



NHMF Study Tour Report



15-17 May 2024

Stockholm 

Contributors:

- > **Julian Ransom**, BSc MRICS (ion-consultants + NHMF Man. Committee)
- > **Dominic Higgins**, Director - Rand Associates
- > **Ian Gardner**, Director (Property Services) - Wolverhampton Homes
- > **Peter Long**, Housing Property Manager – Basildon Borough Council
- > **Tony Clark**, Regional Director – Seddon Construction Ltd
- > **Mike Turner**, Executive Director - Cardo Group

Contents:

Pages 1-21	Study Tour Report
Pages 22-24	Participating Organisations (logos)
Page 24	Speakers and Hosts Contribution
Pages 25-29	Selected LinkedIn Testimonials of Study Tour 2024

Introduction | Context of the Tour

Contributor: Julian Ransom BSc MRICS



Every year, the National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF) organises a study tour trip to an area of interest and with relevance to topical challenges in the UK Social Housing Sector. Previous venues have included, the Netherlands, Denmark and Sweden (a 'toe dip' to Malmö), Germany, the Channel Islands, Austria (2022), as well as Ireland, Cardiff, Glasgow, London, and many others.

In 2023, and as a pre-cursor to this year's trip, we visited the impressive Octopus Energy R&D Centre in Slough, and Oxford Brookes University, all focused around retro-fit, NZC (Net Zero Carbon), damp + mold (D&M) and the challenges associated. Thanks to our friends at Octopus Energy and Oxford Brookes.

Delegates typically comprise the NHMF Committee, and invited guests/ sector related organisations. For Sweden, with over 40 delegates attending, this included commercial organisations, social housing providers (large and small), academics, the Chartered Institute of Housing, the National Housing Federation, and TPAS England. Please see the appended logos of those organisations represented.

So why Sweden in 2024?

The primary reason was to visit a European neighbour long acknowledged as being very progressive in respect of NZC preparedness, the adoption of heat networks and heat pumps/related measures, and many wider sustainability agendas. This in the context of both existing legacy housing and infrastructure, world leading sustainability design/development from the early 2000s (Hammarby Lake City), and large re-development programs now underway (including The Royal Seaport). Although not a term directly acknowledged by the Swedes, we also wished to look at their equivalent 'social housing' model, understand their accompanying challenges and share innovative solutions being adopted.

And of course a potential visit to what is arguably the original/first, and now the world's 2nd largest Ikea.

Ben Virgo and I undertook an initial liaison visit in October 2023, and are very grateful to all those in Sweden who assisted us with what transpired to be a most interesting, instructive and helpful study tour program. This notably included The City of Stockholm (including technical tour guides, energy/ecology specialist, + the model city), the KTH Royal Institute of Technology (University), National and Regional governmental housing bodies, tenant / occupant lead pressure group (Electricity), public housing companies (HA equivalent), progressive energy design architects, the City of Stockholm Museum, and the 'old city' walking tour guide.

Stockholm is a truly beautiful city to visit, with many water ways, islands, parks, a rich culture and much historic and modern architecture of note. We were very lucky to have uninterrupted sunshine which showed the City at its best.

There is too much from our visit to cover in detail, however, the following provides an engaging glimpse, written by delegates who attended, with which to appreciate some aspects of interest. If you have any areas of particular interest, please contact Ben or myself on behalf of the NHMF for presentation notes and/or more detail.

julian@ion-consultants.co.uk
ben.virgo@m3h.co.uk

Day 1: Historic Stockholm

Wednesday 15 May | afternoon tour

Contributor: Dominic Higgins



We were met by our city guide, Arturo Ardao Rivera (Rainbow Tours of Stockholm), who took us on a very informative walking tour of parts of the historic city centre of Stockholm. The weather was beautiful with sunshine glinting off the Baltic Sea, the architecture and culture we saw, magnificent, and the information and humour provided by Arturo set up the context for start of the tour perfectly.

We also learnt about the general preservation of historical buildings owing to Sweden's traditionally neutral stance during the first and second world wars.

Many of these buildings have a similar aesthetic appeal and can be difficult to age or distinguish – top tip – the clue is in the colour of the roof!



The tour concluded in the city centre's glass 'walk over' city model, an exquisitely detailed model of Stockholm allowing a real appreciation of how this beautiful city is nestled within the Baltic Sea.

Here we had the pleasure and benefit of *Dr Richard Lowes' vast knowledge and experience of the UK's challenges in reducing carbon emissions and how the natural resources in Sweden offer a wider variety of solutions.

The UK's dependence on natural gas was highlighted and is in stark contrast to Sweden's majority of district heating, layered against the population density and being the second coldest country in Europe make the stats even more impressive.

The climate change act requires complete elimination of fossil fuels by 2050, as far away from us now as 1998 – seems like yesterday! With 88% of households currently relying on fossil fuels this does seem an extraordinary challenge.

The second coldest country is also the best for retaining heat in buildings with the lowest U Values for walls, roofs and floors – this is just innovation and should absolutely be something that could be replicated by the UK and rest of Europe – as we learnt later in the tour the appreciation of the impact of cold bridging in homes is far superior which we could learn an awful lot from given our dire efforts to combat damp and mould.

The news gets worse! The UK's reliance on, largely imported, natural gas leaves us terribly vulnerable to volatile market conditions and the turbulence we've seen, in particular, since the war in Ukraine.

So what can be done?

One solid looking solution is heat pumps – both domestic and district.

However, along with the physical challenges there is also a people or perception challenge when it comes to, what may be our best hope, heat pumps. Heat pumps don't conform to the 'normal' behaviours we experience when we get chilly – we are more about boosts, on or off and the psychology (especially due to the fear of cost) of continuous background, slowly type warming behaviours of heat pumps.

It was certainly humbling at times as the stats continued to drop in – oh and another thing, Sweden managed to climb from the very worst standard of living country in Europe to the very best within the same century.

Smart guys...

**Dr Richard Lowes. Senior Associate RAP (the Regulatory Assistance Project), research Fellow University of Exeter, Energy policy expert.*



Day 2: Present Stockholm

Thursday 16 May | morning tour

Contributor: Ian Gardner

Day 2 of the Study Tour commenced at the Stockholm City Museum. This included a range of presentations and a brief tour of the museum's Pihlqvist Family Home.

Introduction to Swedish/Stockholm housing model

Bertram Steininger, Associate Professor for Real Estate and Finance, KTH Royal Institute of Technology, Stockholm



Bertram has lived in Sweden for 6 years and has sought to integrate his technological university background into improving housing.

Sweden is a relatively small country in global terms. Population of 10.5 million (25.5 inhabitants per SqKm) versus 67.6 million (279 inhabitants per SqKm) in the UK. 87% of Swedes live in urban areas, that only covers 1.5% of its entire land area.

	Sweden	UK
Single Households	42% (35% 60 years plus)	30% (30% 65 years plus)
Average Household size	2.0 persons (Stockholm)	2.4
Average rooms per person	1.8	1.6

‘Social Housing’ is not a term used in Sweden, ‘Public Housing’ is the preferred definition for those who rent their homes from the municipalities (local government). This promotes integration and reduces stigmatising of low-income families.

Rented housing is not considered as being an ‘investment’ in Sweden, with a highly regulated rent setting regime being in place. The overall number of housing units is broadly sufficient, however there are high levels of under-occupation, leading to an ‘allocation’ imbalance. This results in a typical 9 year wait for a ‘rental contract’.

The Housing Co-Operative model is commonly used, with the management Board taking control of the day-to-day management of the housing units and common areas. This includes when owner occupiers wish to sell their apartment (condominium). Subletting is restricted to a maximum of 6 months, again subject to local board approval and fees. This protects the local community to attempts from ‘speculators’. State subsidies are available to low-income families to assist with rent and service charge payments.

The new build housing construction rate more than halved in 2023, versus 2022. Despite this housing costs have only increased by circa 1.5% year prior to April 2024.



The Million Programme was launched in 1965, running to 1974. The target was to build 1 million homes for a population of only 8 million people. This new build programme sought to improve housing supply and quality, including the demolition of some poor 19th century homes. This created a net increase of over 600,000 homes, with over 65% being lower-level apartments or family houses.

Rental Swaps (similar to the UK's Mutual Exchange process) are facilitated via web portals, with circa 3,400 homes, nationally, being advertised at any one time. Swaps are generally triggered by changes family size or income and relocation is typically over short distances.

Introduction to the role of the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning in Sweden, Public Housing Sweden.

Olov Shultz, International Secretariat (Boverkett).



Olov Shultz, (and Jules).
Low rise Million Programme
Housing blocks (refurbished)
as backdrop.

Boverkett / National Board of Housing key functions include;

- Central Government authority under Ministry of Rural Affairs and Infrastructure
- Undertakes Government Commissions
- Surveys of the Housing Market
- Developing Building Design and Construction Regulations
- Supporting the delivery of energy efficiency, health and sustainable buildings
- Monitoring compliance of Planning and Building Acts
- Oversees sustainable development
- Oversees administration of Government subsidies for investment

Boverkett is also responsible for developing and monitoring Planning Policy, ensuring social, ecological, cultural and economic aspects are considered. Boverkett, and other key national agencies, oversee the 21 counties and regions (County Councils) to ensure consistent delivery and application of binding planning and building Acts, and non-binding Regional and Comprehensive Plans, by the 290 Municipalities (Local Governments) across Sweden. Each Municipality includes Assemblies and Committees to oversee Planning, in addition to building control.

Housing provision has been given great political focus since 1945, which culminated in the Million Programme. Since, 1974 housing supply has been falling, despite some increase in the early 1990's due to high levels of state subsidy, that were short term, and a further modest increase up to 2015, due to increasing market prices and low interest rates. The pandemic, high interest rates and construction inflation has reduced housing supply to its lowest levels in 70 years, with only 19,500 expected to commence in 2024.

The 1973/74 Oil Crisis spurred the development of new Building Regulations, that improved the thermal efficiency of homes and the criteria for attracting Government subsidies. The emphasis on energy efficiency has continued and has resulted in a typical Swedish home being significantly more energy efficient than a UK home.



Public Housing Sweden, Sveriges Allmannytta

Covering topics such as Stockholm Asset management, Net Zero + community engagement.

Public Housing Sweden, works with national agencies such as Boverket, and other Housing Policy advisors to examine inequalities to policy to improve integration, diversity and energy efficiency.

Sweden has a firm commitment, and political will, to reduce carbon emissions arising from housing construction, maintenance and occupation. This includes a target to reduce emissions by 50% by 2030. This is being achieved through innovative design, use of new technologies and a focus on construction materials and *“careful renovation”*.

Traditional ‘whole home’ (or block) refurbishments are now being replaced with a more phased elemental approach (potentially over successive years). This results in most residents remaining in their homes, a more gradual adjustment to rent levels (that are reset after improvements are undertaken), improved cash flow and enables capital to be directed to climate reductions. The elemental approach also promotes ‘just in time’ replacement and hence reduces/delays carbon consumption in the round.

By the early 1960's, Sweden was already delivering circa 90,000 homes annum. This was assisted by a Comprehensive Plan and industrialised delivery model. Some 'system built' (non-traditional) were used but not as widespread as within the UK.

By 1974, 1,047,000 homes delivered under the Million Programme. The design of homes were also an area of focus, with space layouts being improved to maximise ventilation and address outbreaks of Tuberculosis, that was prevalent across the Country at that time.

Some negative views against the Million Programme emerged from the Swedish mainstream media during the early 1970's. Critics declared that there was too much state intervention in housing provision. The use of innovative architecture was also criticised by some commentators, despite their new homes and modern estates being popular with new residents and local communities. Regretfully, some stigmatisation around Million Programme communities is still happening today.

Some phased refurbishment programmes are in progress but finance is now very limited resulting in programmes being scaled back or reprioritised.

More information can be found at;

[In English Public Housing Sweden | Sveriges Allmännytta \(sverigesallmannnytta.se\)](https://sverigesallmannnytta.se/)



Lunch at the world's second largest IKEA (shortly to be the largest, after extension)

Thursday 16 May | afternoon tour

Contributor: Peter Long

As already mentioned, in the early 1960's an ambitious initiative "The Million Programme" by the Swedish Social Democratic Party aimed to build good quality, but affordable properties for Swedish citizens. This was prompted by a severe housing shortage at the time and the movement of people to the urban areas.

As the name of the project implies, the aim was to provide 1,000,000 (one million) new homes over a ten-year period. Between 1965 and 1974 this target was not only met, but exceeded by some 6,000 (six thousand) new homes. These homes were not targeted at low income citizens, but to all income levels. The difference being the level of subsidy given to the occupants. At the time this was the most ambitious programme of its type in the world.

These properties were clustered to form new residential communities, which were served by schools, shopping areas, churches, etc.



One such area is Skarholmen in the district of Soderort on the outskirts of Stockholm. With a population of c. 36,000 the area consists of apartment buildings in the style associated with the Million Programme. It is served by its own metro station, which was built in 1967 and has its own shopping centre, Skarholmen Centrum (one of the largest in Sweden) which opened in 1968.

Unfortunately Skarholmen has acquired a bad reputation for gangs and is reputed to have a problem with gun crime. We saw no evidence of this on our tour of the area, and we were struck by the vibrant central square, the overall cleanliness and the lack of graffiti. We visited during daylight hours and perhaps the bright sunshine showed Skarholmen in a positive light, but the properties and the communal space appeared well maintained and the general atmosphere was good. There were however portable police CCTV cameras erected in some locations, but at no time did we feel unsafe.

Until now, the area has been left unchanged and has not been developed further. As part of 'Focus Skarholmen', the City of Stockholm has designated this area as one now warranting further socially sustainable urban development. This includes plans to build a further 6,500 homes of mixed tenancy types and to introduce new schools, pre-schools and a large sports centre. Planning will further segregate pedestrians from vehicle traffic and there will be a clear focus on young people.



An initiative to introduce art and culture to the area is promoted by capturing 1% of the overall investment to provide murals and sculptures which are scattered throughout the development.

While one goal of the wider project is to increase of the housing density by around 40%, this also reflects the intention of promoting a mix of tenure type, and with an important focus upon social sustainability, community dialogue and increased safety.

Day 3: Future Stockholm

Friday 17 May | morning

Contributor: Tony Clark



Camilla Edvinsson, City of Stockholm.

Breakfast eaten and another sunny day ahead, delegates gathered in the hotel reception area to meet with Camilla Edvinsson and Klas Hyllandel, both Information Officers at the City of Stockholm. Their role today was to lead a guided tour to Hammarby Sjostad, one of Stockholm's many urban development areas. The Hammarby Model is a natural cycle approach to urban living, still inspiring hundreds of foreign delegations to visit Sjostaden each year.



Jorgen Loof, ElectriCity.

And so, sunglasses on, delegates walked to the nearby Unity building to first hear from Jorgen Loof, a prominent member of ElectriCITY. ElectriCITY is a non-profit member organisation established in 2011 by a group of like-minded residents of Hammarby Sjostad with one aim, to make their city more climate smart and sustainable.

Jorgen's role today was to take delegates through one of their many initiatives – 'Engaging Citizens', a resident involved model with a focus on energy use and management.

Engaging Citizens



Jorgen explained that Hammarby Sjostad is a 'living testbed' involving 64 housing associations and approximately 16,000 residents, all of whom are joint owners in the management of their respective buildings. With a mission to be climate neutral by 2030, private energy consumption must be reduced from 5 tons to 1 ton CO₂ per person, per year, if climate targets are to be met. Key players in this mission, are the 64 energy managers appointed by their respective housing associations. These energy managers meet on a regular basis to discuss current challenges and new ideas.

The targeted energy management model overseen by the energy management team, works at three levels – optimisation and maintenance, investments, and heating systems. The former includes measures such as new radiator valves and thermostats, investments includes measures such as loft insulation and new windows and the latter, geothermal heat exchangers and pellet boilers. Also, using collective/strategic procurement, 26 of the 64 housing associations have already saved 50% on their previous energy costs.

Jorgen then went on to explain how a new Energy Steering Group (a membership body including the likes of Volvo) is seeking to fundamentally transform how electricity is generated, stored, and used, using a new microgrid model. The project is called Operation Electricity and is essentially a means to provide electricity resilience in the future. It will see the residential, industrial and commercial sectors come together to create a new Energy Community.

Finally, Jorgen took delegates through some of the many current research projects:

- EV charging using a charging 'network' as opposed to one charger to one vehicle
- The use of e-bikes instead of cars
- Carpool use with two neighbouring families
- Informal o-zone joint procurement
- Circular economy events
- Underground garbage collection systems.

Particularly impressive, was the amount of work carried out with school children. By educating the community at an early age, there is not the need to 'convince' older residents of the need for change down the line.

Visit to Underground Car Park Charging Network



Delegates were then shown one of the many underground car park areas where EV charging works on the basis of a shared network, rather than on an individual basis. Key points to note included:

- 25 chargers charging 236 cars
- Usage booked via a resident App, based on time required
- Unlike individual chargers, there is an approximate life of 25 years for the electric cabinet that runs the charging network
- AC favoured over DC
- Each building buys its energy on an hourly basis.



Tour of Hammarby Sjostad



Hammarby Sjostad (Lake City)

The morning closed with a guided tour of the district of Hammarby Sjostad. Delegates heard that 65% of the homes are housing association owned, with the remaining 35% owned by housing companies (both private and public rent). With a regulated rental market, this works against new build investment, with not enough new homes currently being built. At the present time, the average age of those being given a rented home after a 9-year wait is 50.



Housing association homes are largely unaffordable for many, but these organisations are really leading the way their operating models and technical innovations. Delegates were shown before and after examples of various retrofit works, which were impressive in both scale and finish. Also notable, was the extensive use of open/green space.

With much to think about, delegates then boarded the bus for lunch and a further guided tour of Royal Seaport.



Fri 17 May | afternoon tour

Contributor: Will Routh

Tour of Stockholm Royal Sea Port

The final afternoon saw us whisked off to the Royal Sea Port in Eastern Stockholm, the largest urban development area (236 Hectares) in Sweden, with plans for at least 12,000 new homes and 35,000 workplaces.



The Royal Seaport development site

Former industrial land owned by the City of Stockholm, mainly the old city gas works, is being transformed into a sustainable urban district with schools, preschools, parks, cultural venues (inside the old gas storage towers) and local amenities. The goal is to become fossil fuel-free by 2030, contributing to Stockholm's ambition to be fossil-free and climate-positive by 2040. Stockholm Royal Seaport is a sustainability-profiled area designated by the Stockholm City Council with the task of testing and developing new solutions and processes for a more sustainable future.

Construction started in 2011 and by 2022, 3160 dwelling had been completed as well as a school, library, sports hall 4 public squares and 11 parks and playground. 8 buildings have also been brought back into use as part of the regeneration.



We were given an introductory talk by Örjan Lönngren, energy specialist at City of Stockholm about the energy strategy, as well as the principles and planning of the regeneration project. We then enjoyed a final sunny walking tour of the completed parts of the development by Örjan and Camilla including:

- Low Energy Buildings: targets of 43kWh/m² energy in use and also generation targets per building, met by optimising roof angles and aspects for solar PV generation as well as inclusion of Solar PV on south facing facades. Other energy efficiency elements included triple glazing, summer gardens to add an additional insulation layer, quadruple glazing on edge of buildings where no summer gardens and using pre-fabricated materials to increase air-tightness and remove cold bridges and creating solar shading as part of the design.
- High levels of urban planting and greenery to provide urban cooling, including multi-functional green spaces and green roofs - places for both nature and humans to enjoy and creating a more natural feel to the dense development. It also served to connect the regeneration to the adjacent parkland – both for nature and humans.
- Sustainable Urban drainage solutions: to assist with run-off and filtration to the local water courses.



- The underground vacuum waste system, similar to Hammarby Sjöstad but with additional artwork to engage the local community.



Örjan Lönngren, City of Stockholm Energy Specialist.

- Sustainable Transport solutions: 8000+ cycle spaces (2.5 per apartment), compared to less than 2000+ car parking spaces (0.5 per apartment), cycle lanes, connected pedestrian routes through the development as well as Metro, electric ferry and biofuel buses.
- Public Artwork: with 1% of the investment committed to art.

Overall the visit to Stockholm Royal Sea was an inspiring final afternoon to the Study Tour, seeing how Stockholm was applying and bringing together in one regeneration project all the different elements that we had seen during the rest of the tour – housing supply, affordable housing provision, zero carbon and local neighbourhoods with sustainable and healthy living at the heart of the project.



Views of the Royal Seaport development, including the gas works monitor mid conversion





Views of The Royal Seaport development, including the 'zero energy' block (right).

Conclusions | Headline 'take home' from the Tour (*and where next year*)

Contributor: Julian Ransom BSc MRICS



Our many hosts in Sweden/ Stockholm provided a fascinating opportunity to see and learn a great deal, especially in respect of sustainability by design, retrofit, and the challenges still faced, some of which chime with our own current experience in the UK.

Here are just a few of those headline 'take homes':

- Headline: what Sweden has already achieved in carbon reduction terms both within their housing stock, but more widely as a society is truly inspirational.
- Stockholm demonstrates that forward thinking, integrated, ecological design (city/ LA working together with public housing) is essential for true long term sustainability.

- The widespread use of Heating Networks appears to offer real benefits. This enables simpler substitution (originally from oil) to more energy efficient/ sustainable fuel sources but importantly, the consequential reduction of potential fuel poverty related D&M (21 degree heating integral to the rent). Surely of relevance to the UK currently.
- What Stockholm and Sweden has/is achieving in terms of carbon reduction has taken 50+ years in the making. The UK has a 'bigger hill to climb' and less time to do it in. Learning lessons and so 'not re-inventing the wheel' is therefore important.
- The role and practical deployment of IT / smart data in maximising carbon reduction is palpable. Resident lead joint procurement and smart energy deployment via 'ElectroCity' and 'Hammarby 2.0' is a model worth learning from. *Note: we hope to have ElectroCity speaking at our NHMF Conference, January 2025.*
- Sweden rejected the 'Social Housing' model (after piloting early in the 20th century) as it was considered unnecessarily stigmatising, and has developed a rental subsidy model (and some innovative housing contracts) instead. *A thought provoking UK vs. Sweden contrast?*
- Sweden is, just like the UK, dependent upon government subsidy to ensure the public housing provision model works, particularly given planned retro-fit/ refurbishment program costs. Presently this is under significant pressure following a change of government and grant reduction.
- Greater tenant empowerment enabling an enhanced Swedish governmental lobby is perhaps a notable difference. It could be argued that growing legislation in the UK is reflecting a similar trend (see Caritas Charles TPAS, & Annie Owens NHF, LinkedIn articles appended).
- It could be argued that, despite progressive, egalitarian programs and planning, Swedish immigration, refugee, and asylum initiatives have contributed to some 'social stresses' apparent particularly within predominantly lower income suburbs. Again, arguably there are parallels within the UK and across Europe. Do social housing organisations have a wider role in anticipating this and working with governments to find innovative solutions as global warming is sure to accelerate migration?
- The value gained from time spent amongst representatives from relevant national organisations (UK and equivalent European), experienced sector colleagues, and those involved in both research, and practical interpretation/application of current and forthcoming regulatory obligations cannot be underestimated.



- And perhaps last but not least, with thanks to Ikea, if you haven't tried Cranberry sauce with meat balls *you really should!!*

Just a few of my personal favourites from Sweden Jules.

And so to Next Year:

We are of course already considering the next most relevant location for the 2025 NHMF Study Tour.

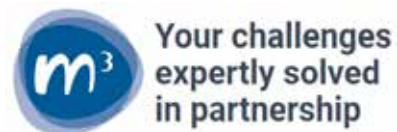
Berlin, Helsinki, Paris, and Copenhagen are currently in the running so watch this space and do join us if you can!



Contemplating a visit to the biggest
Heat Pump in the world
(Denmark's 60MW Heat pump serving
100,000 dwellings.....)



Participating Company Logos:



Ion-Consultants



And a special thanks to our speakers and hosts in Sweden:

- > **Camilla Edvinsson**, Information Officer (City of Stockholm Development Office)
- > **Desirée Morast**, Head of Property and Sustainability (Public Housing Sweden / SVERIGES ALLMÄNNYTTA)
- > **Dr Richard Lowes**, Senior Associate RAP (the Regulatory Assistance Project), research Fellow University of Exeter, Energy policy expert.
- > **Klas Bergholtz**, Sustainability Strategist
- > **Per Spolander**, CEO Staff Office, (Public Housing Sweden / SVERIGES ALLMÄNNYTTA)
- > **Olav Schultz**, International Secretariat (Boverket)
- > **Bertram Steininger**, Associate Professor for Real Estate and Finance, KTH Royal Institute of Technology
- > **Arturo Ardao**, City Manager (Rainbow Tours Stockholm)





Caritas Charles • 2nd

Policy and Insight Manager Tpas England

1mo • Edited •

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Reflections on Sweden

No video for this one as I'm knackered but I thought I would share some thoughts on my time in Stockholm and learning about its approach to housing.

Future thinking

They appear to have long term vision for the city ,for its environmental , social and economic future. It appeared to me that they aren't blighted by the short termism that seems particularly prevalent in the U.K.

The common good

I felt a sense of community when visiting the city but I also felt a sense of collective purpose that there was a common understanding that collectively was the only way to find solutions.

Self confidence

I met people immensely proud of what they are doing but confident within themselves to admit the problems they have and most importantly take ownership of them.

People power

I saw their sense of strength and purpose in unity whether it was the innovation of the residents of Hammerby or the collective bargaining power of the Swedish Tenants Union . I loved their sense that change happens when you work together.

I realised that they were showcasing the city and we might not have got the whole picture. But I was left with a great admiration for the confidence of the Swedes I met.

It's a confidence to plan further than the next elections .

The confidence to admit to and own their mistakes and the confidence that they are all in this together and that collectively they shape the future.

I feel at times we as a country have lost our confidence. Maybe we can learn from Nordic cousins .



Annie Owens • 2nd

Policy Leader for the quality of existing homes at the National Housing ...
4w •

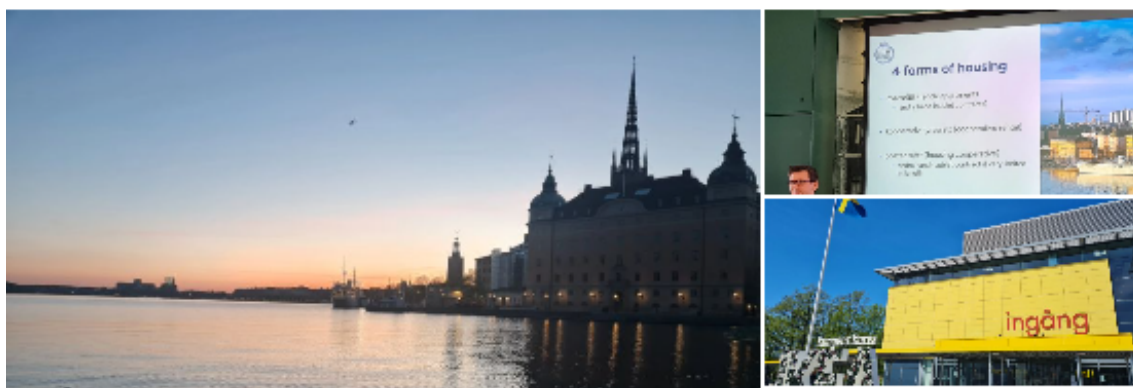
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Last week I was lucky enough to join the [National Housing Maintenance Forum \(NHMF\)](#) study tour to Stockholm. As well as having a lovely time in the Swedish sun, I learnt a lot of interesting things about their housing model.

Some of my takeaways:

1. Considered city planning can develop green, vibrant and mixed communities - but it helps if the city already owns a lot of land it can (re)develop
2. Sweden has no real social housing, after an experiment showed residents found it stigmatising. Subsidising private rents seems to work well for them instead
3. Linking rents to the quality of properties can have unintended consequences - some Swedish tenants refuse improvement works because they are concerned about subsequent rent increases
4. Stockholm and Sweden more broadly has had great success with district heating and heat networks but it took them 35 years to develop - we're trying to do it in 25 years
5. England is being used as a scare story to convince the right wing Swedish government not to fully deregulate their private rented sector. And it seems to be working!


Many thanks to [Ben Virgo](#) and the rest of the team at [M3](#) and the [National Housing Maintenance Forum \(NHMF\)](#) for a fascinating and insightful trip.





James Ellis • 2nd

Operations Director at AD Construction Group

1mo • 

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Superb few days away in Stockholm learning about their Retrofit strategies and approach to sustainability on behalf of **AD Construction Group**. Brilliantly organised by the **National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF)** with special mention to **Ben Virgo** & his colleague Aimen so thank you for the invite. Great to be away with existing friends and clients but also meet some new ones and share ideas.

[#Sustainability](#) [#retrofit](#)





Rand Associates Consultancy Services Ltd

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A fantastic time at the NHMF Stockholm Study Tour!

It was a pleasure to spend the trip learning from so many informative and insightful speakers. We are very lucky to have had such a wonderful tour of the city along with some of our industry colleagues. A big thank you to [NHMF Service Provider Forum](#) for having us.

Watch out for our photos at the worlds largest IKEA - of course there were meatballs! All in all a brilliant trip 🌍 ✈️


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John Evison and **Julian Ransom** share their insights from the recent **National Housing Maintenance Forum (NHMF)** study tour to Stockholm.

Visit <https://lnkd.in/e7gn7hWD> to discover how the city's innovative approaches to urban development and sustainable living are paving the way for a greener future. From district heating networks to AI integration, we explore the green technologies that could help the UK housing market meet its ambitious 2050 net-zero targets.

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