

Evidensbase, Denmark, Løget

In this report we shall take a look at a number of different activities on the housing estate, Løget, in Vejle, Denmark, with a view to providing a qualified foundation for launching the activities described in HCHF.

Some of the activities described here are only indirectly related to matters of health, but we have chosen to include them because we feel that taken as a whole they provide a good basis for understanding what is going on in Løget. Moreover, the experience gained from the activities we describe can be applied in a broader perspective and may therefore be of significance when setting up new projects on the housing estate.

Naturally, we have tried to select those experiences and recommendations which we find especially relevant to HCHF.

Activity	The Social Master Plan, "Løget blooms"
Description	<p>The Social Master Plan is part of the overall Health Master Plan which was launched in 2007 with a grant from the Public Housing Building Foundation (Landsbyggefonden) and is due to run until 2013.</p> <p>The major goal of the Master Plan for Løget is to reverse the spiral of negative development in the area, involving residents in an all-round effort to create a more attractive, safe and well-functioning housing estate in harmonious balance with the rest of the town. To achieve this goal, both practical and social activities will be launched.</p> <p>In connection with the master plan, a Project Coordinator and a Residents Coordinator have been appointed, both with offices and a visible presence in the local area. Their task is to ensure that activities within the framework of the Master Plan are kept moving, and that structures relating to local democracy and the organisation of the housing estate are respected. Steering committees and other groups will be set up to make sure that residents are actively involved in decision-making and other matters relating to the activities launched in their area. For this reason, the coordinators are regarded as the central pivot of all activities in the area, including those not covered by the Social Master Plan. A residents' magazine and the house-to-house distribution of leaflets and flyers will inform residents about activities launched in the area. Recently, information monitors have been set up at relevant sites in the area.</p> <p>There is considerable awareness that Løget is an area at risk, and as such there is</p>

a natural tendency for all sorts of well-intentioned people to set up exciting and highly relevant projects. However, this wealth of activity is accompanied by the risk that projects with very similar content might be launched in the area without any form of cooperation between them! The project coordinators are there to ensure that all activities in the area are coordinated and work together to achieve the goals of the Social Master Plan.

Experience and recommendations

Respect for local democracy

- Coordination and networking between all projects in the area is very important; new projects must respect the established structure and must commit themselves to pass on information and participate in cooperative bodies. Conversely, the coordinators of the Master Plan need to keep an eye open for the potentials and possibilities of new projects and make sure that they have the opportunity to cooperate.

Read more

<http://www.logetby.dk/documents/00003.pdf>

Activity "Heartfelt"

Description

A separate application for funding was made to set up a health centre – an important move under the Social Master Plan – which has been given the name "Heartfelt in Løget".

Heartfelt opened in early 2009 and is run by a full-time health worker. The idea is that Heartfelt should launch activities related especially to health promotion that can help improve social measures in the area, apart from establishing and maintaining the conditions for a better and healthier life for residents of Løget. Health and well-being are watchwords here; the centre should encourage and support by word and example residents who wish to improve their own health and well-being.

Various activities have been launched under the aegis of Heartfelt:

- **Open advisory service in Heartfelt:** Heartfelt is open most days of the week. Residents of the area can come along for an informal chat about health, medication, making an individual health profile, etc..
- **Baby Room:** aimed at families with small children, in cooperation with the health visitor of the area. The Baby Room is open at fixed times on a number of days, but there are also a number of theme events designed specially for families with small children.
- **Physical exercise:** workouts for women, Zumba and other activities involving physical exercise, adapted to the needs and wishes of the residents. These activities are provided in cooperation with adult

	<p>education services.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- Weight-watching and quit smoking courses: in cooperation with the Health Department of the Municipality of Vejle, Heartfelt offers free courses in weight reduction and stopping smoking. These courses are run as required.
Experience and recommendations	<p>Close cooperation with the municipality</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- If you really want to change things on a housing estate, you need to cooperate closely with the municipality. Heartfelt is a permanent fixture and very visible on the estate; its coordinator works very closely with the municipality. This means that Heartfelt is an ideal social hub to link the needs, moods and ways of thinking of residents with the services offered by the municipality in terms of health promotion.
Read/hear more	<p>http://www.loegetby.dk/00070/00111/ http://www.loegetby.dk/documents/00033.pdf Project Manager Tina Wagner</p>

Activity Health Agents – training for voluntary health work

Description	<p>A central element in the Heartfelt project is to develop and run a training course for Health Agents. The idea is to run the course three times in the course of the project, training an expected sixty Health Agents.</p> <p>This course will be offered in cooperation with the Adult Education Centre (VUC) in Vejle and the Municipality of Vejle. The purpose of the course is to qualify and motivate residents to carry out voluntary health promotion work in the local area. The course ran for the first time in October 2010. The course has been developed drawing on the experience gained with the design of a training course for Housing Unit Ambassadors on the Løget and Nørremarken estates.</p> <p>These Health Agents are not to be seen as professional health workers as such. The idea is that they should facilitate health-related activities. They should have a basic knowledge of health matters and the tools to enable them to inform residents and initiate activities.</p> <p>Recruiting to the course has been done using flyers, pamphlets, information given at meetings and on the website, via Facebook, and not least by visiting potential agents at home.</p> <p>The course is a combination of theory and practice, shifting between traditional teaching and project work, in connection with which participants are offered tutoring and other forms of support. Project work leads on to various particular</p>
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health activities directed at specific target groups or at all residents as one group. Participants work on two major projects in the course of their training. The course concludes with an optional examination: participants are examined in the project which they have been working on in the last phase of the course and which they are expected to present in the context of the theoretical teaching they have received.

In December 2010, the group of Agents carried out their first major project – a Festival of Light, involving a communal meal, entertainment and a torchlight procession through Løget. The event was very well attended by a broad and representative cross-section of the residents. The Agents ran the whole event: information, planning and entertainment.

Experience and recommendations

The description of the course designed in the HCHF project resembles the Health Agent training course. We would therefore recommend that the two courses be coordinated, using the experience gained from running the first Health Agent training course.

Broad recruitment

- Getting new recruits is very important in connection with this course. A lot of resources have been mobilised to recruit participants, and this has proved to be a good investment, as new recruits have turned up, especially resourceful ethnic minority women. One of the positive, indirect results here (as in the Book Project) is that you get a wider group of people who can be contacted in connection with future health activities. For example, in connection with the recent Festival of Light it could clearly be seen that a broad and ethnically mixed selection of residents attended.

A practical approach

- The experience gained from the course, and in terms of the actual people attending it, shows the importance of including a large amount of practical project work. This places considerable professional demands on the instructor to maintain a respectable level of theory while supporting the interest and motivation of participants to involve themselves in specific practical projects.

The target group and the planning of teaching

- Different things need to be taken into account when planning the timetable for the course. If people in employment are to participate, the course will have to run evenings or weekends, but on the other hand this excludes people who have child-minding problems. The first course was run in the early afternoon. In light of the high level of unemployment, this course could be a viable alternative to employment activation, so efforts should be made to have the course recognised as a further training possibility alongside other courses on offered to the unemployed.

Read/hear more

Project Manager Tina Wagner

Mail tw@vucvejle.dk for a description of the first course.

Activity	"Health in your own back yard"
Description	<p>The Municipality of Vejle has received a grant from the National Board of Health's rate adjustment pool to launch this project on the Løget and Nørremarken estates.</p> <p>Briefly, the project involves training a corps of Weight Watcher Advisors, who can work in an holistic but targeted manner to change the eating and exercise habits of the families involved. At the outset the target group was overweight adults from non-western countries, but pressure from the executive committees of the two housing associations and others led to it being extended to include Danish citizens.</p> <p>The project started in October 2008 and finished in December 2012. Twelve professional Weight Watcher Advisors were trained in this period. The goal of involving a total of 100 people in the project has already been achieved.</p> <p>In the first place, an attempt was made to recruit people by means of a leaflet translated into several languages, but with no result. Consequently, actual recruitment was achieved through information meetings in associations of various ethnic groups, direct, personal contact and by word of mouth.</p> <p>The participants in the project were offered, over a period of fifteen months, a number of personal interviews, the drawing up of a personal health profile and of a barometer of well-being . The Weight Watcher Advisors involved have used such methods as "The motivating interview" and "The one step at a time concept". With the Weight Watcher Advisor as primus motor, network groups were set up covering various activities, such as walking, stopping smoking, cooking, physical exercises and guided shopping trips. Great efforts have been made to involve participants' families in the project activities.</p>
Experience and recommendations	<p>Considerations concerning recruitment</p> <p>In the course of evaluating the project, there have been a number of relevant reflections concerning recruitment and the spread of information. The following problem areas have been identified:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• An esoteric project title. The title of the project makes little sense in a non-western context and therefore does not arouse the interest of the target group. In general, the use of written information materials calls for a lot of preparation, as neither text nor illustrations necessarily signify the same in different cultures.• Attitudes to public authorities. The project involves the Municipality and the Job Centre. Non-western target groups are often suspicious of public authorities, a fact which may influence their desire to take part in the

project.

- **Is it unhealthy to be fat?** The starting point of this project – "Being fat is not a good thing" – is not necessarily accepted by the target group, who may well have other ideals concerning appearance and a healthy way of life.

Sources

Project description: <http://www.vejle.dk/page32518.aspx>
Project Manager Susanne Petersen. Mail to speen@vejle.dk for further information.

Activity

Books and Health

Description

The Municipality of Vejle's library bus drives around the municipality, making it easy for everyone to borrow books and make use of other library services. The library bus normally comes to the Løget estate two afternoons a week.

In 2003, Vejle Library applied for funding for a project aiming to get more people with non-Danish backgrounds to use the library bus.

While the project was running, the opening hours of the library bus in this area were extended from the normal two afternoons a week to include mornings, hoping in this way to reach more of the women. Information about the project was spread using flyers and posters and via contact with all agencies active in the local area: health visitors, language teachers, caretakers, project coordinators, the Danish Church Cross Army, and so on. In addition, Vejle Library attached to the project a librarian with a non-Danish background, who was able to make good contact with the locals.

With special emphasis on the health angle, a number of theme events were organised with a focus on women's needs, keeping in mind the words of the song: "When Mama ain't happy, ain't nobody happy". Themes: children in families with substance abuse; your body and your back (five evenings with a physiotherapist); women and health (a Danish/Arabic gynaecologist spoke about women and health in both Danish and Arabic). Treasure hunts were organised for the children with considerable success, stimulating language and physical activity. All these activities were run with the help of local voluntary workers.

There was no quantitative evaluation, but the library is quite certain that more people are using the library bus than before the project period. The project has helped to maintain a library bus service in the area, which was otherwise in danger of being closed down.

Experience and

Local project worker

recommendations | - A project worker with a local network has proved to be the project's greatest gain. When something is recommended by someone you know, the message is more credible, you feel more at ease and are more likely to want to join in the activity. A local project worker is more in tune with people's real wishes and needs, so that a programme and its activities can be adapted to these wishes and needs, thus indirectly involving residents in the project and giving them a sense of responsibility.

Source | <http://www.forbindelser.dk/artikel.php?id=17>

Activity "Odd jobs" – a pocket money project

Description | The Odd Jobs project was originally set up using volunteers, but in October 2005 it was formally established by the Urban Committee in Vejle and funding was sought to develop the project, including an application to the Integration Ministry. Odd Jobs covers the pocket money project, an odd jobs exchange and study guidance for young people aged 13–19. The main focus has been on that part of the project called the pocket money project, which employs young people to carry out different kinds of paid jobs. Apart from the jobs, social events are organised for the young people.

While under development, the funding of Odd Jobs has been based on a grant from the Integration Ministry, the local Urban Committee and self-financing. Today, the project is funded by the Municipality of Vejle and the housing associations in the town working together in the organisation called BolivVejle. Two full-time project workers are employed. Odd Jobs is running very well in the two major housing estates in Vejle, Løget and Nørremarken, enjoys the respect of young people and their parents and has become integrated in the daily life of the housing estates.

Experience and recommendations | **A super bargain offer**

- Projects aiming at residents in socially challenged areas have to be put across as super bargain offers rather than social services. They need to be presented and advertised as bargain offers, otherwise the young people involved may be in danger of being socially stigmatised instead of being given a helping hand.
- Odd Jobs may be of relevance to HCHF in connection with child-minding services offered to those taking part in the course.

Read more | Odd Jobs has been described and evaluated in various reports, the links to which can be found here:

<http://www.eukn.dk/page.php?ID=10457>

Evaluation of Odd Jobs

http://www.tjansen.dk/filer/Endelig-evalueringsrapport-Tjansen2006_samlet.pdf

Activity	Adult Education in the local area
Description	<p>The Social Master Plan involves the provision of various adult education activities on the housing estate in cooperation with the Vejle Adult Education Centre and the Art & Culture School (evening classes). Teaching takes place in a well-equipped classroom with proper ICT and other teaching facilities. Vejle Adult Education Centre has engaged someone part-time to coordinate the programme and liaise with other services offered in the area.</p> <p>This move aims to make it easier and more attractive for residents to get started on some kind of education course. Among courses offered in the area in recent years can be mentioned: Danish, ICT, English, Arabic, Yoga, Pottery and Sewing. Information about courses can be found in residents' magazines, flyers distributed to all households and personal contact.</p>
Experience and recommendations	<p>Direct personal contact</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">- It is difficult to arouse interest in the services offered. The best approach seems to be to contact people directly in their homes, as the vast majority of people are quite happy about a home visit. Networks, established for example in ethnic minority clubs and associations, have also proved to be very effective, though there is always the risk of creating closed groups – one for Afghans, one for Somalians, etc.
Read more:	<p>http://www.loegetby.dk/00039/00082/ VUC (Adult Education) Coordinator: Jørgen Ejlskov</p>

Activity	Open Workshops, Activity Committees
Description	<p>An important goal of the Social Master Plan is to involve residents in voluntary work, encouraging them to assume some responsibility for the development of this urban area. Volunteers are recruited through the executive committee and networks.</p> <p>The best example of activities that directly involve the residents are the Open Workshops, which are workshops set up under the Social Master Plan and then taken over by volunteers. At the moment, volunteers keep the exercise room open, and run the pottery and bike repair workshops. In addition, there are clubs for playing cards and bowling.</p> <p>Recurring traditions, such as Midsummer, Bingo (also for children), the Christmas tree party, the Christmas bazaar and flea market and the Løget By Day event are run by volunteers. At the moment there is an Activity Committee, which consists of 15-20 people, half of which are from the executive committees.</p>

Volunteers from outside the housing estate also play an important part. The Danish Church Cross Army has run a successful café for 20 years, manned by external volunteers. For the last two years, the Danish Refugee Council has run a club for women, mainly from ethnic minorities. The club meets every fortnight and is kept going due to herculean efforts by two outside volunteers.

Experience and recommendations

Same old faces

- It is difficult to get new volunteers to take part in voluntary activities at the local level. The tendency is for the same old faces to crop up time and again, which means that volunteers are not really representative of the mosaic of residents in the area. On the other hand, it is important to make voluntary work visible within a formal framework such as the Activity Committee. It is also important to draw on well-established and smoothly functioning activities in the area; they can be a mine of valuable experience and the source of recruits to new activities.

Read/hear more

<http://www.loegetby.dk/00005/00068/>
Residents Coordinator: Jørn Blander

A) Place/setting

Demographic data

Løget has 1,896 residents, with more children and fewer people over 50 than in the municipality as a whole. There are a large number of singles (60.8%), which is markedly higher than the municipal average of 44.3%. Moreover, the body of residents as a whole is characterised by relatively more single parents (8%), who have 1.79 children on average, in contrast to the municipal average of 1.6 children per single parent. In other words, this means that 27% of the children in Løget only have a single parent, in comparison with 16.5% in the municipality as a whole.

Residents with a non-Danish ethnic background make up 43% of the population in Løget, and the present trend is towards an increase in the number of such people on the housing estate.

Taken as a whole, the statistics indicate that the area is moving towards a social pattern that is distorted in comparison with the municipality as a whole. The clearest expression of this tendency is that Løget has a larger percentage of residents not in employment (52.5%) and a greater number of unemployed (8.1%).

The imbalance of so many people not being in employment is emphasised by the fact that between 56 and 60% of pensioners in the area are on early retirement, as compared to only 38% in the municipality as a whole. Moreover, in 2002 about 73% of the residents were receiving some kind of supplementary social benefit, such as unemployment benefits and social

security. The area must be defined as a low-income area: the average gross yearly income for residents of the Municipality of Vejle is DKK 195,441, but in Løget the figure is markedly lower – DKK 127,313.

	Løget	Vejle
Inhabitants	1,896	
Singles	60.8 %	44.3 %
Children of single parents	27%	16.5 %
Non-Danish ethnic background	43%	8 %
Not in employment	52.5 %	
Early retirement/old-age pensioners	56-60 %	38 %
Average income (DKK)	127,313	195,441

Source:
 Facts and Figures, Municipality of Vejle
 Master Plan, "Løget Blooms"

Considerations concerning health and demographics

John Singhammer of the Centre for Public Health has produced a report on the health of ethnic minorities. In the light of his findings, the figures quoted above would lead us to expect that in Løget the incidence of chronic diseases, such as diabetes and heart and lung diseases, and of mental and psychosomatic illnesses would be higher than in the Danish population as a whole. Considerable differences between minority groups and the majority of the population in terms of patterns of illness and illness-related behaviour have been registered in a variety of contexts. Moreover, unfortunate eating habits and a lack of exercise will contribute to pushing the general state of health in the wrong direction.

Slightly less than half of the residents of Løget belong to ethnic minorities, which generally have lower level of self-assessed health, a higher percentage of long-term illnesses and more frequent visits to GPs and hospitals. Despite the later point, however, ethnic minority patients find it harder to find their way round the Danish health system. Lack of Danish language skills in ethnic minorities, especially in the case of senior citizens, make it more difficult to enter into a dialogue with them about health problems, their prevention and treatment.

People's conception of health is culturally determined, in terms of both social and ethnic groupings. For this reason it is vital that residents be drawn into an active dialogue about personal and local health promotion activities that may help improve the general level of health.

What is important?

Based on the above accounts and data, and on interviews with relevant people, our recommendations regarding HCHF may be resumed as follows:

- We must recruit **directly from inside ethnic majority groups**. Experience from previous projects indicates that recruitment from ethnic minority groups calls for a lot of resources. Close contact to ethnic minority clubs and associations is required. Networks and internal role models are a great help if the idea behind a project is to be presented in an attractive, motivating way.
- At the same time, one should be aware not only to recruit from ethnic minority groups, which would make the project somewhat exclusive and socially unbalanced. The Danish residents of Løget are very keen that projects and activities should be broadly based. The executive committees adopt the general position that project funding **must be to the benefit of all**. There have been cases in which executive committees have refused to participate in projects aimed at particular ethnic minority groups.
- Coordinators, members of executive committees and various other people are key cooperative partners. We recommend a high level of information and **respect for the established structures** in the area – which can be assured by close cooperation with the coordinator of the Master Plan.
- Establish **close cooperative relations** to the municipality and other health agencies in the area, so that new initiatives can build on experience with similar activities, improving the general level of the services offered.
- As far as those residents are concerned who are to take part in the project, there must be **a realistic basis** for their taking the course, which means that the individual's personal situation in terms of employment or unemployment must be carefully considered. At a practical level, this may call for further development of child-minding measures (the Odd Jobs project might be useful here), and contacting the Job Centre to have the course recognised as an activation measure.

- In connection with recruiting and information it is important to avoid **the esoteric use of** language. Titles, text and illustrations can send different signals in different cultural contexts.
- **Cultural presuppositions** mean a lot in terms of people's motivation to take part in the project. For example, the fact that the municipality or the Job Centre are responsible for the project may put some people off; similarly, the main issue and value base of the project, while relevant in a Danish context, may seem irrelevant to non-western residents.