that's the purpose [...].*" For some, it was precisely this mode of transportation that motivates them to participate in the event:

“[...] it's cycling that has, it has contributed to a lot of this, because it's a form that I was able to embrace. Not running and not things like that, but just the fact that you can do an incredible amount with a bike.”

Some couldn't get enough: “[...] *the most fun thing is, of course, doing it. Then when you're done, you're like, well, was that all?*”

One even said that if he particularly enjoyed a tour, he rode it twice:

“The nature is beautiful and if I have done a round that I get a positive feeling from, then I might consider doing it again, but in the other direction, to see how I experience it then. I've cycled the same round twice, in both directions. Just to compare.”

For many participants, cycling was primarily associated with an intense, direct experience of nature, which strengthened their emotional connection to the natural world and their surroundings.

The participants found that the event combined cycling and cultural exploration within an orienteering framework perfectly and enjoyed the physical and mental challenges. Depending on their prior experience, they adopted different approaches. Those with extensive map-based navigation skills were motivated by the challenge of finding the checkpoints quickly. In contrast, inexperienced participants considered successfully finding the right route and all checkpoints to be a success. The way the tour was designed suited them perfectly: “[...] *I'm so bad at finding my way. [...] So it's good when you have a map where you know that you'll usually end up back in the same place.*” Bike orienteering offered a great opportunity to explore unfamiliar paths and places, strengthened self-confidence and connection to the area.

Everyone was motivated to find the checkpoints, “[...] *it's fun to have something to go after [...].*” They felt the challenge of mastering map navigation and the appeal of experiencing the places firsthand they had previously studied using the map and accompanying information:

“It feels good when you look at the map and you see a place there [...]. It doesn't tell me anything. But when I've been there, I know that, yes, this is there and it looks like this and that. And that farm is there and those roads are there and it's like this and that. It's better.”

Seeing these places with one's own eyes was a truly wonderful and moving experience that evoked a multitude of positive feelings: the successful navigation, the physical exertion of cycling and the engagement with history. The latter was particularly praised by all participants who had previously taken part in other orienteering bike tours where no cultural-historical information was provided.

Participants' positive experiences of the event led them to develop a stronger emotional connection to the village and places visited. They reported that the event, with its unique concept, was interesting and touched them emotionally. They were fundamentally convinced that “[...] *cultural cycling is important for the village [...] it does good for those who participate.*” They stated that it made rural life more attractive and vibrant, as the bike tour provided an excellent opportunity to participate in a local activity and in that way strengthened the bonds to the village community. As one participant puts it: “*I think I've kind of gotten closer.*”

## 4.2 Cognitive maps

The cognitive maps constitute an additional narrative to the participants' experiences with the cultural cycling. The interview refreshed memories and the questions brought to life various aspects of the tour, of which perhaps the most concise, important and intense experience was then captured as supplementary visual information in the image.

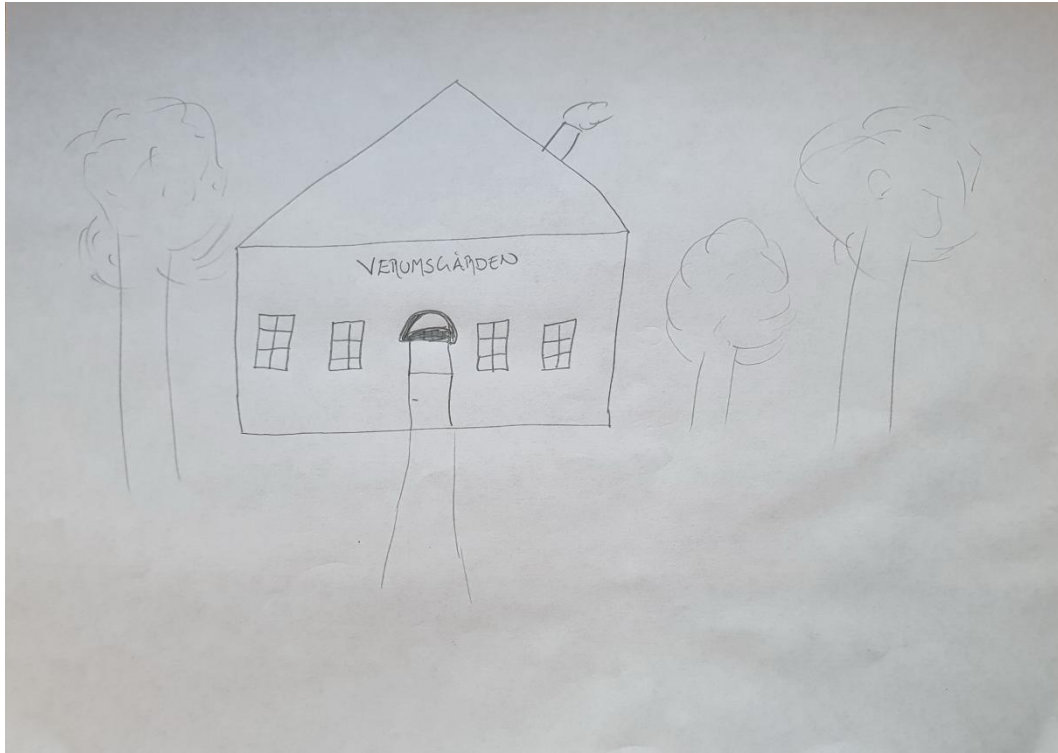
Reactions to my request for a cognitive map varied considerably. Some participants immediately grabbed the materials and started creating a picture, while others needed time to think. A few were very hesitant and unsure whether they wanted to participate. What everyone had in common was that I had to explain what a cognitive map is and what it can include. I also had to emphasise that it is not something that has to meet certain requirements regarding drawing skills or the elements of the picture. The biggest worry was not being able to draw well enough to paint a beautiful, expressive picture that reflects the inner image and makes it clearly visible. Therefore, it was important to emphasise that it did not have to reflect reality or be accurate but could simply be a very personal representation of aspects of the tour that were chosen completely freely. After some initial hesitation, most then purposefully reached for specific pens and colours and seemed to quickly develop an idea of what they wanted to depict.

Selma explained beforehand what she wanted to portray. Hannah, Erik and Lena explained their pictures to me when they were finished, without me having asked them to. As creating a cognitive map was totally voluntary, Oscar chose not to do it and instead showed photos of his group during a break at this year's event.



*Figure 2. Astrid's cognitive map with hidden signature.*

Since Astrid is captivated by the beauty of the local lakes and loves to swim, this is her central theme. Whenever possible, she takes a break at a lake during her bike ride and enjoys nature. The image shows a bathing lake with a jetty, surrounded by a tree, grass and colourful flowers.



*Figure 3. Ronja's cognitive map.*

Ronja was particularly struck by the memory of an impressive and beautiful old farm. However, that house belonged to an earlier event, one of the predecessors of the cultural cycling. That earlier bike tour led past that beautiful old house when it was still in its original location in a forest. Later, the house was moved to the nearest city, an event she can easily remember. Through the exploration of new places during the cultural cycling, this memory became very vivid again and strongly influenced her feelings about the actual event.



Figure 4. Erik's cognitive map.

Like all the other participants, Erik thinks that good weather is essential for a tour like this. The sun shines brightly against a cloudless blue sky. He is cycling along a path in the centre of the area. The signs indicate the various places that he cycled to during the event. The route predominantly leads through nature, characterised by a lake and the coniferous trees typical of this landscape.

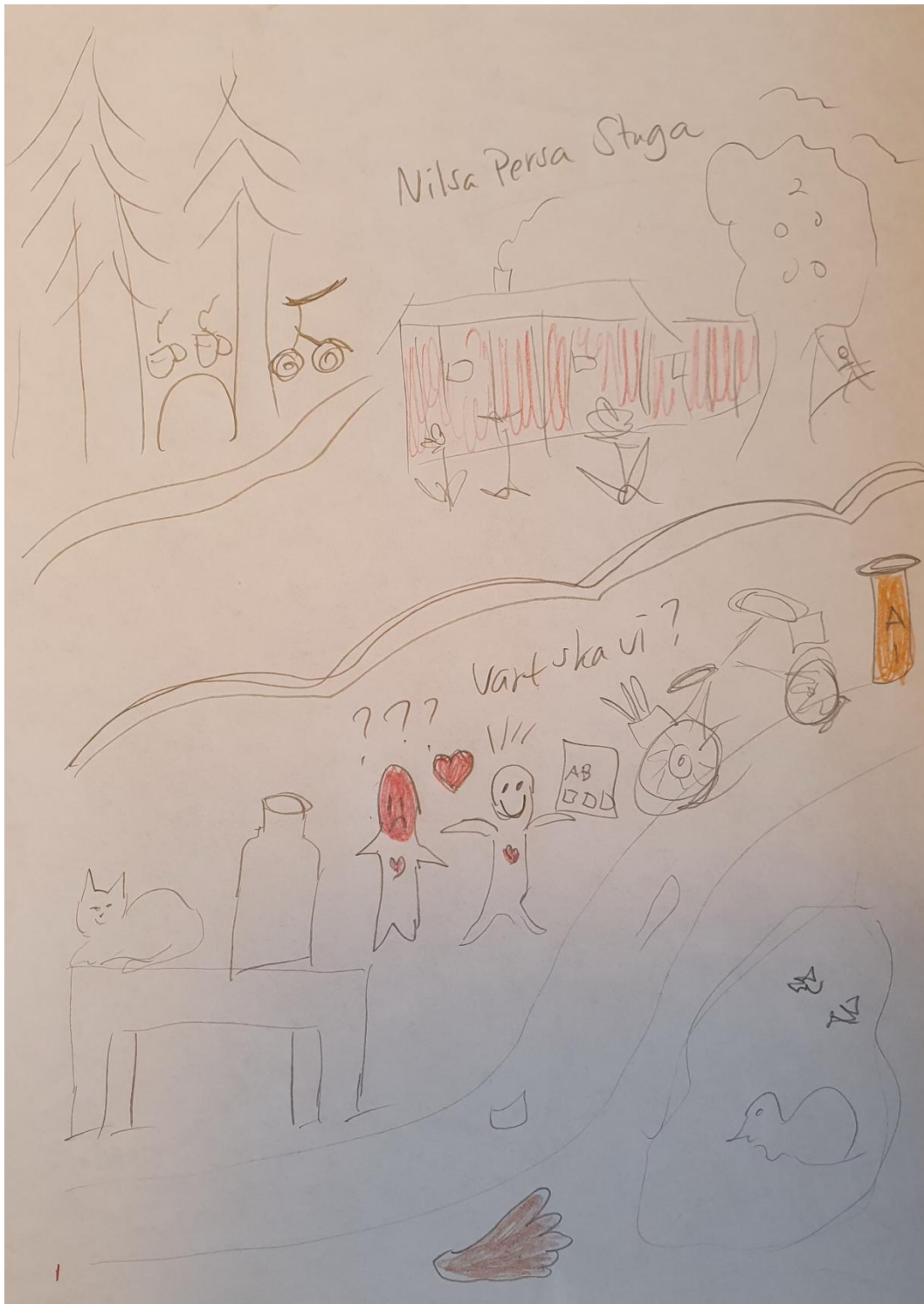
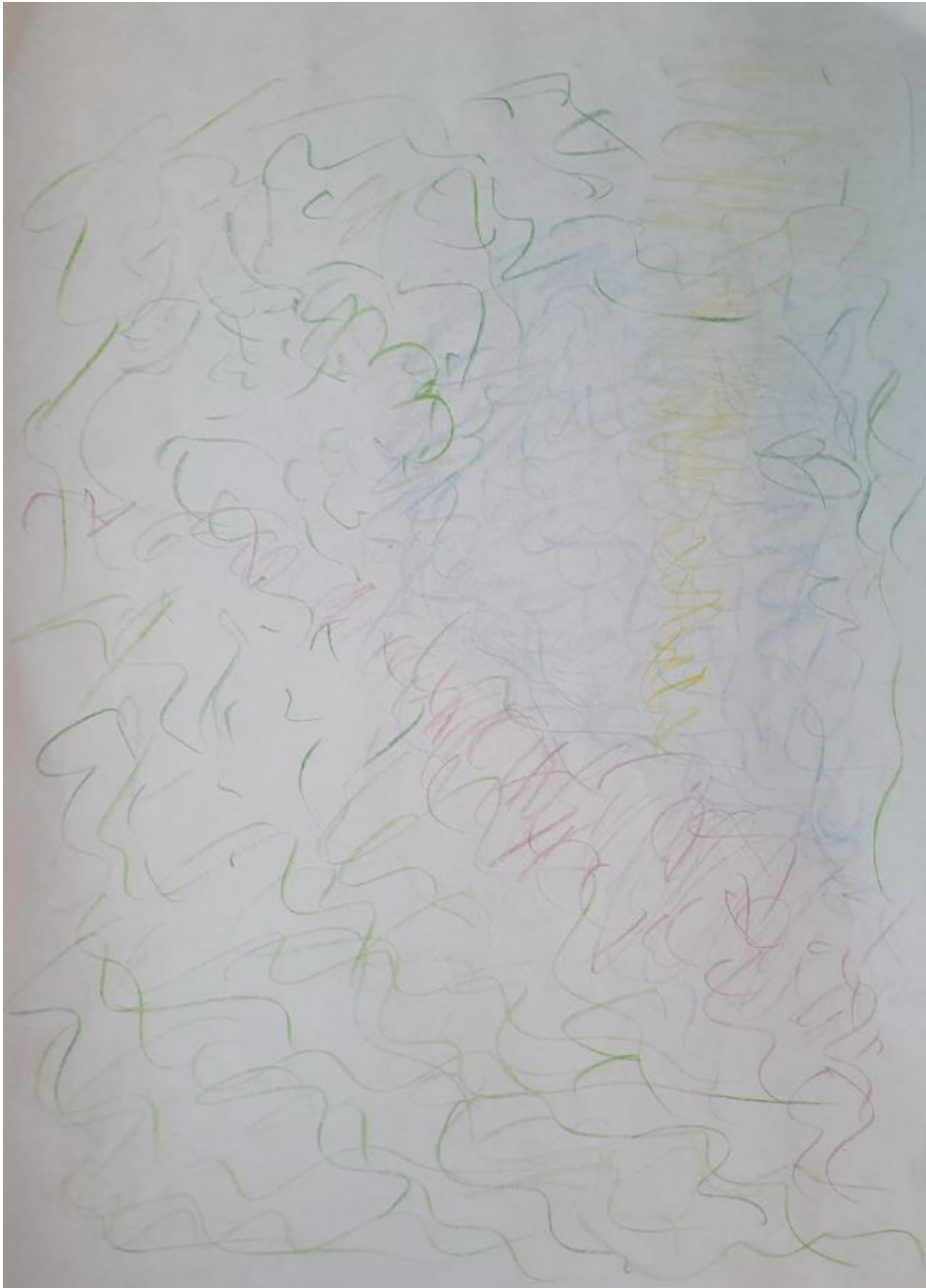


Figure 5. Hannah's cognitive map.

Hannah has drawn a multifaceted and expressive picture representing the tangible and intangible features of the local culture and history, as well as the feelings that arose during the tour. She explained that the picture shows her and her neighbour, with whom she always goes on bike rides. The neighbour has a red face because

she gets worked up easily. Nevertheless, she is a very pleasant companion, and it is always fun to ride a bike with her, represented by the heart symbol. The path with the bicycle, but also the bicycle in the forest, are essential components of the cultural bike tour. The two oversized coffee cups represent the obligatory and all-important coffee break. They always take a coffee break roughly halfway through the tour. The two cups are placed above a rock because they once took a coffee break on a rock surrounded by beautiful nature. The red house is a typical Swedish house. Here, however, it also represents the historical sites visited during the tour. Hannah often heard historical figures referred to as 'Nilsa Persa', a rhetorical term meaning 'all sorts of people' or 'everyone'. During the tour, many people associated with the historical sites and stories were mentioned by name. Hannah really liked this, as she now knows the names of many of the places visited and the people who lived and worked there. This made the stories more vivid and memorable. A person is swinging in a tree. This is because there were several checkpoints at different children's holiday villages. The foot at the bottom of the picture is a troll's foot. At one of the checkpoints, there was an interesting story about trolls, reminding her of a myth about trolls she then told me. A cat sits on a pedestal next to a milk can. Such traditional pedestals and milk cans are still frequently found along paths in front of old houses and farmsteads; they symbolize local history and the recent agricultural past. Cats are also often seen at farmsteads. The local nature is represented by birds, flowers and coniferous and deciduous trees. Hannah still remembers a duck in a pond that she saw during one of the tours. '1 A` is intended to represent one of the 30 checkpoints that one looks for during the tour in order not only to learn the local history, but also to find the corresponding letter for the prize draw. The worksheet with three boxes represents the answer sheet where these letters are entered.



*Figure 6. Lena's cognitive map.*

Lena especially enjoys experiencing nature during the event. Water and trees play a particularly important role to her. She thinks that nature is best enjoyed in good weather, and then it's lovely to take a break and linger in a particularly beautiful spot. She remembered very well a small lake nestled beside a quiet little road, deep in the woods and surrounded by tall trees. She passed by it several times in the last years during the cultural cycling. There are a table and benches close to the water, perfect for taking a coffee break. It's especially beautiful when the sun filters through the leaves onto the lake and the light reflects off it.



*Figure 7. Selma's cognitive map with hidden signature.*

Selma told me at the beginning of her drawing that she knew exactly what she wanted to depict; a place that had greatly impressed her, remained vividly in her memory, and which she had already talked about during the interview. She discarded her first drawing because she couldn't properly capture her inner vision. She asked if she could take a few days to draw a picture, but then immediately created a second one, which she was then satisfied with. Selma was particularly fascinated by a stone wall that was extremely skilfully and evenly stacked. She thinks one can see that someone had put a lot of effort into it and mastered their craft. That was her main subject that she wanted to draw, which is why this stone wall runs through the middle of her picture. Furthermore, her tour is symbolized by two bicycles on a cycle path and two coffee cups, as she always cycles the tour with someone and the obligatory coffee break is important to her. Nature also

plays an important role and is represented by trees. Also, the foundation of a ruin is depicted.

These images are likely to reflect the most vivid and significant feelings, thoughts and experiences that the participants associate with the bike tour, and which most readily come to mind when they reflect on the event retrospectively. These images complement and expand upon the narratives provided in the interviews. Since cognitive maps do not require drawing skills or a prolonged creation process, all the drawings were created within a short time. Almost all the participants chose colours and representations that they certainly had practised as children, such as a smiling sun, jagged conifers or an irregular blue circle representing water, which are usually easy for viewers to understand. Deviations from scale, such as the coffee cups, are quite typical. Their oversized depiction highlights the shared coffee break as a particularly significant positive social and natural experience for many participants. The meaning of these images, alongside the statements from the interviews, will be presented in the next section of my work.

### 4.3 Conclusions on the role of cultural cycling on sense of place and community

This study investigated how organized recreational cycling events can benefit rural populations by combining experiences in nature with the transmission of local cultural and historical knowledge. The focus was on understanding the meaning that participants attribute to natural and cultural-historical sites, and how the event influences their feelings towards these places and the local community.

The interviews provided detailed insights into the participants' perceptions of the various aspects of the event and the factors that shaped their experiences. This multifaceted account was complemented by their cognitive maps, in which they depicted the most important feelings and aspects of the tour.

#### 4.3.1 The stories of place and history

The findings show that while all participants had prior experience with local cycling events, the unique focus on cultural and historical content served as a key motivation, especially for those already interested in local history. The combination of activity and learning enables an intense, sensory and meaningful experience of history. During an entertaining and exciting scavenger hunt, participants experience the rural richness of their village, discover countless historical traces and the invisible gets visible. Participants witness how previous

generations have shaped the village and the landscape to this day, recognizing the continuity between past, present and future. They engaged with the narratives on a personal level, reflecting on their own lives in light of the life stories of earlier generations. The stories link tangible and intangible forms of collective memory, enabling participants to feel a connection to both the places they visit and the community.

In the cognitive maps, local cultural history also plays an important role, represented by ruins, stone walls or symbols commemorating local legends and historical persons. These memories are persistent and extend over several years. Even elements from earlier orienteering events can sometimes be recalled, as the example with the old farmhouse from another event shows.

The event offers something for everyone and, thanks to its recreational and experiential nature, is also appealing to those who haven't previously been fascinated by history. Participants report that the cultural and historical narratives told on-site are both exciting and emotionally moving, sparking curiosity and a desire to learn more. They viewed history not merely as isolated, past events, but as an ongoing process. Through this hands-on approach to knowledge transfer, participants develop a personal connection to many of the places.

The interviews illustrate how certain locations, when connected to stories and experienced physically, gain in significance and contribute to a more intense, reflective and highly valued understanding of local history and historically significant sites. The significance of these places for the history of the village and its inhabitants, in turn, fosters a sense of community. The results indicate that the unique cultural and historical focus of bicycle orienteering significantly contributes to building emotional connections with places and the community.

#### **4.3.2 Establishing and confirming belonging to local community**

This study shows that participation in the cultural cycling is closely tied to participants' place of residence and already existing ties to the village. The event's strong local focus appeals to the participants. For long-term residents in particular, involvement is an expression of belonging, reflecting their identification with the community, support for local initiatives and appreciation of collective efforts. This illustrates how social cohesion can promote participation.

At the same time, the findings highlight the importance of novelty and distinctiveness in local initiatives. Despite an already active village life, the cultural cycling filled a perceived gap by offering something new and engaging, quickly establishing itself as a valued tradition of annual participation.

Participants see the event not only as an individual leisure activity but also as a communal project that contributes to the vibrancy and appeal of the village. Its success demonstrates how innovative formats can invigorate community life and create shared points of reference that strengthen local identity.

The study also highlights the role of spatial and cultural familiarity in fostering a sense of community. For established residents, revisiting familiar places and exploring unfamiliar ones strengthens their connection to the village. For less integrated residents, the event serves a different but equally important function: it provides access to spatial knowledge and local narratives, which are essential for feeling included. The bike tour thus promotes social integration on various levels. The cultural cycling can be understood as being more than just a recreational activity. It acts as a social mechanism that promotes ties with the community by linking outdoor activity, shared knowledge and local identity. These findings suggest that local outdoor events of this kind can play a significant role in sustaining and developing rural communities, as they simultaneously reinforce existing bonds and facilitate the integration of new residents.

#### 4.3.3 Experiencing the rural landscape

The findings show that the value of cultural cycling lies not primarily in spectacular sites or exceptional destinations, but in the experience of moving through familiar and varied rural landscapes. Participants appreciate the diversity and constant transitions between forests, fields, lakes, settlements and agricultural landscapes with farm animals. They described the countryside as aesthetically appealing, calming and meaningful, thus contributing to feelings of well-being and sense of place.

The interviews further demonstrate that cycling enables an embodied and sensory engagement with the landscape. Participants experienced nature through movement, smells, sounds, changing light conditions and seasonal variation, which strengthened both emotional attachment and memory formation. Specific places became meaningful not only because of their visual beauty, but also because of the atmosphere and feelings associated with them.

The study also highlights the importance of slowness and flexibility within the cycling experience. Participants valued the possibility to stop spontaneously, spend time in nature and adapt the pace of the tour to their own needs and interests. Cycling was therefore not only perceived as a recreational activity, but also as a form of mental restoration and everyday well-being. Nature was repeatedly associated with calmness, reduced stress, reflection and improved physical and emotional health.

Also in the cognitive maps, nature and its beauty are a central theme for all participants. The experienced environment is represented by lakes and trees, often the typical conifers, but also deciduous trees, which are seen as particularly aesthetically pleasing. During the tour especially wild animals are rarely encountered; perhaps that's why a single duck and a few birds in the sky remain in the memory. The tours are primarily undertaken in good weather with sunshine and blue skies, which particularly highlights the beauty of nature, as can be seen, for example in sunlight glittering on the surface of a lake or a sun shining brightly and powerfully in the sky. Since many participants have a particular fondness for water and some like to go swimming during their breaks, the local lakes play a special role in the illustrations.

Overall, the findings suggest that cultural cycling fosters a strong sense of place by connecting participants to the local landscape through sensory experience, movement and personal interaction with the environment. Familiar rural settings, often perceived as ordinary in everyday life, gained renewed significance through cycling and became spaces of recreation, reflection and emotional attachment.

#### 4.3.4 Social ties and shared perspectives

The interviewees reported that they would prefer to take the tours with others. In just a few years, the tour has become an established and cherished tradition for them and their companions. Sharing experiences along the route and jointly exploring places and their history fosters conversation, reflection and the exchange of perspectives. This deepens the experience and intensifies emotional engagement with the places visited. Overcoming challenges like navigation in the landscape together enhances enjoyment and creates a sense of security and safety.

A shared appreciation of the landscape also acts as a unifying element. The participants' shared enthusiasm for the area's varied rural landscape strengthens their collective identity. Experiencing the area's beauty together, and sometimes rediscovering it through others' eyes, strengthens the sense of place and belonging to the village. Thus, the bike tour connects participants not only with the landscape, but also with their community.

Encounters with other residents and participants, whether planned or spontaneous, contribute to feelings of belonging and reinforce social ties within the village. Even brief interactions become meaningful elements of the experience and strengthen participants' sense of community.

Importantly, the tour also seems to renew participants' appreciation of their everyday surroundings. Seeing the landscape through the eyes of others enables residents to recognise the value and beauty of places they might otherwise overlook.

However, people who cycle alone are less likely to linger at beautiful or interesting natural or historical sites. This diminishes the overall experience in terms of both encounters with places and the emotional connection to place and community.

Beyond the immediate experience, the bike tour generates further social value through subsequent conversations. Participants like to share their experiences, tell stories and anecdotes and reflect on the challenges and highlights together. Through these ongoing narratives, the event becomes a part of local identity and collective memory, thus deepening a sense of belonging. The tour's uniqueness and local popularity further amplify this effect, as participants recognise it as a special and valuable part of their village.

In the cognitive maps, social aspects are a major focus, often represented by coffee cups symbolizing shared picnics, but also by depictions of people, sometimes accompanied by symbols such as a heart that convey attached emotions. The emphasis on the shared coffee break, as well as the relevance of the depicted nature, underscores the leisure aspect of the tour. Such a day is often something special, undertaken in a relaxed atmosphere and together with pleasant company, and one takes the time to fully experience all the impressions by lingering in interesting and beautiful places, which is also represented in the illustrations of historical remains and depictions of favoured natural features.

Overall, the results demonstrate that the social aspect of cultural cycling is a central component which fosters social cohesion, emotional well-being and a stronger sense of place and community through shared experience.

#### **4.3.5 The significance of cycling and orienteering on sense of place and community**

The study demonstrates that the cultural cycling creates a meaningful connection between physical movement, cultural heritage and emotional engagement with place and community. The bicycle is not merely a practical mode of transportation within the event; it actively shapes how participants perceive and experience the rural landscape. Its slow pace, simplicity and flexibility support participants to consciously and actively engage with their surroundings, experiencing observations, reflections and emotional resonance with the stories and places

encountered along the route. Moving around under one's own power creates feelings of achievement, fulfilment and joy. Experiencing the landscape and seasons with all the senses contributes to a direct and self-directed connection with nature, fostering a stronger sense of immersion and presence. For many, the combination of nature and history, movement, exploration and cultural learning is central to the great appeal of the event.

In the cognitive maps, cycling and orienteering are central themes, represented by bicycles, signposts, checkpoints and the answer sheet for the competition, where all found checkpoints are entered with their corresponding letters.

The integration of orienteering further deepens participants' engagement. Navigating and exploring the area independently fosters curiosity, problem-solving skills, confidence in one's own abilities and an active perception of the landscape. Regardless of prior navigation experience, participants described a sense of satisfaction and happiness when locating checkpoints and successfully completing the route. Importantly, physically visiting places that were previously only abstract points on a map, becomes a lived experience of meaningful and memorable locations. In this way, the event not only promotes spatial orientation and, consequently, an increased sense of security and safety, but also a more personal and embodied understanding of the local environment. This, in turn, leads to a greater familiarity with places and a stronger connection to the village.

#### 4.3.6 Summary

The study suggests that cultural cycling makes a positive contribution to rural community life by engaging the local population and connecting them with the surrounding nature, culture and history. Residents can associate local history as a meaningful, ongoing process, related with their own identity. Cycling as a social activity deepens the embodied experience of places through conversation, reflection, and the exchange of perspectives. The combination of cycling, orienteering, physical achievement, sensory nature experiences and the exchange of local historical knowledge create a multifaceted experience that addresses both cognitive and emotional aspects and deepens the spatial and social connection to places and the village.

These aspects distinguish the tour from other activities and amplify its impact, as the associated emotional experiences, such as the joy of discovery, curiosity, achievement, enjoyment and togetherness enhance the participants' quality of life. People appreciate the familiar surroundings and perceive rural landscapes as aesthetically pleasing, calming and meaningful. Participants immerse themselves

in nature, are fully present in the moment, switch off, enjoy the silence and feel calm, safe and relaxed.

The local connection and the combination of physical activity in nature with sensory experiences, the adventure of exploration, and cultural-historical learning address both cognitive and emotional aspects, thus contributing to the village's vibrancy and appeal. The event has a positive impact on the participants' quality of life and well-being and strengthens their connection to the places and the community.

## 5. Discussion

The aim of this study was to investigate the impact of a specific cultural-historical event on the development and transformation of participants' sense of place and sense of community within a rural context. Empirically, the research analyses what how organised tours of bicycle orienteering mean to the residents in these aspects. The wider context of the study is the relative scarcity of events for outdoor recreation in rural areas, and social events in general. As in this case, rural areas can possess a significant density of cultural and historical sites to explore, offering substantial potential for fostering positive experiences with potentially community-building effects. The following sections provide a critical discussion of the empirical findings, integrating them with the theoretical framework and literature presented in the introductory chapters.

### 5.1 Organised outdoor activities in rural areas make a difference

Gladwell et al. (2013) state that people greatly appreciate opportunities to pursue an activity that brings them outside and closer to nature. My study was able to confirm this assertion. The participants unanimously emphasised that the activity's natural setting, embedded in a rural landscape, was a fundamental prerequisite for participation and a central, highly valued part of their experience. They repeatedly highlighted the scenic beauty of the surroundings, particularly the forests and lakes, which were among their favourites.

Respondents frequently self-identified as committed nature enthusiasts who actively seek opportunities to spend time outdoors. They reported perceived benefits in terms of both physical and psychological well-being, as well as an enhanced overall quality of life. These statements are consistent with those of Ten Brink et al. (2016), who show that exposure to nature is associated with heightened positive affect, and the findings of Stoltz et al. (2023), who demonstrate that physical activity in natural environments contributes to improved health outcomes and increased well-being. While Marcen et al. (2022) confirm these results, they discovered lower levels of outdoor activity engagement among rural residents compared to urban populations. In contrast, my study suggests that locally organised activities, particularly those incorporating elements of local cultural history, are especially effective in engaging rural populations. Such

initiatives appear to provide an additional incentive to be outdoors and, in this case, to cycle longer distances than usual.

When individuals were asked to indicate their preferred landscapes for leisure activities, Hörnsten and Fredman (2000) demonstrate that usage patterns are predominantly oriented toward proximate environments, typically located within one to two kilometres of their place of residence, rather than more distant landscapes that might be perceived as more attractive. Also, research by Gladwell et al. (2013) indicates that easy and convenient access to green spaces is associated with a reduced perception of exertion, which in turn enhances motivation to engage in outdoor physical activity. In the present study, although participants were predominantly local residents, the distances between their home and the respective starting points frequently exceeded the range of one to two kilometres. While the longer travel distances were sometimes perceived as challenging, they were nonetheless accepted. This can be attributed to the positive aesthetic evaluation of the landscapes traversed between participants' homes and the tour's starting points. Fortunately, the local landscape is quite varied, with different types of nature. Even in agricultural and forestry areas, participants can enjoy several positive aspects, such as open spaces with wide views or encountering grazing animals. Therefore, at least in this area, the rural landscape is very well suited for such an event. Accordingly, the cultural cycling event can be interpreted as facilitating relatively low-threshold and convenient access to attractive, nearby green spaces within a rural landscape context. Moreover, participants' motivation was not solely contingent upon the physical setting, but was also shaped by complementary factors, including opportunities for place-based learning about local history and the social dimension of participating alongside like-minded people. These findings confirm the conclusions of Lehto (2024), which emphasize that the fulfilment of recreational needs depends on the convergence of diverse activities, preferences and motivational drivers.

In contrast to the findings reported by Skerratt et al. (2017), which suggest limited leisure opportunities in rural areas, the responses obtained in this study indicate that the investigated village offers an unusually wide range of leisure activities, largely facilitated by local clubs and associations. Nevertheless, participants emphasized a continued demand for additional attractive options, particularly with a new, unique and interesting appeal, as well as opportunities for individualisation according to personal preferences and abilities. In this context, the cultural bike tour is a leisure activity that combines these preferences perfectly.

Lehto et al. (2022) emphasise that targeted incentives are often necessary to encourage participation in outdoor activities in many rural areas. In this regard,

providing suitable recreational infrastructure, such as adequate trails, maps and points of interest, is considered particularly valuable as it facilitates access to and participation in nature-based activities. In line with these observations, the carefully planned routes on detailed maps allowed participants of the studied event to cycle predominantly along agricultural and forestry roads as well as low traffic roads. This route minimised exposure to vehicular traffic, thus contributing to an enhanced sense of safety among participants. Furthermore, participants reported that exploring cultural and historical sites and learning about their significance added substantial intrinsic value to the activity. While the landscape traversed was not characterised by spectacular landmarks, it offered aesthetically pleasing natural features, such as scenic views and the chance to stop at lakes and other visually appealing locations. These settings were frequently described in highly positive emotional terms and appeared to leave a lasting impression. In several cases, participants expressed a clear intention to revisit particularly valued sites in the future. These findings align with the theoretical framework proposed by Lehto et al. (2022), which suggests that access to attractive green spaces positively influences the frequency of recreational behaviour in nature.

## 5.2 The affective relationship between individuals and their everyday environment

The findings of this study indicate that positive experiences in natural environments do not depend on the presence of exceptional landscapes or sites; rather, they emerge from a proximate, appreciative and affective relationship between individuals and their everyday surroundings. In this context, events that highlight local landscape qualities and render them experientially accessible in daily life appear to play a facilitative role. Consistent with Sebastien (2020), the findings suggest that subjective perceptions, individual attitudes and personal environmental preferences significantly shape how landscapes are experienced and interpreted. All participants reported an already positive disposition towards the rural landscape prior to the cycling event. However, the event itself revealed the multidimensional character of this environment, highlighting previously unrecognised features and expanding participants' awareness of its diversity. In particular, the integration of cultural-historical knowledge transfer on site enabled participants to engage with specific locations in a more personal and meaningful way. This process combined cognitive and affective dimensions: participants acquired knowledge, experienced emotional resonance and developed stronger connections to both natural and historical sites. In this regard, the study addresses the research gap identified by Lewicka (2011), regarding the emotional aspects of human–environment relationships and connections to places. By demonstrating

how locally grounded activities can deepen emotional and experiential connections to place, the findings provide empirical insight into the mechanisms through which this connection can be fostered.

### 5.3 The recreational value of rural landscapes

The sustained success of the event, evidenced by consistently high participation rates over multiple years and uniformly positive participant feedback, underscores the significance of rural areas as spaces of considerable recreational value. These findings align with Borgström et al. (2013) and McCullough et al. (2018), who argue that the recreational functions of rural landscapes are frequently underestimated and warrant greater prioritization in both research and policy contexts. Moreover, the positive impacts of the rural landscape on participants, as identified in this study, lend empirical support to Skriver Hansen's (2021) call for a more precise and comprehensive conceptualization of "recreational landscapes." Specifically, the results highlight the importance of systematically integrating this concept not only into applied spatial planning practices but also into theoretical frameworks within landscape studies and nature-related disciplines.

Lehto et al. (2022) argue that landscapes characterised by intensive agricultural and forestry practices are not suitable for recreational purposes. The findings of the present study nuance this position by indicating that small-scale land use may contribute positively to recreational experiences, in particular when embedded within a predominantly natural landscape. Furthermore, the results suggest that agricultural and forestry tracks offer advantageous conditions for cycling-based activities as they facilitate coming close to nature while simultaneously providing a traffic free and therefore safe ride. In addition, participants highlighted encounters with small-scale farms and farm animals as a distinctive and valued component of their experience. Such elements were described as adding variety and fostering an emotionally engaging and vivid perception of rural nature, thereby enriching the overall experiential outcome of the activity.

### 5.4 Local history strengthens local ties

Sebastien (2020) advocated for more research regarding the significance of environment and sense of place in the relationship between spatial structures and human experience. My study shows that combining nature experiences with visits to cultural and historical sites is a holistic experience that simultaneously

addresses physical, cognitive and affective dimensions. Such combined experiences generate a broad spectrum of benefits, including emotional enrichment, intellectual stimulation and opportunities for social interaction. Furthermore, participants reported that the shared experience of a special activity in a picturesque rural setting fostered a sense of collective belonging. The relaxed and aesthetically pleasing setting of the event promotes communication and social contact, even with strangers. This, in turn, contributed to enhanced social cohesion at the local level, strengthening the relational ties with the village and its inhabitants.

Agimass et al. (2017) demonstrate that the presence of historical sites significantly increases the probability of a region being visited. The participants reported that engagement with such sites constituted a central component of the event's attractiveness and served as a primary motivational factor for attendance. The interpretation and communication of local cultural history within the landscape facilitated an intensified experiential engagement, fostering empathetic understanding of the life stories and socio-historical conditions of past generations, a finding confirmed by Brügge and Sandell (2021). Exposure to these narratives appears to generate enduring cognitive and affective impacts, prompting reflective processes in which individuals contextualise their own lives in relation to historical experiences. Participants further indicate that insights into how previous populations dealt with adverse circumstances can strengthen their own perceived resilience and ability to cope with current challenges. This finding aligns with Ten Brink et al. (2016) and Johnson (2025), who argue that landscapes are not merely perceived as physical environments, but rather understood as meaningful, lived environments shaped by previous generations. Through this process, participants develop a sense of relational connectedness to the landscape and its former inhabitants.

The vivid and engaging historical presentation on-site during the bike tour allows participants to emotionally immerse themselves in the past and understand how it has shaped the places and the landscape to this day. They confirm, in line with Lewicka (2011) and Manzo & Devine-Wright (2013), that this connection to local history creates a strong emotional bond with the places. In particular, the local participants feel a close connection to the village community. As Ellery & Ellery (2019) and Cross (2001) illustrate, they see their identity as being linked to past generations and thus experience a sense of continuity and belonging. Understanding the cultural and historical significance of places and acquiring collective knowledge leads to the feeling of being part of an ongoing story. By linking place, emotions, identity and memory, the sense of belonging and identification with the community is strengthened. These experiences align with

the theories of Scannell & Gifford (2010, 2014) that emotional attachments to place and community are both geographical and cognitive in nature.

In response to Lee's (2014) call for more research into the significance of cultural-historical sites within outdoor activities, particularly in relation to cycling as a leisure practice, the present findings suggest that cultural-historical landscapes possess an intrinsic attractiveness that is further amplified through the effective and vivid interpretation of their historical narratives.

## 5.5 Spatial, intellectual, and sensory experiences deepen bonds

According to Rajala et al. (2020), sense of place and sense of community are positively correlated with perceptions of safety and security. The results of the present study show that participants developed this sense of safety and security through the acquisition of experiential knowledge related to the location, meaning and spatial relationships of places in their environment. This expanded spatial knowledge, the newly gained familiarity with the surroundings and the resulting sense of safety and security were highly valued, as they contributed significantly to the participants' quality of life and sense of freedom. At the same time, the development of this spatial "insider" knowledge fostered a stronger sense of belonging to the village community.

Raymond et al. (2017) emphasize the importance of explaining the underlying processes of immediate sensory experience and intellectual abstraction that led to the emotional significance of places. Findings from the present study indicate that participants engaged in rich, multisensory experiences throughout the tour, occurring both in natural settings and at cultural-historical sites. These sensory engagements appear to intensify the overall experiential quality, facilitate emotional connections and contribute to the formation of durable memory structures. Such memories are readily reactivated through subsequent sensory stimuli, suggesting that embodied, multisensory encounters play a critical role in reinforcing a sense of place and experiential meaning-making.

Cycling represents a popular leisure activity among participants, consistent with findings reported by Ten Brink et al. (2016). The alignment of the event with participants' existing interests therefore acts as an additional motivation for participation. The results further suggest that the bicycle itself plays an important role in shaping the qualitative nature of the experience. Its moderate pace and technological simplicity support a more attentive and immersive engagement with

the surroundings. Participants describe experiencing the environment in a multisensory way, noticing details and making spontaneous stops, enabling a deeper, more profound engagement with both the natural environment and cultural-historical sites. This mode of travel encourages a gradual process of discovery, allowing impressions to be taken in and reflected upon over time. In turn, this appears to strengthen participants' emotional connection to the places they encounter.

## 5.6 The interplay of joyful exploration and taking on a challenge

Gladwell et al. (2013) emphasise the importance of enjoyment, distraction from everyday life and challenge in relation to physical activity in natural environments. The findings of my study align with this perspective as participants described cycling as a preferred leisure and holiday activity, primarily associated with enjoyment, exploration of the surroundings and relaxation. In this sense, cycling appears to contribute positively to perceived well-being and overall quality of life. Beyond the activity itself, participants also value the broader experiential context, including time spent in natural settings, being outdoors and opportunities for social interaction. In addition, moderate challenges, such as route navigation and locating checkpoints, are perceived as enriching elements that add variety and a sense of adventure. These findings are consistent with those reported by Chang and Chang (2009), who similarly emphasise the interplay of enjoyment, challenge and environmental context in outdoor recreational experiences.

In accordance with the key factors for positive cycling experiences discussed by McKibbin (2014), the participants' statements showed that these conditions were largely fulfilled during the cultural cycling. In particular, the route apparently reflected their preferences regarding diversity of the landscape, while the communication of regional cultural history was perceived as appealing and meaningful. The circular routes with low traffic volume, which led the participants back to their starting points, were perceived by the participants as safe and reassuring. Together, these factors created conditions conducive to an enjoyable and accessible cycling experience.

Furthermore, enthusiasm for the navigational challenge associated with orienteering in natural environments emerges as a significant motivational factor for participation in the event. Although participants report varying levels of confidence in map-based navigation, there is a shared commitment to locating the checkpoints, driven by the desire to experience the sites connected to the

narratives presented. Successfully negotiating these challenges, usually in collaboration with others, appears to generate not only enjoyment but also increased self-confidence, and a sense of security, but also to social benefits, consistent with the findings of Gladwell et al. (2013).

Overall, the present study provides insights into effective and successful strategies for promoting recreational cycling among local populations in rural areas. In doing so, it contributes to addressing the research gap identified by Lee (2014) and Kircher et al. (2022), as existing literature has predominantly examined cycling in relation to sport-oriented practices or urban environments, with comparatively limited attention to its role in rural leisure contexts. The findings indicate that cultural cycling across natural and cultural landscapes can foster and strengthen participants' sense of place and community belonging. Exploring the local area by bicycle appears to enhance the perceived meaning and significance of familiar environments. The event can thus be understood as facilitating connections both between individuals and places in a way that also reinforces their ties to the village community. The combination of exploration, shared experiences, learning on site and transfer of common local knowledge generates affective engagement. This, in turn, contributes to the formation of an inclusive and dynamic sense of belonging that links participants to both specific historical sites and the broader community context. Because these experiences are embedded within a shared local framework, they also promote a stronger sense of community. Moreover, the social dimension of the activity deepens interpersonal bonds between participants, as the experience becomes intertwined with relationships, memories and identity. Participants engage with local history at an individual level while simultaneously situating themselves within a collective historical narrative that continues to develop. In this regard, the event represents a constructive example and can serve as a useful model for the design of similar community-based leisure initiatives, thereby simultaneously increasing the attractiveness of rural areas and the well-being and enjoyment of life of the participating rural population.

## 5.7 Limitations and suggestions for future studies

According to Sebastian (2020) leisure-based place interactions are more inclined to be positive, and therefore biased, as leisure is associated with concepts such as freedom or intrinsic motivation. However, I see this organised leisure activity as an additional opportunity to get out into the local area in a positive and pleasant way, and to develop positive feelings towards certain places and the local community. One might assume that participants who did not have a good or at

least somewhat satisfactory experience of the tour would not repeat the participation and would also not be interested in taking part in my study. Although the participants in my study were not explicitly asked about negative experiences, they certainly had the opportunity to mention them of their own accord.

A further difficulty arises when examining an annual but time-limited event. The timeframe is significant, and I had to retrospectively capture the associations and meanings, some of which dated back to previous years. Since the event began in 2021, this period is generally manageable in retrospect, although distortions of perception and feelings may have occurred when describing activities and experiences from long ago (Sebastien 2020). I was interested in all experiences the participants had with the event throughout the entire period and welcomed all relevant information. In at least one instance, however, the memory of a significantly different event from previous years became clearly intertwined with more recent experiences, which I subsequently clarified in my analysis. However, for most participants, it was not difficult to distinguish between the different events, as their focuses were clearly different.

The primary goal of a qualitative study is to outline potentials, not to gather representative data on social perceptions in the sense of an opinion poll. The study thus demonstrates that there is considerable potential in combining the communication of cultural-historical knowledge with landscape experiences. Whether and how this connection can be made generally accessible is a question that another research could address.

Many aspects had to be left out of my research. This event could also be investigated using a different method to gain broader and more multifaceted insights. The Fixity-Flow framework by Di Masso et al. (2019) offers an interesting perspective for future research, as it is particularly suitable for exploring the interplay between lived experience of meaningful places and personal connections through mobility. Also studying different groups of people, such as children and adolescents or newcomers to the area, would be interesting. In general, a larger number of participants could be included to obtain a broader range of information. Other benefits of the event might be of interest, such as the participants' willingness to commit themselves more to preserving their natural or cultural environment in the future, increased motivation to engage in more physical activity in nature or effects on physical and mental health. The effects and benefits of such an event could be investigated in other environments, such as urban ones. Therefore, my study may be a first step that points to a need for further research.

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# Scientific Poster



## Let's bike in the countryside!

How cultural cycling orienteering can strengthen emotional bonds

**RURAL CHALLENGES**  
 The progressing rural depopulation leads to:

- aging population
- loss of traditions
- inadequate infrastructure
- limited recreational opportunities.

Urbanization and intensive land use have led to a global decline in green spaces for recreation, even in rural areas.

This results in poorer health and lower life expectancy, loneliness and isolation.

**KEYCONCEPTS**

- *Sense of Place:* strong emotional ties to meaningful places.
- *Sense of Community:* social attachment to a community of place.

These interrelated concepts both enhance belonging and identity, and improve quality of life, health and well-being.

**CULTURAL CYCLING ORIENTEERING**

- In rural landscape on nature trails or low-traffic roads.
- For experienced and inexperienced people of almost any age.
- Alone or in a group.
- Can be completed at own pace over several months.
- Circular routes lead to cultural-historical checkpoints.
- Exploring landscape and learning local history on site.

**FINDINGS**

- An annual event becomes a tradition.
- The village gets more vibrant and attractive.
- Rural landscape feels familiar, appealing and safe.
- In nature, people are relaxed, present and happy.
- A social activity for recreation, exercise, and reflection.
- Local history is linked to personal identity.
- Participants feel greater sense of place and community.
- This leads to quality of life, health and well-being.

Photo: Susanna Ritschard



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 Tourism Studies (BSc)  
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SCIENCE AND EDUCATION  
**FOR SUSTAINABLE LIFE**

# Appendix 1- Contact letter to organisers, English

2025

Hi!

My name is Sandra Peter and I live in Högahult. I am currently writing my master thesis within the program “Outdoor Environment for Health and Wellbeing” at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU).

I find the event "Cultural Cycling” of the Farstorp Village Association very interesting and would like to use this event as an example to research people's relationships with places.

In order to describe and present the event more comprehensively, I would like to get more background information later in the summer, preferably in a personal conversation. If I may, I will get back to you later with my request.

At the moment it is important to me that you know that this project is taking place. I would be very happy about your goodwill and acceptance of my study.

To explore the benefits of this event for the participants, I will be conducting interviews between May and September.

And here is my kind request: It would be wonderful if you would include my request to participate in the interview in your map package. In that case, I would prepare bilingual information in English and Swedish. I am enclosing a draft for your information.

Of course, I will also try to find participants in other ways, but I believe that the reach will be greater if people become aware of my work already when they buy the maps.

I would be very happy about a positive answer. Please send an email, a message or call me if you are interested or have questions about the project, and I will come back to you.

Sandra Peter  
070-6192458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

You can also contact my supervisor, docent, Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Department of People and Society (SLU).

## Appendix 2- Contact letter to organisers, Swedish

2025

Hej!

Jag heter Sandra Peter och bor i Högahult. Under våren/sommaren skall jag skriva mitt examensarbete i miljöpsykologi vid Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (SLU) i Alnarp. Arrangemanget med Farstorp Byalags Kulturcykling har nu fångat mitt intresse. Min plan är att studera vad denna aktivitet kan betyda för människor och deras relationer till den plats de bor på, kulturmiljön men också naturmiljön och livet i stort på landet. För denna studie planerar jag intervjuer med deltagare från dessa cykelturer under maj till september.

Min fråga till er är nu om ni kan bistå mig i rekryteringen av deltagare som kan tänka sig att ställa upp på en intervju? Kanske kan ni inkludera ett brev om projektet i kartpaketet? Kanske har ni något annat förslag?

Jag tänkte dela ut information på engelska och svenska, men tyska går också bra då det är mitt modersmål.

Längre fram skulle jag gärna vilja göra en intervju även med er som planerar och håller i turerna för att bättre förstå upplägget, bakgrunden till satsningen och era tankar kring arrangemangen.

Ring gärna eller skicka ett mejl så kan vi kanske ses eller talas vid per telefon framöver. Jag kan också skicka ett prov på det brev som jag tänkte skicka ut till deltagarna för påseende. Det är ju viktigt att all information blir rätt.

Sandra Peter  
070-6192458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

Om ni vill nå min handledare för att ställa frågor om projektet är det docent Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Institutionen för människor och samhälle vid SLU i Alnarp.

# Appendix 3 - Semi-structured interview guide for organisers, English

## **Introduction, consent**

Hello *Name*, nice to meet you. How are you?

First, I wanted to introduce myself a little more. I moved here from Germany 13 years ago and live in Högahult. I am studying "Outdoor Environment for Health and Wellbeing" at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and am now writing my master's thesis about Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling. I have participated in it four times myself and was very impressed by all the places I got to know and everything I learned about the cultural and historical background of my local area. That's why I would now like to find out more about the value of heritage for a sense of place and belonging to a community and how such an activity can promote this.

I am very interested in the background of this bike orienteering, your intention to organize such an event, the goal of this activity, some facts about the event, but also some personal information about you and the other organizers.

I would like to record this conversation and need your consent. You can cancel your participation at any time. All your data will then be deleted. Otherwise, your data will be used in my master's thesis. Since I am speaking to you as an official representative of the organizers, your information will not be anonymized. Is all of this OK with you? We will need about an hour for the interview. Do you have any questions before we start?

*start voice recording*

## **Village association**

Who are you? How many of you are there?

How are you organized? What are your tasks?

Are you active in other groups as well? Which ones?

How did the idea for the cultural cycling come about? What was the idea behind/purpose of the event?

How did you become interested in doing such an event?

Do you cycle yourself? Do you orientate?

What value does cultural history have for you?

What value does nature have for you?

What value does the village community have for you?

What value do outdoor activities have for you?

What is your relationship to local history and the places?

What is your emotional connection to Farstorp?  
How long have you lived here?

### **Cultural cycling**

How are the tasks related to cultural cycling distributed?  
What is your role/tasks in this?  
How familiar are you with the roads, places, and surroundings?  
How is a cultural cycling created?  
What did you want to achieve?  
Why did it involve cycling?  
Why did it involve orienteering?  
Where is the geographical boundary?  
Who do you see as participants? Who are you targeting? geographically, in terms of age, in terms of interest...? Why?  
What are the criteria for the routes you choose?  
What are the criteria for the places you choose?  
What are the criteria for the stories you tell?  
Where do you find information about good routes and interesting places? Where does knowledge, inspiration, etc. come from?  
Why do you tell stories about local cultural and historical places, people, and events?  
Where do you get information about this?  
Is the event needed? Why?  
Do you think the event is important? Why? For whom? Farstorp? Society? Residents? Nature? Places?  
What is positive about cultural cycling? For the village? For participants? Residents? Landowners?  
What are the advantages/results/benefits for the participants?

### **Miscellaneous**

How do you spread information about the event?  
Where are card packages sold?  
How do landowners/local residents react?  
What feedback did you get, positive - negative, praise - criticism?  
What have you changed/improved over the years?  
Does it always go as it should? Are there setbacks too?

### **Similar events**

Are there similar events elsewhere?  
Were you inspired by other events?  
Do you participate in other similar events?  
Do you have contact with organizers of other similar events?

### **Participants**

How many card packages were sold in each year?  
Where do they come from? Are they all from the Farstorp villages?  
The cycling package is sold not only in Farstorp but also in Hästveda and Bjärnum. Can you guess how much interest there is from residents there?  
What do you know about the participants?

Do you know any participants personally?  
Do you know if they cycle together as a couple/group/family or are there also people alone?  
Can you guess the age group? Gender distribution?  
Did you get any feedback on how the participants experience the event?  
How many participants submit the reply form?

### **Future**

Future plans?  
Would you like support and commitment from anyone? Who? How? Why?  
The cultural cycling is a kind of pop-up event. Do you think it would be nice to establish something long-term from it? For example, a bike tour that remains in the future with road markings and location explanations for return visits or new interested parties?

### **More**

May I get the card package from 2021?

### **Goodbye**

Thank you again for your time! I really appreciate it!

# Appendix 4 - Semi-structured interview guide for organisers, Swedish

## Introduktion, samtycke

Hej *Namn*, trevligt att träffas. Hur mår du?

Först vill jag presentera mig lite mer. Jag flyttade hit från Tyskland för 13 år sedan och bor i Högahult. Jag studerar "Utemiljö för hälsa och välbefinnande" vid Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet (SLU) och skriver nu min masteruppsats om Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling. Jag har själv deltagit i den fyra gånger och blev mycket imponerad av alla platser jag fick lära känna och allt jag lärde mig om den kulturella och historiska bakgrunden i mitt närområde. Därför vill jag nu veta mer om värdet av evenemanget kring kulturarv för en känsla av plats och tillhörighet i ett samhälle och hur en sådan aktivitet kan främja detta. Jag är mycket intresserad av bakgrunden till denna cykelorientering, din avsikt att organisera ett sådant evenemang, målet med denna aktivitet, några fakta om evenemanget, men också lite personlig information om dig och de andra arrangörerna.

Jag vill spela in detta samtal och behöver ditt samtycke. Du kan avbryta ditt deltagande när som helst. Alla dina uppgifter kommer då att raderas. Annars kommer dina uppgifter att användas i min masteruppsats. Eftersom jag talar till dig som en officiell representant för arrangörerna kommer din information inte att anonymiseras. Är allt detta okej för dig? Vi kommer att behöva ungefär en timme för intervjun. Har du några frågor innan vi börjar?

*starta röstinspelning*

## **Byalaget**

Vem är ni? Hur många är ni?

Hur är ni organiserade? Vad är era/ dina uppgifter?

Är ni aktiva i andra grupper också? Vilka?

Hur kom idén om kulturcyklingen? Vad var tanken bakom/ syftet med evenemanget?

Hur kom det att ni är intresserad i att göra ett sådant evenemang?

Cyklar ni själv? Orienterar ni?

Vilket värde har kulturhistoria för er?

Vilket värde har naturen för er?

Vilket värde har bysamhället för er?

Vilket värde har utomhusaktiviteter för er?

Vad har du/ni för relation till lokal historia och platserna?

Hur är din känslomässiga koppling till Farstorp?

Hur länge bor du här?

## **Kulturcykling**

Hur är uppgifterna kring kulturcyklingen fördelade?  
Vad är din roll/ dina uppgifter i detta?  
Hur känner ni till vägar, platser, omgivningen?  
Hur blir en kulturcykling till?  
Vad är det ni vill åstadkomma?  
Varför blev det med cykel?  
Varför blev det med orientering?  
Vart ligger den geografiska gränsen?  
Vem ser ni som deltagare? Vilka siktar ni på? geografiskt, åldersmässigt, intressebaserat...? Varför?  
Vad är kriterierna för vägar ni väljer?  
Vad är kriterierna för platser ni väljer?  
Vad är kriterierna för historier ni berättar?  
Vart hittar ni information om bra vägar och intressanta platser? Varifrån kommer vetandet, inspiration...?  
Varför berättar ni om lokala kulturhistoriska platser, personer och händelser?  
Varifrån får ni information om detta?  
Behövs evenemanget? Varför?  
Tycker du att evenemanget är viktigt? Varför? För vem? Farstorp? Samhället? Invånare? Naturen? Platser?  
Vad är positivt med kulturcyklingen? För byn? För deltagare? Invånare? Markägare?  
Vilka är fördelarna/ resultat/ förmåner för deltagarna?

## **Diverse**

Hur sprider ni information om evenemanget?  
Vart säljs kortpaketet?  
Hur reagerar markägare/ kringboende?  
Vad fick ni för återkoppling, positiv - negativ, beröm - kritik  
Vad har ni ändrat genom åren/ förbättrat  
Går det alltid som det ska? Finns det motgångar också?

## **Liknande evenemang**

Finns liknande evenemang någon annanstans?  
Blev ni inspirerade av andra evenemang?  
Deltar ni i andra liknande evenemang?  
Har ni kontakt till arrangörer av andra liknande evenemang?

## **Deltagare**

Hur många kortpaket blev sålda i respektive år?  
Varifrån kommer de? Är alla från Farstorpbyarna?  
Cykelpaketet säljs inte bara i Farstorp utan också i Hästveda och Bjärnum. Kan du gissa hur stort intresse det finns av invånare där?  
Vad vet ni om deltagarna?  
Känner ni någon deltagare personligen?  
Vet ni om de cyklar tillsammans som par/ grupp/ familj eller finns också ensamma?  
Kan ni gissa åldersgruppen? Könsfördelning?

Fick ni på något sätt återkoppling om hur deltagarna upplever evenemanget?  
Hur många brukar skicka in talongen?

### **Framtid**

Framtidsplaner?

Skulle ni önskar er stöd och engagemang från någon? Vem? Hur? Varför?

Kulturcylingen är en sorts pop up evenemang. Skulle ni tycka att det skulle vara skönt att etablera något långvarigt av det? T. ex. En cykelrunda som finns kvar i framtiden med vägmarkeringar och platsförklaringar för återbesök eller nya intresserade?

### **Mer**

Kan jag få kortpaketet från 2021?

# Appendix 5 - 1st Invitation to participate in the study, Flyer, English

## **DO YOU WANT TO PARTICIPATE IN A STUDY ON THE IMPORTANCE OF PLACE?**

Have you participated in Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling? Then I am looking for you for an interview!

My name is Sandra Peter and I live in Högahult. I am currently writing my master's thesis in environmental psychology at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU). I am investigating how people in rural areas experience and relate to places in their cultural and natural surroundings.

### **ABOUT THE STUDY**

- ✧ You have participated in *Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling* on at least one of the five occasions between 2021 and 2025.
- ✧ The interview takes approximately 2 hours and will be held between May and September 2025.
- ✧ We will meet on site in Farstorp or at another location we agree on.
- ✧ The interview can be conducted in Swedish, English or German.

### **HOW YOUR DATA WILL BE MANAGED**

- ✧ Your participation is voluntary and can be cancelled at any time.
- ✧ The interview will be recorded, and the material will be handled confidentially.
- ✧ All personal data will be anonymized.
- ✧ The results will be published in my master's thesis, and all material will be deleted afterwards.

### **INTERESTED? QUESTIONS?**

Please contact me by phone, text message or email. I will be happy to tell you more!

Sandra Peter  
070-6192458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

You can also contact my supervisor.  
Associate Professor Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53,  
fredrika.martensson@slu.se,  
Department of Humanities and Society (SLU).

# Appendix 6 - 1st Invitation to participate in the study, Flyer, Swedish

## VILL DU DELTA I EN STUDIE OM PLATSENS BETYDELSE?

Har du deltagit i Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling? Då söker jag dig för en intervju!

Jag heter Sandra Peter och bor i Höгахult. Just nu skriver jag mitt examensarbete i miljöpsykologi vid Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet (SLU). Jag undersöker hur människor på landsbygden upplever och relaterar till platser i sin kulturella och naturliga omgivning.

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### OM STUDIEN

- ✧ Du har deltagit i *Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling* vid minst ett av de fem tillfällena mellan 2021 och 2025.
- ✧ Intervjun tar cirka 2 timmar och hålls mellan maj och september 2025.
- ✧ Vi träffas på plats i Farstorp eller annan plats vi kommer överens om.
- ✧ Intervjun kan genomföras på svenska, engelska eller tyska.

---

### SÅ HANTERAS DINA UPPGIFTER

- ✧ Ditt deltagande är frivilligt och kan avbrytas när som helst.
- ✧ Intervjun spelas in och materialet hanteras konfidentiellt.
- ✧ Alla personuppgifter anonymiseras.
- ✧ Resultatet publiceras i min masteruppsats och allt material raderas därefter.

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### INTRESSERAD? FRÅGOR?

Kontakta mig gärna via telefon, sms eller e-post. Jag berättar gärna mer!

Sandra Peter  
070-6192458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

Du kan också kontakta min handledare.  
Docent Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se,  
Institutionen för människor och samhälle (SLU).

# Appendix 7 - 2nd Invitation to participate in the study, English

**May I interview you for about 45 minutes?**

## **Invitation to participate in a study about Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling 2021-2025**

Hi! My name is Sandra Peter and I live in Högahult. I am currently writing my thesis within the program "Outdoor environment for health and well-being" at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU). I am interested in the effects and experiences of outdoor activities in cultural and natural environments and people's relationships with places. To find out more, I am now looking for participants for Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling for an interview.

### **What does it mean to be part of the study?**

As a participant in the study, you will be given the opportunity to share your experiences on this topic in an interview. You are welcome if you have participated in at least one of Farstorps Byalag's five Cultural Cycling events. The interviews can be conducted in English, Swedish or German, and we can meet in a public place in Farstorp or another place we agree on. You need to set aside approximately 45 minutes for the interview.

### **How will your data be handled?**

Your participation in the study is voluntary, and you can choose to stop at any time without giving any reason. The interview will be recorded. Only I and my supervisor will have access to the material from the interview. Your personal data will be treated confidentially. The focus is on general knowledge about the quality of the place and relationships to place. This means that all names of people will be fictitious and all details that can easily identify a person will also be deleted. The result will be published as a master's thesis available on the web. Once the thesis has been approved, the recorded material will be deleted.

I hope you can consider participating. If you know someone who might be interested in participating in the study, please pass this information on.

Call me, send a message or an email if you are interested or have questions about the project, and I will get back to you.

Sandra Peter  
070-61 92 458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

Du kan också kontakta min handledare, docent Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Institutionen för människor och samhälle (SLU).

## Appendix 8 - 2nd Invitation to participate in the study, Swedish

**Får jag intervjua dig i cirka 45 minuter?**

**Inbjudan att delta i en studie om Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling 2021–2025**

Hej! Jag heter Sandra Peter och bor i Högahult. Jag skriver just nu på mitt examensarbete inom programmet ”Utomhusmiljö för hälsa och välbefinnande” vid Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (SLU). Jag är intresserad av effekter och upplevelser av friluftaktiviteter i kultur- och naturmiljöer och människors relationer till platser. För att få veta mer söker jag nu deltagare till Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling för en intervju.

**Vad innebär det att vara med i studien?**

Som deltagare i studien ges du möjlighet att dela med dig av dina erfarenheter kring detta ämne i en intervju. Du är välkommen om du har deltagit i minst en av Farstorps Byalags fem Kulturcyklarna. Intervjuerna kan genomföras på engelska, svenska eller tyska, och vi kan träffas på allmän plats i Farstorp eller annan plats vi kommer överens om. Du behöver avsätta ungefär 45 minuter för intervjun.

**Hur kommer dina uppgifter att hanteras?**

Ditt deltagande i studien är frivilligt och du kan när som helst välja att avbryta utan att ange någon anledning. Intervjun kommer att spelas in. Endast jag och min handledare kommer att ha tillgång till materialet från intervjun. Dina personuppgifter kommer att behandlas konfidentiellt. Fokus ligger på allmän kunskap om platsens kvalitet och relationer till plats. Detta innebär att alla namn på personer kommer att vara fiktiva och alla detaljer som lätt kan identifiera en person raderas också. Resultatet kommer att publiceras som en masteruppsats tillgänglig på webben. När uppsatsen har godkänts kommer det inspelade materialet att raderas.

Jag hoppas att du kan tänka dig att delta. Om du känner någon som kan vara intresserad av att delta i studien, vänligen vidarebefordra denna information.

Ring mig, skicka ett meddelande eller ett mail om du är intresserad eller har frågor om projektet, så återkommer jag till dig.

Sandra Peter  
070-61 92 458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

Du kan också kontakta min handledare, docent, Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Institutionen för människor och samhälle (SLU).

## Appendix 9 - 3rd Invitation to participate in the study, English

**May I interview you for about 35 minutes?**

### **Invitation to participate in a study about Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling**

My name is Sandra Peter and I live in Högahult. I am writing my thesis within the program “Outdoor Environment for Health and Well-being” at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU) and am interested in the effects and experiences of outdoor activities in cultural and natural environments as well as people's relationships with places. Therefore, I am looking for participants in Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling for an interview that can be conducted in Swedish, English or German.

Call me, send me a message or send me an email if you are interested or have any questions.

Sandra Peter  
070-6192458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

You can also contact my supervisor, docent, Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Department of People and Society (SLU).

## Appendix 10 - 3rd Invitation to participate in the study, Swedish

**Får jag intervjua dig i cirka 35 minuter?**

### **Inbjudan att delta i en studie om Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling**

Jag heter Sandra Peter och bor i Högahult. Jag skriver mitt examensarbete inom programmet "Utomhusmiljö för hälsa och välbefinnande" vid Sveriges Lantbruksuniversitet (SLU) och är intresserad av effekter och upplevelser av friluftaktiviteter i kultur- och naturmiljöer samt människors relationer till platser. Därför söker jag deltagare till Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling för en intervju som kan genomföras på svenska, engelska eller tyska.

Ring mig, skicka ett meddelande eller ett mail om du är intresserad eller har frågor.

Sandra Peter  
070-61 92 458  
sapr0004@stud.slu.se

Du kan också kontakta min handledare, docent, Fredrika Mårtensson, 040-41 54 53, fredrika.martensson@slu.se, Institutionen för människor och samhälle (SLU).

# Appendix 11 - Semi-structured interview guide participants, English

## 1 Introduction, consent

Hello *Name*, nice to meet you.

First, I would like to briefly introduce myself and the purpose of the interview. I am studying at the Swedish University of Agricultural Sciences (SLU). The program is called "Outdoor Environment for Health and Wellbeing" with a main field of study in environmental psychology. I am currently writing my master's thesis on Farstorp's Byalags Kulturcykling. I live about 5 km from Farstorp in Högahult and I have participated myself before. This piqued my curiosity, and I want to explore other people's experiences of this activity where you visit local cultural and historically significant places.

I am interested in your experience of this cycling event and what this local activity and visit to the various cultural and historic sites means to you. For this purpose, I will be asking you questions about your experiences, feelings and thoughts. Finally, I would also ask you to draw a map that represents your personal image of the cycle tour.

It's important that you know that I will be recording the interview. Your data will be used anonymously in my master's thesis. Your mental map will also be included. The original data will be deleted after my thesis has been accepted by the university. You can cancel your participation at any time. All your data will then be deleted. If you agree, I would now like your verbal consent.

Do you have any questions before we start?

Then I start the voice recording.

*start voice recording*

My questions are intended to help you get started, so please feel free to interrupt me. First, I would like to ask you to tell me something about

### **2 You, your place of residence and Farstorp**

**How far is it from your home to Farstorp?**

**Is the place one of Farstorp's villages?**

**How long have you lived there?**

**How familiar are you with Farstorp, its surroundings and its inhabitants?**

**How do you experience and use your surroundings?**

Positively? Negatively? Do you have any favourite places? Areas you avoid?

**Are there places in your area that you have an emotional connection to?**

**Are there places in your area that you visit because they serve a specific purpose?**

**How do you experience Farstorp?**

As a neighbourhood and as a local community? A good place to live?  
**How old are you?**

Now I would like to talk with you about your

### **3 Participation in Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling**

This is the fifth year of Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling.

**Please tell me about your connection to it.**

**In which years did you participate?**

**Do you remember how you first heard about it?**

**What sparked your interest?**

**Why are you participating?**

**Please describe how you plan and carry out a tour.** When, with whom and how?

**Do you usually complete all three laps?** If not, why?

**Please tell me about a specific tour.**

How did the day go?

What did you see and experience?

How did it feel?

What was interesting, surprising, beautiful...?

What did you get out of the event? What did you value most?

How did the whole tour or individual laps feel to you?

What was particularly positive or negative about the tour for you?

**Do you know the tour area well?** How?

Did you know certain trails and places or the area in general?

Have you discovered new places and trails?

Is the new or the familiar most important to you on the tour?

Now I am going to ask some questions about the local environment.

### **4 Local heritage, local history**

The tour takes you to cultural and historical sites.

**Can you tell me something you remember that you find particularly interesting?**

**Can you tell me an interesting story about a place you have visited?**

Why did this particular place impress you?

**Do you remember other checkpoints that tell an interesting story?**

**Which places evoked emotions, were particularly beautiful, interesting, moving, impressive...? Why?**

Do you feel a special connection to certain historical places after the tour? Which ones? Why?

**What is your personal opinion about the value and importance of local cultural history?**

What new things have you learned about Farstorp's cultural history?

What does Farstorp's local history mean to you?

Do you find it interesting or important to learn more about it?

**What does it mean to you that the tour is closely connected to Farstorp and its history?**

Does this make the event particularly interesting

**Does this event strengthen your emotional connection to the local cultural**

**heritage?** How does it feel?

**Would you like to visit any of these places again?** Which ones, Why?

Now that we've talked about historical sites, my next questions are about

### **5 Importance of nature, natural sites along the way**

**What is your personal relationship with nature, what significance does it have for you?**

**In what ways is this activity good for you to get out and explore nature?**

**To what extent does this activity foster your emotional connection to nature?**

Do you feel a special connection to certain natural sites after the tour?

Which ones? Why? How?

**Which natural places did you find particularly beautiful, interesting, moving, impressive...?**

Why? Did you stop somewhere, spend more time, even off the checkpoints?

**Would you like to visit some of these natural places again in the future?**

Which ones, why?

**Did you know the nature in this area well?** How?

**How did it feel to be outdoors so much during the activity?**

My next questions are about the

### **5 Social aspects of that tour**

**Which kind of social experiences/benefits did that tour give to you?** How?

**Have you had any meaningful encounters along the way?** Which? How?

**How does your experience of the ride change through social interactions?**

e.g. by participating with others, meeting other people along the way, talking to others about this activity?

What difference does it make to you whether you cycle alone or with others?

Mina sista frågor gäller

### **7 Farstorps lokalsamhälle**

**What other events in Farstorp do you usually attend?**

**Is it important for you to belong to the local community in some way?**

**Do you play an active role in the community?**

**How does this event affect your connection to the local community?**

Has it changed your understanding of the local community? How? Why?

**To what extent do you know the people of Farstorp better now?**

**Does participating make you feel more part of the Farstorp village community?**

Why? How?

Do you feel more connected and included in the village community?

**Do you think this event is important?** Why?

Do you think such events are especially important in rural areas? Why?

**Finally, can you summarize what this activity gives you, what it means to you and why you participate?**

**Do you think you will participate again in the future?** Why?

### **8 Final Question**

We are coming to an end. Before I ask you to create a picture, do you have any final questions or comments?

### **9 Your personal picture of the tour**

Draw your own personal picture of the trip, reflecting your feelings, experiences, adventures, memories...

It could be a specific place, a specific route, something in nature or something related to cultural history, a moment or a day, an experience or a story - simply something that connects you to the trip.

You are completely free to choose what and how you draw, whether it is precise or abstract, in color or black and white, with or without text, simple or detailed. It is simply about what this trip represents for you personally.

### **10 Goodbye**

Thank you again for your participation! I really appreciate it!

# Appendix 12 - Interview questions and guideline participants, Swedish

## 1 Inledning, Samtycke

Hej *Namn*, trevligt att träffas.

Först vill jag kort presentera mig och intervjuens syfte. Jag studerar vid Sveriges lantbruksuniversitet (SLU). Programmet heter "Utemiljö för hälsa och välbefinnande" med huvudområde miljöpsykologi. Jag skriver för närvarande min masteruppsats om Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling. Jag bor ungefär 5 km från Farstorp i Högahult och jag har själv deltagit tidigare. Detta väckte min nyfikenhet, och jag vill utforska andra människors erfarenheter av denna aktivitet där man besöker lokala kulturellt och historiskt betydelsefulla platser.

Jag är intresserad av hur du upplevde evenemanget, vad denna aktivitet och besöket på de olika platserna betydde för dig. Jag kommer att ställa frågor om dina upplevelser, känslor och tankar, och i slutet kommer jag att be dig att skapa en bild av evenemanget.

Jag kommer att spela in intervjun. Dina uppgifter och bilden du förhoppningsvis kommer skapa används anonymt i min uppsats. Originaluppgifterna raderas efter att min uppsats har godkänts av universitetet. Du kan när som helst avbryta ditt deltagande, och alla dina uppgifter kommer då att raderas. Om du samtycker till allt detta ber jag nu om ditt muntliga samtycke.

Tack. Har du några frågor innan vi börjar?

Då startar jag röstinspelningen.

*Starta röstinspelning*

Mina frågor är avsedda att hjälpa dig att komma igång, så avbryt mig gärna. Först vill jag be dig att berätta något om

### **2 Dig själv, var du bor och Farstorp.**

**Hur långt är det från din bostad till Farstorp?**

**Är platsen en av Farstorps byar?**

**Hur länge har du bott där?**

**Hur känner du till Farstorp, dess omgivning och dess invånare?**

**Hur upplever och använder du din omgivning?**

Positivt? Negativt? Har du några favoritplatser? Områden du undviker?

**Finns det platser i ditt område som du har en känslomässig koppling till?**

**Finns det platser i ditt område som du besöker för att de tjänar ett specifikt syfte?**

**Hur upplever du Farstorp? Som grannskap och som lokalsamhälle? En bra plats att bo på?**

**Hur gammal är du?**

Nu skulle jag vilja prata med dig om

### **3 Ditt deltagande i Farstorps Byalags Kulturcykling.**

I år är det femte året för evenemanget. **Berätta gärna om din koppling till det.**

**Vilka år deltog du?**

**Kommer du ihåg hur du först hörde talas om det?**

**Vad väckte ditt intresse?**

**Varför deltar du?**

**Beskriv gärna hur du planerar och genomför en tur.** När, med vem och hur?

**Brukar du slutföra alla tre varv?** Om inte, varför?

**Berätta gärna om en specifik tur.**

Hur gick dagen?

Vad såg och upplevde du?

Hur kändes det?

Vad var intressant, överraskande, vackert...?

Vad fick du ut av evenemanget? Vad värdesatte du mest?

Hur kändes hela turen eller enskilda varv för dig?

Vad var särskilt positivt eller negativt med turen för dig?

**Känner du till turområdet väl? Hur?**

Kände du vissa leder och platser eller området i allmänhet?

Har du upptäckt nya platser och leder?

Är det nya eller det bekanta viktigast för dig på turen?

Nu skulle jag vilja ställa några frågor om

### **4 Lokalt kulturarv, lokal historia**

Turen tar dig till kulturhistoriska platser. **Kan du berätta något du minns och tycker är särskilt intressant?**

**Kan du berätta en intressant historia om en plats du har besökt?**

Varför imponerade just den här platsen på dig?

**Minns du andra kontrollpunkter som berättar en intressant historia**

**Vilka platser väckte känslor, var särskilt vackra, intressanta, rörande, imponerande...?**

Varför?

**Känner du till en särskild koppling till vissa historiska platser efter turen?**

Vilka? Varför?

**Vad är din personliga åsikt om värdet och betydelsen av lokal kulturhistoria?**

**Vilka nya saker har du lärt dig om Farstorps kulturhistoria?**

Vad betyder Farstorps lokala historia för dig?

Tycker du att det är intressant eller viktigt att lära dig mer om det?

**Vad betyder det för dig att turen är nära kopplad till Farstorp och dess historia?**

Gör detta evenemang särskilt intressant?

**Stärker detta evenemang din känslomässiga koppling till det lokala kulturarvet?**

Hur känns det?

**Skulle du vilja besöka några av dessa platser igen? Vilka? Varför?**

Nu när vi har pratat om historiska platser, gäller mina nästa frågor

### **5 Naturens betydelse, naturliga platser längs vägen.**

**Vad är din personliga relation till naturen, vilken betydelse har den för dig? På vilket sätt är den här aktiviteten bra för dig att komma ut och utforska naturen?**

**I vilken utsträckning främjar den här aktiviteten din känslomässiga koppling till naturen? Känner du till en speciell koppling till några naturliga platser efter turen?**

Vilka? Varför? Hur?

**Vilka naturliga platser tyckte du var särskilt vackra, intressanta, rörande, imponerande...?**

Varför? Stannade du någonstans, tillbringade du mer tid, även utanför kontrollpunkterna?

**Skulle du vilja besöka några av dessa naturliga platser igen i framtiden?**

Vilka, varför?

**Känner du till naturen i det här området väl? Hur?**

**Hur kändes det att vara utomhus så mycket under aktiviteten?**

Nu har jag några frågor om de

### **6 Sociala aspekter av turen.**

**Vilka sociala upplevelser erbjöd den här aktiviteten dig? Hur?**

**Hade du några möten längs vägen? Vilka? Hur?**

**Hur förändras din upplevelse av turen genom sociala interaktioner?**

t. ex. genom att delta tillsammans med andra, träffa andra människor längs vägen, prata med andra om denna aktivitet?

Vilken skillnad är det för dig om du cyklar ensam eller med andra?

Mina sista frågor gäller

### **7 Farstorps lokalsamhället.**

**Vilka andra evenemang i Farstorp brukar du delta i?**

**Är det viktigt för dig att du tillhör lokalsamhället på något sätt?**

**Spelar du en aktiv roll i samhället?**

**Hur påverkar det här evenemanget din koppling till lokalsamhället?**

Har det förändrat din förståelse av lokalsamhället? Hur? Varför?

**I vilken utsträckning känner du Farstorpsborna bättre nu?**

**Får deltagandet dig att känna dig mer som en del av Farstorps bysamhället?**

Varför? Hur?

Känner du dig mer sammankopplad och inkluderad i bygemenskapen?

**I vilken utsträckning tror du att den här aktiviteten främjar känslomässiga band till det lokala bysamhället?**

**Tycker du att den här händelsen är viktig? Varför?**

Tycker du att sådana händelser är särskilt viktiga på landsbygden? Varför?

**Slutligen, kan du sammanfatta vad den här aktiviteten ger dig, vad den betyder för dig och varför du deltar?**

**Tror du att du kommer att delta igen i framtiden? Varför?**

### **8 Slutfråga**

Vi närmar oss slutet. Innan jag kommer be dig att skapa en bild, har du några sista frågor eller kommentarer?

### **9 Din personliga bild av turen**

Rita din egen personliga bild av turen, som återspeglar dina känslor, upplevelser, äventyr, minnen...

Det kan vara en specifik plats, en specifik rutt, något i naturen eller något relaterat till kulturhistoria, ett ögonblick eller en dag, en upplevelse eller en berättelse – helt enkelt något som kopplar dig till turen.

Du är helt fritt att välja vad och hur du ritar, oavsett om det är precist eller abstrakt, i färg eller svartvitt, med eller utan text, enkelt eller detaljerat.

Det handlar helt enkelt om vad den här turen representerar för dig personligen.

### **10 Avslutning**

Tack igen för ditt deltagande! Jag uppskattar det verkligen!

# Appendix 13 - Cultural cycling map package 2025



## FARSTORPS BYALAG

BJUDER IN TILL

## KULTUR-CYKLING



**VAR MED OCH CYKLA OCH VINN FINA PRISER**

**12 Maj – 15 Sep.**

**STARTPAKET med karta och kontrollkort 50 kr**

**SWISH-NUMMER 123 118 82 26**

Nu är det dags för att bjuda in till nya turer ut i Farstorps bygden. I år utgår vi från olika startplatser, se kartan.

Passa på att ta chansen att besöka gamla och nya platser och läsa om dess historia.

Det finns 3 rundor på ca. 2 mil att cykla för att samla kontroller och bokstäver.

Kultur-cyklingen är sponsrad av: Sparbanken Göinge Farstorp, Sparbankstiftelsen Farstorp, Christensens Bygg & Foder AB Hästveda, ICA Bjärnum, ICA Hästveda, Nilssons Tryckeri AB Bjärnum.

Alla som lämnar in en ifylld talong är med i utlottning av fina priser.

Information om varje kontroll finner ni på baksidan av kartan.

Väl mött i vår fagra natur!

Njut av all den historia som vi valt att berätta om under dessa turer.

Välkomna!

Farstorps Byalag

## Välkomna till Farstorp Byalags kulturcykling

2025-05-15 – 2025-09-15

Farstorps Byalag inbjuder till en ny **KULTURCYKLING** detta år, den femte i ordningen. 3 nya cykelrundor erbjuds och där det finns totalt 30 kontrollpunkter att besöka. **Varje kontroll har något att berätta, se baksida karta.** Vid varje kontrollpunkt finns en bokstav, som skall antecknas på svarstalongen som medföljer detta paket. Skriv in bokstaven i avsedd ruta. Kontrollen är utmärkt på plats med en smal stolpe, höjd 0,7 – 1,0 m. Vi har valt att utgå från olika startplatser för att kunna variera oss mer och hitta mer att berätta om. Detta prövade vi i fjol och som togs väl emot.

**Då kontrollerna har besökts och svarstalongen är ifylld med namn och telefon så är man berättigad att delta i en utlottning som görs direkt efter att Kulturcyklingen är avslutad. Ett fint prisbord väntar. Vinnarna meddelas personligen och vinstlista kommer att anslås i Farstorp.**

Svarstalongen skall inlämnas i en brevlåda som kommer att finnas vid Farstorps Bygdegårds baksida, intill köksingången, märkt Farstorps Byalag. Senast den 15 september skall svarstalongen vara inlämnad för att komma med i utlottningen. Glöm inte att anteckna namn och telefon.

**Vi kommer dessutom att ha en extra utlottning bland de som har klurat ut vår gåta. De 30 bokstäverna kan fås till att bli en textslinga som vi vill att ni skall försöka lösa. Skriv in vad ni tror är lösningen på denna textslinga, där samtliga 30 bokstäver används. Texten anges på avsedd plats i svarstalongen. Ett tips på vägen. *Tänk på vad ni sysslar med och var ni är!***

Försvinner någon kontroll eller annat problem uppstår, vore vi tacksamma inom arbetsgruppen att få del av denna information. Kontakta någon av följande:

Ida Nilsson 073-386 17 09, Lars Eliasson 073-447 47 81, Kim Petterson 070-550 37 82.

Farstorps Kulturcykling sponsras av Sparbanken Göinge, ICA Hästveda, ICA Bjärnum, Christensens Bygg och Foder AB, Nilssons Tryckeri AB.

**Då vi är ute och cyklar så uppmanar vi alla att vara rädda om er så att inga incidenter uppstår. Trafikregler skall alltid iakttas. Vi vill också påminna om allemansrättens rättigheter och skyldigheter. Visa alltid hänsyn till markägare, djur och natur.**

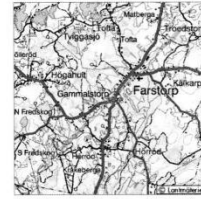
Vi önskar er alla trevliga rundor i cykelsadeln i vår vackra och kulturrika bygd. Stanna upp vid kontrollplatserna, läs informationen på baksida karta och begrunda vad som berättas.

**LYCKA TILL!**

Önskar Farstorps Byalag



## FARSTORPS BYALAG KULTUR-CYKLING



### SVARS-TALONG

Kontroll	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10
Bokstav										

Kontroll	11	12	13	14	15	16	17	18	19	20
Bokstav										

Kontroll	21	22	23	24	25	26	27	28	29	30
Bokstav										

**Extra uppgift:**

**Var med och tävla om extra priser.**

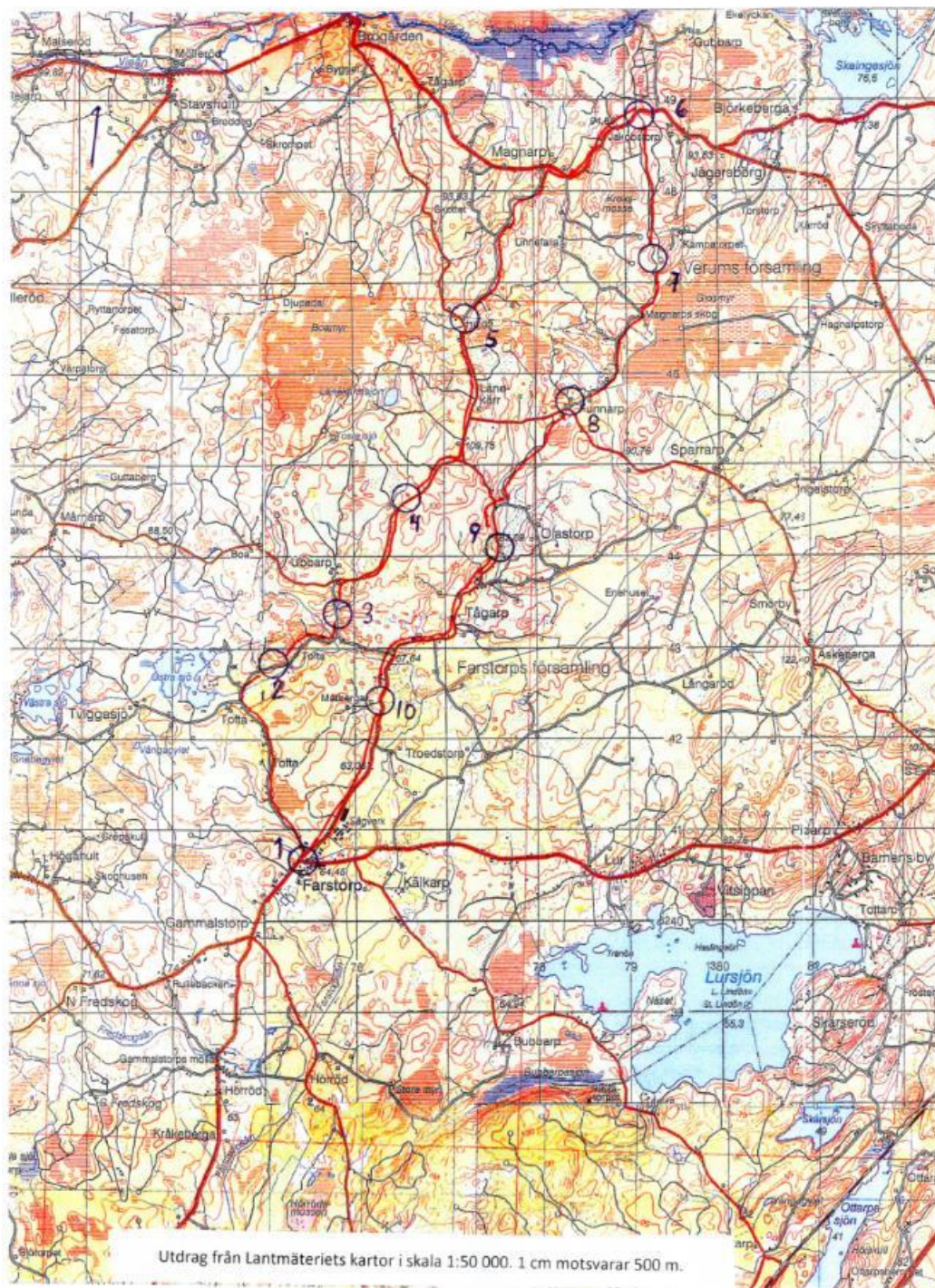
**Bilda en text av alla de bokstäver som Ni hittat under turerna.**

**TEXT:**

---

<b>Namn:</b>
<b>Adress:</b>
<b>Tel:</b>

Denna ifyllda talong lämnas i brevlådan på baksidan av Bygdegården i Farstorp



Cykelrunda 1 2025 Längd c:a 20 km

Parkeringsplats: Bygdegården, Farstorp

1. **Caféverksamhet.** Här intill låg förr två st. caféer. Café Björkhaga fanns i det hus som ligger mellan korsningen och bygdegården. Cedervalls café fanns i det grå huset norr om sparbankslokalen. Caféverksamheten upphörde under 1970-talet. I synnerhet var Cedervalls café mycket populärt bland ungdomar, för ca 75 år sedan.

2. **Naturreservat.** Farstorp har fått ett nytt naturreservat. Norr om denna plats har vi nu ett område in-tecknat som naturreservat. Området sträcker sig upp till Ubbarp. Här finns gammal orörd bokskog som man vill skydda och bevara. Här finns också de tre hällorna som går under benämning "snapphanehällorna", där snapphanar hade sitt kryp in för att komma undan och gömma sig.

3. **Inlandsisen.** Isälvarna under isen skapade rullstensåsarna. Här omkring har den satt tydliga spår. Åsarna är både stora och med rejäla dalgångar emellan. Åsarna löper här i öst-västlig riktning.

4. **Torpruiner.** I Ubbarp och Länekärr finns ovanligt många torpruiner. Här ute vid vägen låg ett torp där ruinerna är väl bevarade. De byggdes som regel i mitten av 1800-talet då befolkningsökningen var stor. Nödåren 1867 – 1869, då skörden slog fel två år i rad blev en prövningens tid för alla. Barn-dödigheten var stor och man fick ta till alla medel för att kunna överleva. Många kom att emigrera.

5. **Snapphaneöverfall.** Här vid gränsen mellan Länekärr och Verum skedde ett blodigt snapphane-överfall strax före jul 1677. En liten trupp om 16 svenska ryttare på väg norrut slog nattläger här. De överfölls av snapphanar i gryningen. Tre ryttare lyckades fly men de övriga blev dräpta på plats. Märkligt är att det varit så tyst om detta. Händelsen finns omskriven i en rättegångshandling 8 år senare. Var liken blev begravda är oklart. Kanske det finns en okänd massgrav i närheten?

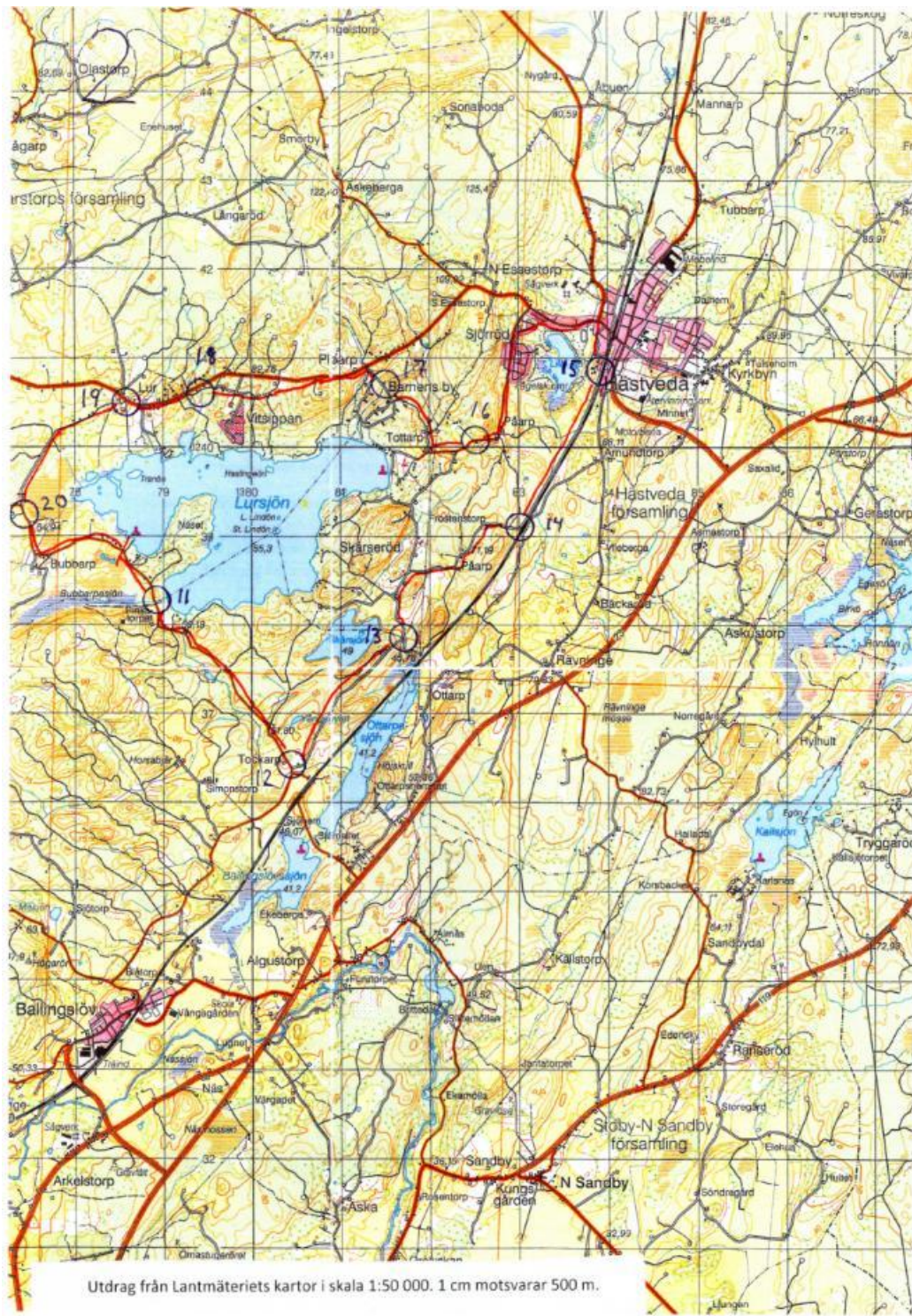
6. **Järnframställning.** På många platser i vår bygd finns det platser som minner om gammal järnframställning. Här i Magnarp såväl som i Funnarp finns det flera platser där man bearbetat myr-malm. Man kan fortfarande finna järnslag efter denna verksamhet trots att det gått ett flertal hundra år sen verksamheten upphörde. Myr-malmen kom att konkurreras ut av modernare metoder för att framställa järn och dessutom med en betydligt högre kvalitet på järnet.

7. **Grebbabrötet.** Här lär en ung flicka enligt gammal sägen ha trillat ner från en stor sten och avlidit då hon höll på med att vakta djur som gick och betade. Efter denna händelse uppkallas platsen för "Grebbabrötet". Ryktet säger att det spökar här efter denna händelse. Kan det vara denna sten?

8. **Ryssolja.** Här i Funnarp på f.d. Halls gård finns en ryssoljesten. Man torrdestillerade björkbark utan syretillförsel och då fick man fram en lättflytande olja som kallas ryssolja. Denna olja har använts av ryska soldater under århundraden för att smörja skor och hästars seldon och har en stark och mycket speciell lukt. Den kallas ryssolja eftersom man kunde känna ryska soldaters närvaro genom lukten.

9. **Smedjor.** Förr var bysmeden en oundgänglig person på landsbygden. Här på gränsen mellan Olastorp och Tågarps låg Tågarps smedja som startades av Elias Green kring 1875. Smedjan var i drift fram till 1946 då verksamheten upphörde. Att kunna reparera och tillvarata järnet var mycket viktigt och nödvändigt. Man fick vara rädd om det man ägde. Inget slit och släng vid denna tid.

10. **Släktgård.** Här i Matberga finns en genuin släktgård. Det går att påvisa att samma släkt har bott här sedan 1500-talet, vilket är mycket ovanligt. Gården har byggts om under seklernas gång men platsen är densamma. Nuvarande ägare är Magnus Turesson som följer i släktens spår och är Farstorp trogen.



Cykelrunda 2. Längd ca 20 km

Parkeringsplats: Bubbarpsbadet

**11. Bubbarpssjön.** Vid sjösänkningarna på 1870-talet så skedde stora förändringar här. Bubbarpssjön sträckte sig tidigare långt ner i sydväst längs berget mot Hörröd och kallades Lugherland i gamla skrifter, då sockengränserna drogs upp under 1200-talet. Efter sjösänkningen blev den idylliska sjön ett träskområde med mycket liten vattenyta.

**12. Tockarp.** Här låg norr om nuvarande gård två kringbyggda äldre gårdar. Ägandeskapet har skiftat många gånger och ibland var det svårt att hålla isär detta och köp fick återgå på grund av oklarheter kring gränser och vad man köpt p.g.a. alla andelstal som förelåg genom arv. Kring 1860 byggdes nuvarande vita gård. Här har funnits både kvarn och bränneri.

**13. Gamla gränser.** Här går sockengränsen. Denna cykelrunda startade i Farstorp, efter **K11** kommer man in i Stoby och härefter in i Hästvedas gamla socken. Denna gamla gräns drogs upp under 1200-talet och Stora Lindön i Lursjön är en plats där 3 socknar möts. Sockengränserna var av stor betydelse förr i tiden. Kyrkan skulle ha sitt tionde i skatt och då var det sockengränserna som styrde.

**14. Banvaktstugor.** Med järnvägens framdragnin följde mycket annat. Exempelvis så uppfördes en mängd banvaktstugor med ca 2-3 km avstånd mellan varandra. Enkla bostäder med ett rum och kök samt förråd. Efter Hästveda fanns närmast söderut Amundtorp, Frostentorp, Ottarp och Tockarp. Banvaktens syssla var att hans sträcka skulle kontrolleras varje dag innan första lok kom och ge klartecken till lokföraren från sin postering. Järnvägsgrindar skulle stängas m.m.

**15. Hembygdsföreningen** i Hästveda bildades 1949. Förste ordf. och initiativtagare till föreningen var Carl-Gunnar Persson. Hembygdssparkens första hus blev Rävningestugan som legat i Rävninge och nu kunde räddas med en flytt hit. I parken har sedan tillkommit Mannarpstugan, en banvaktstuga och en skvaltkvarn. I anslutning till Mannarpstugan finns också ett museum. Parken fungerar också som vandrarhem under sommartid, då här finns ett antal kampingstugor som hyrs ut för övernattnin.

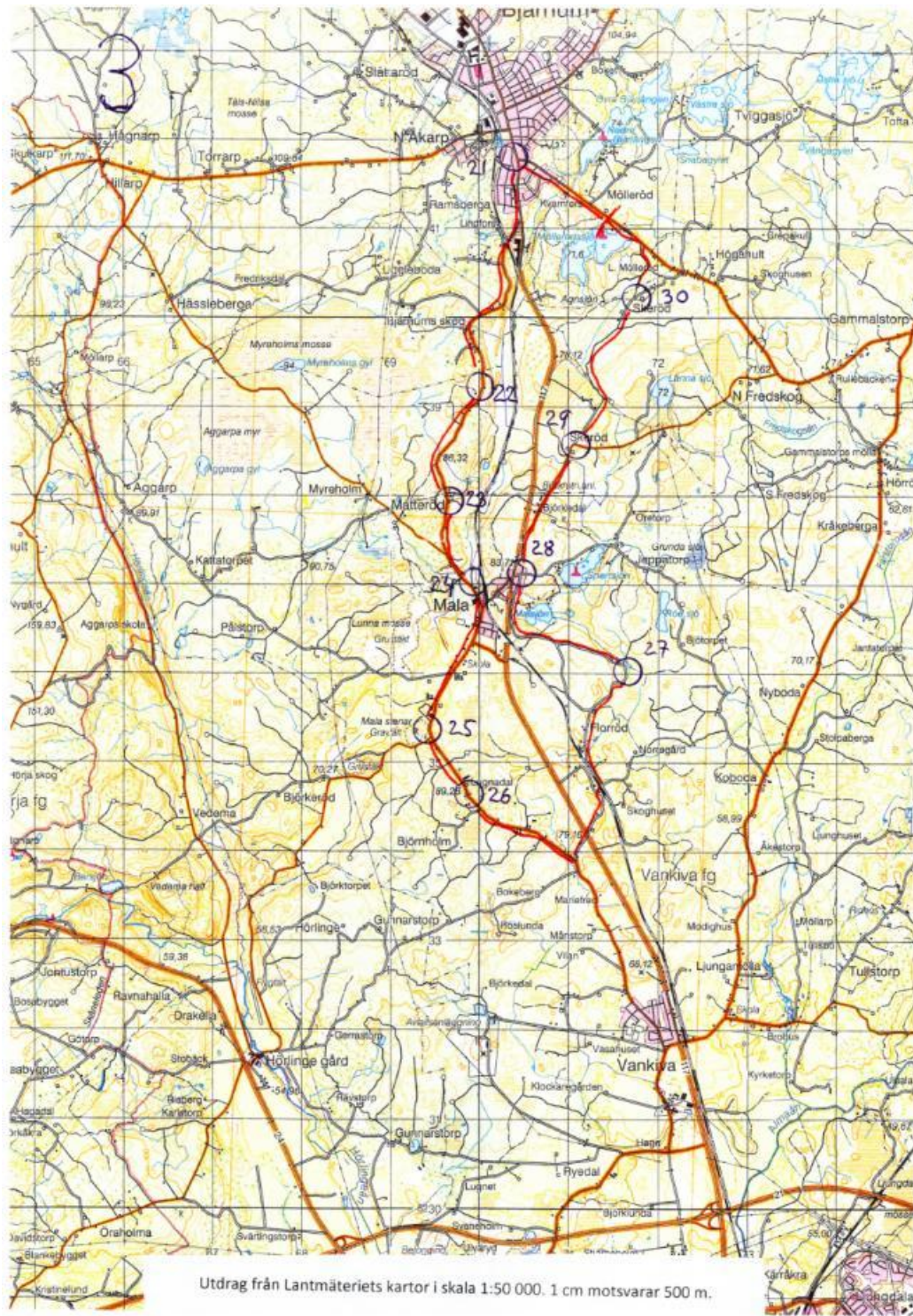
**16. Påarp** är en vidsträckt by, som mest är känd för att Anton Nilsson i Påarp skänkte mark vid Lursjön till Hästveda kommun 1937. Mark som tillkommit genom sjösänkningen och som nu har blivit det vi kallar Lursjöbaden. En turistpärla i Hässleholms kommun. Genom sitt attraktiva läge har i Påarp tillkommit flera nya hus på senare tid.

**17. Barnens By** ägs av Malmö stad och under åren 1935-1945 byggdes det upp en koloniverksamhet i Hästveda med 13 stugor som fortfarande är i drift och väl underhållna. Dessutom finns ett 14:e i Essestorp gamla skola. En av stugorna kallas "Rytter" eftersom här tidigare låg ett Ryttartorp. Just här låg en gammal skvaltkvarn, som är flyttad till Hästveda Hembygdsspark och kan beskådas där.

**18. Konstnärer.** Här intill finns en info.tavla vid vandringsleden som omtalar konstnärer i bygden. Här i grannskapet bodde John Öhwall och Torgny Rydahl, båda välkända konstnärer som hade som specialitet att avteckna naturen och i synnerhet bokskogen med alla dess färgskiftningar.

**19. Lur.** I början av 1970-talet upprustades vägen mellan Lur och Farstorp. Den smala och krokiga vägen förbättrades avsevärt. Här i Lur intill byastenen fanns förr en mycket skarp och besvärlig S-kurva som då togs bort. Samma skedde i Farstorp, där prästbron togs ur bruk och vägen kunde rätas ut genom att en vägtrumma grävdes ner och ersatte den gamla bron.

**20. HV-kök.** Här intill låg förr en träindustri som tillverkade köksinredning. Man kallade sig Kunglig Hovleverantör eftersom man skickat inredning till någon av de kungliga. Verksamheten var i blygsam skala och antalet anställda uppgick till högst ett tiotal.



Cykelrunda 3 2025. Längd c:a 20 km

Parkeringsplats: Mölleröds bad

**21. Gästgiveri.** Här fanns två gästgiverier. På norrsidan av vägen fanns redan 1703 det första enkla gästgiveriet. Under 1800-talet tillkom det även ett gästgiveri på Bjärbo som då var nybyggt. 1734 års Gästgiveri-förordning skärpte kraven för alla gästgiverier där det stadgades upp vad som gällde för skjutshåll, mat, logi och vilken standard de vägfarande kunde kräva. Milstenen här anger avståndet till närmaste gästgiveri, d.v.s. Röinge söderut och Vittsjö norrut. När järnvägen byggdes klar 1890 så kom vardagen att förändras till det sämre för att bedriva gästgiveriverksamhet.

**22. Rövare-backen.** Här intill och väster om vägen uppe på backen finns ett röse, som i gamla tider kallats Rövare-röret. En kuslig historia är knuten till det. Om det är sant eller endast sägen, vet ingen. Men det sägs att tre systrar skulle ha bragts om livet här då de var på väg till kyrkan i N. Åkarp för ottesång på juldagsmorgonen.

**23. Filminspelning.** SVT gjorde på 1980-talet en kriminalserie som fick namnet "Skånska mord". Ett avsnitt handlade om "Hurvamorden", där polisman Tore Hedin seriemördar 9 människor och tog slutligen sitt eget liv genom att dränka sig i Bosarpssjön. Detta hus finns med i filmen. Ett annat gammalt hus som låg strax intill, eldades upp i filmen för att gestalta ett av morderna. Ernst Hugo Järegård spelade huvudrollen, som polisman Tore Hedin.

**24. Fabrikshistoria.** Här ligger en fabrik med rötter i Bjärnum. Troedsson & Nilsson startades 1884 i Kulleröd som ett sågverk, sedan tillkom tunnbinderverksamhet. Efter en brand 1944 byggdes nytt i Bjärnum intill järnvägen. 1951 tillkom denna anläggning i Mala. Idag är det i huvudsak produktion och handel med EUR-pallar och pallkragar som gäller. Ingår i KRP-koncernen.

**25. Mala stenar** är ett gravfält från yngre järnåldern och består av sex skeppssättningar med 43 resta stenar. Den största skeppssättningen är 16,5 m lång och 6 m bred och består av 16 stenar. Här finns en mer ingående informationstavla som man kan ta del av. Kulturminne utöver det vanliga.

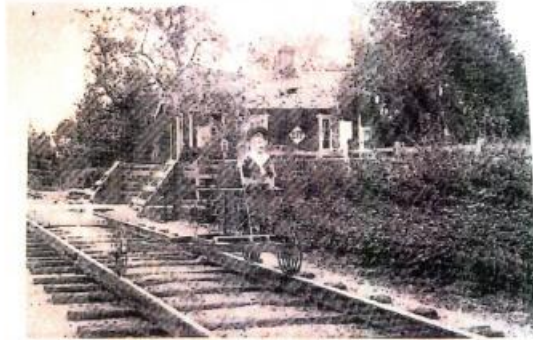
**26. Milstenar.** Här finns en krönt milsten med inskriptionen AF (Adolf Fredrik) 1766 som anger att man har färdats en gammal svensk mil från föregående gästgiveri (Röinge). Det finns också ¼ - milstenar och ½-milstenar men dessa var inte krönte. Finns också i järn men kallas då milstolpar.

**27. Bobacken** på Oretorp 1:6 östra gräns var tidigare kringflutet av gungfly. I orostider förvarade bönderna i Mala by sina värdefullaste ägodelar där. En svensk ryttare lär ha upptäckt detta men han kunde infångas och oskadliggöras. Kroppen och hästen skall ha trampats ner i dyn.

**28. Mala** tillhör Vankiva socken. Hit kom järnvägen 1890 och man fick egen station vilket lyfte den lilla byn. En av Sveriges första riksdagskvinnor, Nelly Thüring var född här och har fått en egen gata i Mala uppkallad efter sig. Tre bröder Augustsson gjorde sig kända inom fotbollen och spred beröm åt Mala inom idrottsvärlden.

**29. Skeröd** brandhärjades och ödelades av svenskt krigsfolk under ledning av vår hjältekung Gustav II Adolf i början 1600-talet. Från 1570 fram till 1710 var det mycket oroligt i våra gränsbygder. De svenska härjningstågen var många och avlöste varandra. Efter freden 1658 tog det ca 60 år innan det lugnade sig.

**30. Krooks donation.** Otto Daniel Krook var en köpman i Helsingborg som skänkte pengar för inköp av skog som skulle bevaras för framtiden. Under 2023 firades 150-årsjubileum av detta. Flera unika skogsområden blev inköpta och finns nu samlade under stiftelsen Skånska landskap. Här ingår närliggande Mölleröd samt Vedema i Hässleholms kommun.



Barnabroarna nr 277 Frestentorp låg några km söder om Hälsöeda järnvägsstation. Stugan skilde till  
privatprivat och flyttades omkring 1940 till Ekestorp. Foto: Husa



Grebbabrödet,  
runda 1



Skvaltekvärn från Piparp,  
runda 2



Gästgivargård i Bjärnum 1800-talet, runda 3



Krönt milsten, runda 3

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