Social Sustainability and Housing for Vulnerable Groups in Sweden:
An Integrated Literature Review

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SUMMARY

This review of literature consolidates the state of academic research on social sustainability housing in Sweden. Based on literature published over the past 20 years, the review integrates a diverse range of research perspectives, topics and findings. From this consolidation of the literature the aim is to produce several multidimensional frameworks for social sustainability in housing that link together purposes, practices, planning and people. Suggestions are also proposed that improving planning, stakeholder consultation, evaluation processes.
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INTRODUCTION

Review Topic, Purpose and Relevant Questions

The social sustainability pillar has been called the “missing pillar” (Boström, 2012) because it is often dominated in sustainability discussion by the economic and environmental pillars. Surprisingly, this has also been the case for central social topics such as housing (Jensen, Jørgensen, Elle, & Lauridsen, 2012). This review of literature aims to explore the research literature on social sustainability and to consolidate this research on social sustainability housing in Sweden. The review is based on literature published over the past 20 years and aims to integrate this literature to provide useful directions for policy makers and future research. This literature review takes a consolidative and integrative look at the current state of research on social and sustainable urban housing in Sweden. Sweden has been a leading nation in this field of urban planning for social inclusion. Surprisingly, although this is a well-developed area of research that includes empirical, theoretical, definitional and philosophical studies, very little meta-review research has been performed that explores convergences and divergences across the literature to bring greater coherency to this very diverse body of research. In the course of finding connections and synthesizing research the review will also develop summary responses to some practical questions. Some of the questions that the review intends to present information on, if not specifically provide answers for, include:

- How is social sustainability defined? How is social sustainability defined in the context of housing for marginalized groups in Sweden?
- What is the current state of planning for social sustainability housing in Sweden?
- Are there special social challenges facing marginalised groups in the housing market in Sweden?
- Are there ways in which social housing in Sweden can be improved to desegregate for marginalised groups?
- What are the leading innovations in Sweden regarding urban social sustainability?
- Are environmental and social aspects of sustainability well integrated in urban planning developments?
- What steps are involved in the planning process and how might they be improved?
- How are stakeholders included in decision-making processes?
- Where do the various stakeholders come into the planning process? At what point is their voice heard?
• What topics are not being addressed in the current literature on social sustainability and housing in Sweden and are there any critical problems with the assumptions on which the current literature is based?

While complete answers will not be provided for all these questions, the intent is to develop a narrative that can provide some insights into all of these issues.

**Review topic, scope and delimiting factors**

The review considers a complex topic that lies at the intersection of several extensive research domains. These demands include such bold topics as urban development, social sustainability, social housing, and inclusion of marginalized groups in planned housing. It is important, therefore, that the scope of the research be delimited to relevant set of studies. Accordingly, the scope of the review is demarcated along four lines - the social dimension, the Swedish experience, special stakeholder groups, and formative planning processes.

First, we focus on the social dimension of sustainability and will look at how social sustainability is defined, theorized and studied generally and then within the housing context. Social sustainability is widely recognized as a separate form of sustainability to those of economic, governance, cultural and environmental varieties. It is also true however, that there are very powerful connections and interdependencies between these the dimensions of sustainability. Positive economic conditions and healthy communities are clearly strongly linked, and this association also holds between natural environments and social sustainability. For example, access to green areas and to healthy natural environments is associated with better individual health outcomes (Gascon et al., 2016; Van den Berg, Hartig, & Staats, 2007). All this has led to a rich academic literature on social sustainability and an accompanying diversity in understanding what social sustainability refers to.

“… ubiquitous references to social sustainability have created a rather messy conceptual field in which there is a good deal of uncertainty about the term’s many meanings and applications” (Vallance, Perkins, & Dixon, 2011)

If housing and urban planning approaches are to achieve desired social sustainability outcomes, then access to green spaces and healthy ecological areas is important. For such reasons it is necessary to consider social sustainability within economic, cultural and ecological contexts. Consequently, while these other types of sustainability will not be a major focus of the review, occasionally connections with economic and ecological topics will be discussed or at least a
relevant connection will be referred to. Second, the review will be focused on literature dealing with Sweden and the status of research involving Swedish case studies of housing projects, planning process is and stakeholder consultations. It should be recognized that this review will only consider research published in English. While the great majority of relevant literature has been written or made available in English, some studies are available only in Swedish and these studies have not been included in the review. Sweden is recognized as one of the leading countries in the development of social sustainability housing and the prominence on this topic in planning and urban development has been well established in Sweden for several decades. Consequently, a significant proportion of the research carried out in this field has either taken place on Swedish projects or involves Swedish researchers. For these reasons, although I have focused on Swedish research for this review, the implications of the findings might well have implications for other countries and regions. Third, we will consider the topic of social sustainability for marginalized groups who, for whatever reason, are considered to have diminished political and economic power in deciding their housing options and living conditions. While these groups will be identified as part of the review, it is likely that they will include such groups as the elderly and retired people, the youth and young adults, people with low socioeconomic status (SES), people with disabilities, and immigrants and new arrivals.

A final delimitation of this review is the special attention given to the formative processes involved in social sustainability projects such as planning, design, land allocation and stakeholder consultation. A focus on formative and preliminary processes reflects the need to include the voices of marginalized stakeholder groups (such as those mentioned above) in social sustainability planning.

The need for an integrative review

Social sustainability in housing is an important public policy area. In Sweden, as in other parts of the world, the populations of its communities and cities are becoming more ethnically, culturally and democratically diverse. While the benefits of greater diversity are well documented, increasing range of human needs also places additional strains on the resourcing of basic human needs such as housing and accommodation. Hence, it is important that an overview of the needs are vulnerable populations needs to be made available to public policy makers, government planning agencies and private sector players in commercial markets. While several standard reviews of particular aspects of this field were identified, no meta-review of social sustainability housing in Sweden was found in the course of performing the literature search. This is despite the significant number of studies undertaken and the diverse topics that have been the subject matter for research in this field. The range of literature identified during the literature search included
empirical papers and to collect information on substantive topics as well as theory building and theory testing research articles. An integrative literature review has the potential to contribute significantly to the topic for several reasons. To understand these additional contributions, it is important to first describe the kinds of conventional reviews that are performed and the outcomes.

Conventional literature reviews are typically structured using one or more of the following aspects: topic focus, goal-focus, perspective, coverage, organization, and audience (Cooper, 1988). The **topic-focus** structure refers to any of the central issues as practices, programs, or interventions. **Perspective-based** structure organizes the review according to different perspectives and stated position on the topic under focus. **Coverage** can be exhaustive - where all relevant literature is included, comprehensive - where all aspects of the relevant literature are included, representative - where some sampling procedure is involved, central - where literature is selected on the basis of some reasoned criteria and illustrative - where literature is reviewed to provide examples of some focus topic. **Organization** refers to the structuring of reviews that - arranged. (a) conceptually, same ideas is reviewed together; (b) historically, (c) methodologically,

A **goals-focused** literature review structure asks a clear research question and critically analyzes the literature to answer that question by integrating diverse perspectives, identifying central issues or methodological problems. An integrative review may adopt one or more of these orientations to the review process but there are additional aspects that are unique to integrative reviews. An integrative literature review is a form of research that: i) provides a conceptual overview of a research field so that particular studies can be located with the frameworks and maps developed from the synthesis of conceptual papers, ii) synthesizes that research to highlight core themes and surface less obvious aspects of extant research both in what is covered and what is not, iii) generates new frameworks and perspectives on the topic, and iv) develop critiques and novel insights about the field (Torraco, 2005).

**The purpose of this integrative review**

The purpose and aims of this integrative review are to: i) provide an overview of social sustainability models, some background to the current state of research, and describe the general activities in the social sustainability of housing in Sweden, ii) integrate that material to assess gaps and highlights assumptions in current research, iii) develop some meta-frameworks for systematically evaluating the state of extant research, iv) evaluate and discuss the state of research and provide some direction for future research activities. The central objective is to
develop new insights into the entire chain of demand, policy objectives, decision-making, planning, consultation and outcomes for the social sustainability dimension of housing and urban development in Sweden. While looking at literature that covers the whole chain of planning, customer experience and evaluation, special attention will be given to front end factors, that is, to the planning, consultation process and formative process as these tend to highlight the stakeholder dimension of sustainability and the problems and solutions that the research literature has identified. Social sustainability solutions in how the housing planning and land allocation process functions are important for building healthy and resilient communities and the active participation of an extended circle of diverse stakeholders is important for this process to operate well (Bramley, Dempsey, Power, & Brown, 2006; Missimer, Robèrt, & Broman, 2017).

METHOD

Method Steps

An integrative literature review was adopted as the method for selecting, compiling and analyzing the studies included in the review. This approach was chosen because it not only reviews and summarizes the extant literature but also critiques and synthesizes the pool of research in an integrated way such that new frameworks and perspectives on the topic are generated. Integrative literature reviews are conducted on subjects that undergo rapid increase in the number of studies and that have not yet been comprehensively reviewed from an integrative perspective. Integrative literature reviews provide review and critique to identify gaps as well as problematize assumptions and resolve inconsistencies in the literature and provide fresh, new perspectives. The steps in this integrative method are set out in Table 1. In this review these steps will not be followed in a linear manner with the analysis of the selected and retained studies being iteratively developed through the body of the review.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Method Steps</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1. Topic of the Review</td>
<td>The subject matter of the review with delimitations</td>
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<td>2. Need and Purpose of the Review</td>
<td>Description of need for the review and the general purpose</td>
</tr>
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<td>3. Author Perspective</td>
<td>The philosophical and scientific orientation</td>
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<td>4. Design and Structure</td>
<td>A basic overview of the review design</td>
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<td>5. Search and Sampling Procedures</td>
<td>The search criteria and selection procedures for sampling and retention</td>
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<td>6. Critical Analysis</td>
<td>The analytical procedures</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7. Synthesis</td>
<td>The procedures involved in synthesising information and results</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
8. Limitations and Further Research

Statement of limitations and description of further research

Design

The overall design of the review is detail in Figure 1. As mentioned, the analysis did not conform with a linear process but was characterized by ongoing iterations between the text and the emerging themes.

Literature Selection and Text Analysis

An open search of academic publications using the search phrase “social sustainability” and “Sweden” returns over 170,000 hits on Google Scholar, yet reviews and meta-analyses are rare and often narrowly focused on definitional or conceptual issues rather than the practical dimensions. While this narrow focus helps deepen our understanding of specific facets of social sustainability, the resulting diverse presentation and fragmentation of the field prevents the identification of underlying relations between the different dimensions of social sustainability and ultimately hinders consolidation of the field. The intent here is to consolidate extant research, establishing convergences and identify divergences across the disparate branches of the literature.
and highlight weaknesses within and gaps between different research streams. An initial sample of articles were selected via online databases. The search terms used for the selection process were: social sustainability, equity + Sweden, Europe, + renovation, renewal, development, integrated + urban, housing, planning + review, measurement. There is an extensive literature on urban renewal and urban regeneration and there may be aspects of this research that has relevance for this review topic. However, while there are some selected documents from these fields that have been included here, Urban renewal and urban regeneration studies have not been included here.

There are several reasons for this. First, urban renewal/regeneration studies, while sometimes including diversity and social issues, often place more focus on the commercial, infrastructure and transport dimension with social sustainability issues occupying a more peripheral position. Second, social sustainability is commonly researched within the broad context of sustainability and so explicitly includes environmental sustainability dimensions, while the renewal and regeneration literatures may not necessarily include these aspects of sustainability. While environmental sustainability is not a focus of this review, the context of social sustainability being embedded or perceived to be embedded with environmental considerations offers a unique perspective that this review consciously seeks to explore. Third, while there might be very relevant material within the urban renewal/regeneration corpus, it is a very extensive body of literature and so it is likely that large portions are not directly relevant to the current topic.

The technique of text scrutinization was used to identify these themes. The basic sample of 123 articles, theses and books was analysed to identify the concepts and findings of interest. Scrutinising texts (Luborsky, 1994; Ryan & Bernard, 2003) for themes involves looking for textual elements that disclose patterns of interest. These patterns include (Ryan & Bernard, 2003):

- Repetitions: These are “topics that occur and reoccur” (Bogdan & Taylor, 1975, p. 83)
- Indigenous categories: The conceptual schemes that authors use to organise their texts.
- Metaphors and analogies: Identifying themes through root metaphors and guiding analogies.
- Similarities and differences: Finding convergences and divergences within the text.
- Linguistic connectors: Terms such as “because”, “since”, “always”, and “as a result” often disclose core assumptions, causal inferences and the basic orientations of the research.
- Theory-related material: The thematic content is often disclosed by explicit reference to theory.
- Graphical material: Images, diagrams and other graphical material can indicate core themes.
- Structural themes: Themes can be evident in the article titles, headings and subheadings.
RESULTS AND DISCUSSION

A Brief History of Social Housing in Sweden

The provision of social housing has always occupied a special place in the Swedish welfare state. After the second world war a state investigation on housing was undertaken and the resulting policy called “Folkhem” (Grundström & Molina, 2016) aimed for universal housing irrespective of income levels or housing conditions. The aim was policy has had the aim of “good housing for all” (Grander, 2018, p. viii). The Folkhem program dealt with the national housing shortage that occurred during the 50s and 60s and by the early 1970s had achieved decent housing conditions for the entire population. The main means for implementing this policy has been allmännyttan, the national approach to public housing, where municipal housing companies offer rental and for sale housing of high quality, for the benefit of everyone.

The municipal housing companies and the policy environments they operate in have changed over the years in response to policy developments that have introduced competitive markets and opened up the sector to private development. As a result, socio-economic segregation in housing has been increasing throughout Sweden despite ongoing attempts to develop policies to counter such development (Grundström & Molina, 2016). This segregation has occurred across the country in major population centres but most notably in Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö), geographically where enclaves of poverty or wealth have developed where “income levels, ethnicity, and form of housing clearly coincide” (Grundström & Molina, 2016, p. 317).

Currently there is a mix of public and private housing providers who produce a range of housing options and types of developments. Grander (2018) studied the impact of these policies and mixes of housing providers on inequalities and disadvantaged populations in Swedish society. He found that: i) despite a shift to more competitive markets and commercial conditions investment, allmännyttan “still has a latent and potential ability to counteract housing inequality” (Grander, 2018, p. ix), ii) the contextual conditions have changed in that allmännyttan exists within a financialized environment where costs take on a more prominent role in decision making, iii) municipal housing companies still have substantial discretion to use various mechanisms “which contribute to counteracting housing inequality” (Grander, 2018, p. ix), and iv) that this discretion leads to “both reduced and increased housing inequality” depending on the
character and competencies of the local stakeholders and the processes they employ to achieve the goal of ‘good housing, for the benefit of everyone. In summary, there have been three basic periods of social housing in Sweden since 1930 (Grundström & Molina, 2016). These periods are listed in Table 2.

Table 2: Policy eras in the history of social housing in Sweden

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Time Period</th>
<th>Dominant Policy</th>
<th>Characteristic features</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1930-1960</td>
<td>First Folkhem period of fair housing for all</td>
<td>Publicly funded model which eliminated the housing shortage.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1960-74</td>
<td>Second Folkhem period - the Million Programme</td>
<td>In 1974, Sweden had the highest housing production per capita in the world. In 1974 the Folkhem model resulted in a surplus of housing units and deregulation began.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1974-2006</td>
<td>Deregulation and</td>
<td>Changes to rent regulation. Housing construction falls and further marketisation continues through the 80s and 90s. State subsidies for housing ended in 2006.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2006-present</td>
<td>Marketisation and municipalities</td>
<td>Continued marketisation with the introduction of municipally-owned housing companies. No longer any government guarantees of housing for vulnerable groups. New housing initiatives based on life-style choice and not on public housing. Increasing polarisation of neighbourhoods through the geographical concentration of both wealth and poverty.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The history shows an overall trajectory from public funding and egalitarian approach to housing provision to a market-driven opportunity approach. The result has been more segregation in communities and more involvement from the private sector which responds more to the individual preferences of those with available capital. There are several implications of this continuing trend and these include: i) the greater vulnerability of marginalised groups to fluctuations in the market, ii) the greater the need for innovative options to be developed by both private and municipality-owned companies, iii) the growing difficulty of marginalised groups to enter either the rental or home-owner housing markets, iv) the emergence of interest in social innovation from government and for profit social enterprises means that opportunities for increased consultation and participation of marginalised groups are becoming more available but they have yet to be taken up in any consistent way.

Modeling and Defining Social Sustainability

Diverse models of sustainable development

Sustainability is a polysemous and composite concept made up of different conceptual elements. To better understand the social aspect of sustainability and some of the various approaches taken to it definition, it is important to acknowledge its theoretical roots. The scientific study of sustainability emerged through the 1970s and 1980s from an increasing awareness of the impact of human activity on natural systems. Very quickly the discourse of sustainable development came to dominate the conversation with the release of the Brundtland report (WCED, 1987).
Sustainable development has heavily referenced the need for intergenerational ecological viability since these early discussions but as early as the 1980s, other elements including governance, political and cultural aspects were associated with sustainable development. However, exactly which these elements were and how they should be defined have been the subject of much academic and policy debate since those early years.

In 1997, Jon Elkington proposed the now widely used notion of the “triple bottom line” (Elkington, 1997) to describe the balanced emphasis that should be given to the natural environment and the financial and socio-cultural aspects of organizational purpose and how it is accounted for. Another associated heuristic is the 3Ps (or three pillars) of Prosperity (or Profit), People, Planet where the “People” pillar corresponds to the social sustainability dimension in Elkington’s system. Defining social sustainability has frequently been stated as an elusive and multifaceted endeavor (Boyer, Peterson, Arora, & Caldwell, 2016) because social priorities are diverse and context specific. An integrated understanding will require, at the very least, a two-fold reconciliation of: i) the integration of divergent definitions of social sustainability and ii) the relationship between social sustainability and other elements of sustainability. These two tasks are closely related. A more integrated understanding of the social dimension will be at least partly dependent on how its relationships with economic and environmental sustainability is understood. For example, the social sustainability topic of wealth/poverty and the environmental topic of climate change are closely linked as the level of wealth determines consumption and thereby the production of carbon emissions. But exactly what that linkage and causal relationship between social sustainability and these other elements needs to be investigated.

These two topics of divergent definitions and their relationship are addressed in perhaps the most commonly used model of sustainability - the triple bottom line model. The triple bottom line or 3P approach has been widely adopted in defining sustainability within both academic and business settings. Some scholars have argued that there should be a broadening of the concept to include other elements beyond these three. Other suggestions for elements that should be included in the set of sustainability dimensions include religious–spiritual sustainability, political–institutional sustainability and cultural–aesthetic sustainability, (Griessler & Littig, 2005). Hawkes has proposed that cultural sustainability in the sense of language, beliefs, practices and heritage conservation should be considered a fourth pillar of sustainability (Hawkes, 2001). Institutional sustainability has been proposed as another candidate for inclusion in that it offers a complementary interpersonal dimension to the personal dimension that is typically the focus of social sustainability (Pfahl, 2005). Institutional sustainability also brings in the notion of the reproduction and regulation of social order and governance. Bossel proposes that sustainability can be viewed as the “coevolution of human and social systems” where that
coevolution incorporates six subsystems: individual development, the social system, government, infrastructure, the economic system, resources and environment (Bossel, 1999).

Although there have been many different models the approach of the three pillars model of sustainability, the economic (profit), the social (people) and the environmental (planet) has prevailed to become the most popular approach. However, apart from the actual component dimensions of sustainability, there has also been several models that differ on the relationship between those components. The disparate model (see Figure 2a) regards the various elements as separate and independent. The conventional model (see Figure 2b) is where the economic is assumed to be primary because it is the key domain of producing of sustainable economic wealth enabling resources to be allocated to the other two sustainability domains (Kurucz, Colbert, & Marcus, 2014). The interacting version (see Figure 2c) is where all three domains interact with no necessarily primary domain.

The polysemic nature of definitions of ‘sustainability’ and ‘sustainable development’ is repeated within each of the three dimensions of economic, social and environmental sustainability and this is particularly true for the social. In the following sections, I summarize and evaluate some views on social sustainability and propose an integrative model that will be used in the review to consider the specific topic of housing and accommodation in Sweden and its relationship with social sustainability. The aim here is not to articulate a complete definition or model of social sustainability but to accommodate the contributions of various approaches with the intent of developing a framework that can be used to evaluate and forward recommendations for policies and practices. The multifaceted nature of social sustainability is demonstrated in a paper on “social sustainability and whole development” by Sachs (1999). Sachs identified many definitive elements including human rights, democratic politics, culture, homogeneity, income levels, social equity, multiculturalism, access to services and opportunities. From this analysis social sustainability requires a balance between regulated and independent change, that is, a trade-off between the responsibilities and rights of citizens, social organisations and governments for the
equitable maintenance of long-term prosperity. Godschalk (2004), also points out the complex of social sustainability by including all the challenging contexts that threaten human systems capacity to thrive and consequently he focussed on risk and conflict management aspects. This perspective looks at the alignments and misalignments that occur in numerous social arenas, be they urban planning, political or commercial activity or government policy development. Taking the topic of urban housing as an example, social sustainability is promoted when a community builds its capacity to develop “liveable cities”, considers the risks to its viability as a place of flourishing and so pursues resilience management to cope with and adapt to changing circumstances that threaten the equitable distribution of prosperity. Just taking the conceptual propositions of these views into account illustrates the complexity of what social sustainability refers to.

**Social Sustainability**

The particularly complex nature of social sustainability has led to special challenges in analysing, defining, and applying social sustainability as compared with the economic and environmental pillars. First, there is inherent uncertainty in social analysis that arises from the intersubjective nature of social life. There is no simple cause and effect relationship between social forces, structures and agencies and their behavioural and material outcomes. What might be regarded as social outcomes in one setting have as much causal influence and explanatory power as what might be regarded as social determinants in another. Second, this very complexity together with the objective study of environmental sustainability has resulted in greater attention being paid to biological and ecological crises within sustainability sciences and discourses. Hence, ‘green’ topics, e.g. plastics pollution of the oceans, take precedence over, or at least capture more attention than, ‘brown’ topics, e.g., impact of plastics pollution on human health. The destruction of the Amazon and the loss of biodiversity take priority over the dispossession of indigenous peoples. In essence the categorisation of environmental economic and social issues is a political and ideological act. In the following section the aim is to integrated multiple perspective, not into a single unified model, but an accommodating framework that can provide practical direction for complex decision making in a housing context where vulnerable groups are at risk.

Social sustainability, rather than being peripheral to economic and environmental dimensions of sustainability, is the central connecting pillar on which all aspects of sustainability are seated. However, even when seen as an important dimension of sustainability researchers have noted that there are still different very different orientations to its conceptualisation and application. In the following sections we discuss the definition of social sustainability from the standpoint of different orientations (Abramsson & Hagberg, 2018; Åhman, 2013; Andersson, Angelstam,
Social Sustainability and Housing for Vulnerable Groups

Axelsson, Elbakidze, & Törnblom, 2013; Axelsson et al., 2013; Boyer et al., 2016; Dempsey, Bramley, Power, & Brown, 2011; Hilgers, 2013; McKenzie, 2004; Murphy, 2012; Vallance et al., 2011). These approaches see social sustainability as: (i) a separate stand-alone dimension, ii) a limiting constraint on other dimensions, iii) a developmental dimension, iv) a transformative bridging mechanism between economic and environmental sustainability, v) a maintenance factor that preserves culture and vi) an integrated, process-oriented approach to sustainability.

**Social Sustainability as Independent Pillar (Stand-Alone Perspective)**

Social sustainability is sometimes regarded in isolation from other aspects of sustainability (see Figure 3) in that it “does not constrain, propel or in any way interact with the other pillars” (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 4). Social sustainability from this perspective is largely about purely social and community issues. It is equivalent to a simple Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) perspective in business. There are three aspects which dominate the stand-alone view of social sustainability - social materiality, the social equity perspective and the community life perspective (see Figure 3). Social materiality is the nature of the physical (density and type of housing) aspect of social sustainability. Social equity is related to levels of poverty, access to services (essential and desirable), employment, and affordable housing. The community life perspective includes social interaction, collective activities, sense of place, residential stability (versus turnover), and security (lack of crime and disorder). Where housing is dense and poor quality, social equity is low and community life is lacking resilience, isolated, and unstable then social sustainability will not be a long-term option. Conversely, where housing is dense and good quality or low density and good quality, social equity is balanced and community life is stable well-networked and high in resilience then social sustainability measure will be well-placed.

![Figure 3: Social sustainability as a stand-alone dimension](image)

The advantages of the stand-alone approach are several. First, it enables the measurement of social sustainability as an independent dimension. This provides a clear direction for developing goals, interventions and future plans for improving social sustainability through objective setting...
and evaluation. Second, the stand-alone approach helps to clarify the internal relationships between the aspects of social sustainability. The interdependency and covariance of the sustainability domains has been noted previously. In evaluating the social sustainability of housing, researchers and stakeholders can focus on key indicators of social well-being as material, social justice and community wellbeing without introducing the complexities of environmental and economic issues. Third the stand-alone approach gives focus to issues of social well-being within the context of long-term viability of communities. The crucial importance of the social dimensions of sustainability is seen in the many social ills that are present in unsustainable communities. Problems linked with crime and security, war and violence, vandalism, unemployment, disability, age and migration issues receive much needed attention in an intergenerational sustainability context when they are viewed independently of environmental and economic issues. The stand-alone perspective supports the idea of a social sustainability index that is meaningful independent of the other pillars or the broader concept of sustainability (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 4).

Applying social sustainability as if it were an isolated dimension of sustainability allows comparisons of diverse interventions in varying contexts at specific points in time. This, in turn, accentuates the role of the social in developing all kinds of development and ‘growth’ in communities. Typically this reduction to a single indicator of sustainability has been the role of economic sustainability but this kind of reduction has led to a number of wicked problems such as inequity, entrenched unemployment, poverty and social disengagement (Hajirasouli & Kumarasuriyar, 2016). While the stand-alone approach does generate important knowledge on the role it plays in creating flourishing human communities, a more comprehensive understanding of how different pillars interact is needed establishing in order to characterize and assess sustainability (Griessler & Littig, 2005). Frequently, discussions of sustainable development prioritize economic growth and profit over environmental and social dimensions. This reductionist perspective can sometimes be transferred onto the other pillars with equally problematic outcomes. In general, reductionist perspectives on sustainability see the preferred pillar as a site for investments and the other domains as sites for minimising costs. With the dominance of the economic pillar the social and environmental have been neglected and the reappraisal of the social as central has come out of a need to rebalance this economic reductionism.

Social sustainability can also be envisioned as a boundary condition that places constraints upon economic and environmental imperatives. Such a view sees sustainability as a trade-off being
vying objectives. In terms of housing this can be equated with the planner’s dilemma (Nor, 2017). The social sustainability goals of equity, strong community life and healthy physical conditions need to be traded off against economic efficiencies and environmental protections. This plays out into the very practical planning dilemmas. For example, how much financial investment and monetary cost should be allocated to housing developments to optimise social sustainability goals? How intrusive should those housing developments be on ecological systems and the various natural resources of land, water, soil, flora, fauna, rivers, lakes, forest, and so on? In a more positive tone, what design features does the housing development need to posses to retain and maintain or, preferably, restore and generate economic and environmental resilience.

Social sustainability perspectives that are constraint and trade-off focused highlight the role of innovation in developing social sustainability solutions. Innovative solutions and entrepreneurial activities are know to flourish under conditions of constraint and limitation (Shepherd & Patzelt, 2017). Social sustainability places constraints on economic and environmental activities that encourage organisations to think outside the box, to develop creative solutions and to allow experimentation and playful trialling of ideas. These experiments are innovative in that they meet multiple objectives across economic, social and environmental domains at the same time. As Boyer notes,

This social-pillar-as-constraint framing often prescribes pragmatic tinkering—alleging that ‘sustainable’ solutions will emerge in practice as public and private decision makers discover solutions that achieve multiple criteria at the same time. (Boyer et al., 2016, p. 7)

In applying these notions to housing for vulnerable further constraints and trade-offs related to design and access, affordability and quality, locality and availability will also figure prominently in the development of sustainability solutions that include all three pillars.

Social sustainability as human development

The development perspective regards environmental and economic sustainability as achievable only as subsequent to the planning for and establishment of social development (see Figure 4). Consequently, there is a need to first establish the basic conditions of socio-cultural resilience and social well-being before addressing environmental issues (Dempsey et al., 2011). While considering the economic as a vital and distinct sustainability domain, the developmental perspective regards the economic as part of, and subject to the social domain (Vallance et al., 2011). The developmental perspective on social sustainability captures the whole constellation of
factors concerning human and individual and collective growth and emergence. These factors include such elements as life span needs, available resources, the distribution of power and influence, basic human rights and responsibilities and the balancing of personal freedoms with institutional structures that support those freedoms. The development perspective highlights the need for inter- and intra-generational equity in the provision of resources necessary for capacity building. Social sustainability as social development therefore includes political issues such as the need for democratic processes at all levels of personal, community, national and international activities (Andersson, Brämå, & Holmqvist, 2010). Rather, if social development varies with national and regional boundaries, and sustainability across all borders is weakened, the course unsustainable practices will spill out from one region to reduce the social resilience and capacity building of another. For example, the movement of refugees from an area of social vulnerability to another of more stable developmental capacity, illustrates this notion of connected social sustainability as a function of overall development (Harju, 2015). This clearly applies not only between countries but also occurs within countries where varying access to resources and opportunities can impact on the overall level of social sustainability within the same political, cultural or geographic region.

The developmental aspect of social sustainability can be seen as a function of addressing the basic needs of people across different scales of time and place (see Figure 2). Early discussions of sustainable development recognized that addressing fundamental human needs is a core aspect of social sustainability and that to meet these needs it is also important that the physical and natural environment be sustained over the long term. The basic human need for security and physical protection as expressed, for example, in meeting demands for housing and accommodation, are closely associated with a community’s capacity to care for natural systems and maintain ecological resilience (Werner, 2017). For example, the links between socially sustainable housing and security of home tenure and ownership have been noted in the literature (Crabtree, 2005). Sustainable housing and the additional costs of green technology and alternative energy sources or retrograde modifications to improve housing and energy efficiencies are often costly and the demand for more basic needs of nutrition, education, health and transport can outweigh discretionary spending on sustainability measures (Burningham & Thrush, 2003). At the general level, it is unreasonable to expect that families prioritize concerns social justice and equity issues, let alone, those regarding environmental sustainability, when they are struggling to provide for basic accommodation needs. Regardless of the level of economic development, poverty and under-development act as barriers to securing better social and environmental outcomes. Consequently, the developmental dimension of social sustainability ranges from very tangible, basic requirements such as housing, education, clean water and clean air to more abstract, advanced needs such as political freedoms, human rights and social justice.
Consequently, the developmental view on social sustainability sees the securing of environmental, physical and economic sustainability as primary requirements that are necessary but not sufficient for the development of more complex developmental potentials that together constitute social sustainability (Vallance et al., 2011).

Some questions related to the topic of housing arising from the developmental perspective include: i) Can housing needs be met for the disadvantaged and more vulnerable social groups that support both basic and advanced developmental outcomes for individuals or communities? ii) What is the relationship between housing needs and advanced developmental needs such as freedom, dignity and inclusion while securing ecological health and resilience? iii) Will people and human communities forego wealthy lifestyles and the accompanying luxuries and capacity for discretionary consumption to achieve equitable distribution of wealth and more sustainable consumption patterns?

Social Sustainability as bridging economic and ecological pillars

A second stream of literature on social sustainability sees human communities and natural environments as co-creating the conditions for sustainable development. This bridging perspective takes a more integrative view to explain social sustainability as a function of the resilience of social-ecological systems (Folke, 2006) (see Figure 5). Rather than expecting that positive ecological outcomes will eventually follow from social development, the bridging literature sees social sustainability actively partnering with environmental concerns to build social equity and justice. The social element in this bridging approach is the utilization of human potential to produce flourishing natural environments so that social conditions are generated that directly support ecological sustainability (Wikström, 2013). This can come about via two pathways (Vallance et al., 2011). First, bridging occurs through science communication, media
and information that mediates the physical reality of the state of planetary systems and ecologies to people and societies. This informational, incrementalist pathway communicates the reliance of social sustainability on natural systems which in turn creates the necessary conditions for social change and the protection and restoration of ecological systems and awareness of the health effects of human process on those natural systems. The second way bridging is used to understand social sustainability is to highlight the ways that we perceive the relationship between human and nature as a socially constructed process (Marcus, Kurucz, & Colbert, 2010). This is a mindset perspective that sees social sustainability as a constructed condition and thereby amenable to sudden transformative change and reimaging (Vallance et al., 2011). These two methods for framing social sustainability, as informational cocreation or as mindset cocreation also demarcate differences between researchers who propose incrementalist theories of social sustainability and those who propose transformative theories of social sustainability. On the transformative side of the divide are critics who see current social practices as dysfunctional for communities and destructive of natural systems and thereby requiring transformative change. Social sustainability from this angle is something that requires a full overhaul and transformation of the cultural mindsets that drive unsustainable systems and practices.

Incrementalist bridging and transformative bridging are two approaches that have implications for how social sustainability is conceptualised. In incrementalist bridging the social and the environmental are integrated and connected through a scientific accumulation of the facts which then over time filters into the world of public policy, government regulation and business affairs and decision-making. So there is encouragement, through the gradual impact of knowledge and policy development, to do things differently without the pressure or expectation to demand fundamental changes to the way society currently functions so that more sustainable systems emerge. These non-transformative approaches to bridging sustainability often rely on the adoption of technological innovations rather than radical changes in social systems, economic systems, market regulations or personal lifestyles. Social sustainability from this perspective amount to relatively small changes in social systems and the laws, policies and practices that regulate them. For example, to achieve more sustainable housing options and processes, market incentives and inducements are preferred over wholesale legal changes. Marginal improvements in the provision of green energy is preferred overall radical infrastructure changes. Scientific information tends to be an important aspect of incrementalist social sustainability because it is typically presented as descriptive and therefore eschews more radical assessments of the need for change based on ethical or social justice-related motivations. The objective stance that is part of scientific training precludes a more activist stance where moral judgements, values, and emotions and ethics tend to play a more significant role.
The incrementalist position is, however, being challenged by a transformative bridging approach that sees no axiomatic separation between society and the environment. The social and the environmental are not two different aspects of sustainability. Rather, they constitute a single social-ecological system (Holling, 2001) and hence natural systems and natural forms are constitutive of the social. Within a housing context this transformative bridging approach completely reframes what conventional suburban life to propose such alternatives as communal living arrangements, nature-inspired housing designs and radically new planning processes for urban developments. Such proposals call for new understandings of the relationship between social sustainability and mainstream forms of urban life as all stakeholders involved in the housing and urban development sector make value-based judgements about the way they use, and care for, their immediate environment (Gressgdrd, 2015). From this perspective nature becomes an integral factor for stimulating the transformation of people’s behaviour and social action.

![Figure 5: The bridging perspective](image)

**Social Sustainability as Maintenance**

A third stream of literature sees social sustainability as a process of securing and maintaining the local places and spaces that have traditionally defined local forms of cultural life and identity (Vallance et al., 2011). *Maintenance* social sustainability is a mixture of traditional practices and systems and may include activities that are unsustainable at larger functional scales in the long term. Maintenance forms of social sustainability might include, for example, traditional forms of accommodation, urban life, farming and transport practices that are part of a cultural identity which have been practices for many generations but which are

Maintenance social sustainability speaks to the traditions, practices, preferences and places people would like to see maintained (sustained) or improved, such as low-density suburban living, the use of the private car, and the preservation of natural landscapes. These practices underpin people’s quality of life, social networks, pleasant work and living spaces, leisure opportunities, and so on. Maintenance social sustainability is,
therefore, concerned with the ways in which social and cultural preferences and characteristics, and the environment, are maintained over time. (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 345)

This form of maintenance is a habitual practice that builds on local cultural identity rather than the sustainability factors that may operate at larger international and global scales of assessment. Maintenance sustainability can also actively work against these larger often scientifically-based assessments of social and environmental sustainability. Perhaps the most prevalent example of maintenance sustainability is seen in the influence of traditional and mainstream economic and commercial practices on social forms of existence. The sustainability of traditional economic systems often usurps attempts to develop more transformative approaches to social change. The maintenance of conventional technological innovations, social policies, long-term planning, capital and financial investments, infrastructure development are motivated by traditional views and embedded practices that limit vision and imagination. Social-ecological innovations disrupt these “established patterns of behaviour, values and traditions that people would like to see preserved (such as private automobility and suburban living “ (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 345).

There are numerous factors involved in maintenance forms of social sustainability that extend beyond an habitual preference for the status quo. Social change is a difficult process in which there can be winners and losers and hence issues of social and political power, influence and control become important for understanding the dynamics of sustainability and how it relates to social change. Vested commercial and political interests, who have much to lose if sustainability issues were addressed with real action, can stymie change through the creation of doubt and neutralise public concern and motivation for change (Oreskes & Conway, 2010) The ongoing ineffectual response to the climate change problem despite decades of knowledge is evidence the problem of collective action and this problem is closely linked to maintenance forms of social sustainability (Gold, Muthuri, & Reiner, 2018). At a more domestic level of household change, even where government regulation and business innovations do support change, unintended and perverse results can result given people’s reluctance to adopt new lifestyle practices. Greater efficiencies in transportation and fuel, for example, can result simply in more travel, more flights, more private vehicle use. (Polimeni, 2008).

What this means for social sustainability and housing is that sustainable cities, suburbs and housing developments need to be places where: i) people actually want to live and ii) centres of power are open to more advanced levels of change, that is, change that is in measure to the scientific realities of sustainability, These two aspects of social maintenance are interdependent and influence each other in decisive ways. While niche sectors of communities may have greater
knowledge and motivation for change, changing the behaviour and choices of the general public requires concerted action from leaders and those with systemic authority to undertake significant change. Maintenance social sustainability raised awareness of the need for leadership, the communication of the facts and urgency for change, a responsive vision for tacking that change challenge and support for embedding change practices. Commenting on the need for education and communication for addressing awareness and sustainability in a housing context, Vallence and her colleagues write,

Maintenance social sustainability requires a good understanding of, for example, new housing developments, the layout of streets, open spaces, residential densities, the location of services, an awareness of habitual movements in place, and how they connect with housing cultures, references, practices and values, particularly those for low-density, suburban lifestyles. (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 345)

This awareness needs to be present for all stakeholders irrespective of their social power or capacity to extend influence over the factors that the authors identify in this quote. In summary, the maintenance perspective can be seen as maintaining either a traditional persistence and stability of a culture or as maintaining a more adaptive capacity to responsively change as circumstances require. Figure 6 shows these two forms of maintenance - stability and adaptive-transformative. Stability maintenance is social sustainability that changes but only as far as is possible while maintaining traditional knowledge sources, conventional centres of power and control and information access. Adaptive-transformative approaches to social sustainability are characterised by acceptance of scientific consensus of knowledge, awareness of challenges and systemic complexities, collaborative and distributive forms of decision-making and shared access to information.

![Figure 6: The maintenance perspective](image-url)
In summary, the maintenance perspective consists of two kinds of social sustainability (see Figure 6): i) the minimalist position aims to introduce sustainability measures that do not threaten conventional lifestyles, decision-making processes, business activities, planning and infrastructure development processes, traditional stakeholder groups, power structure or dominant cultural paradigms, ii) the adaptive position aims to provide significant levels of change in social structures and cultural mindsets so that transformative strategies can be developed and implemented. In the minimalist position social sustainability is still a desired outcome but not if it upsets the status quo beyond limits that are acceptable by mainstream centres of societal power, authority and leadership. The adaptive position seeks levels of social sustainability that actively address multi-level sustainability challenges, from the local to the global, including significant shifts in, not only laws, regulations, decisions and policies, but who makes those decisions and the ways they are enforced.

**Social Sustainability as Integrated System**

The integration of these three positions - the developmental, the bridging and the maintenance - requires the accommodation of the unique contributions of each and a recognition of the existing gaps. Convergences are: i) inclusion: that all three perspectives acknowledge the distinctiveness of ecological and the economic as something apart from the social, ii) interdependency: despite this distinctiveness, there is intense interdependency between all three, and iii) change: recognition that both tangible and intangible changes are needed in the relationships between biosphere, the socio-sphere and the economic sphere. Some divergences and conflicts include: i) conventional developmental needs of the social can be harmful, deleterious or at least cause stress to environmental and economic sustainability, ii) conventional developmental needs (developmental social sustainability) are different to and need to be distinguished from preferences and wants (maintenance social sustainability) and iii) what is beneficial for the biophysical environment (bridging social sustainability) may be at odds with traditional community wants and preferences (maintenance social sustainability).

Considering the three perspectives of development (basic/tangible and advanced/intangible needs), bridging (social/human and environmental/nature) and maintenance (incremental or traditional and transformative or ecological) simultaneously permits the identification of both fault lines of contention and synergies for innovation in how social sustainability can be achieved. In the context of housing these contentions and possibilities are no less important. For example, the issue of cost and resources becomes problematic when developmental and bridging perspectives are both present. Change can be expensive and the issue of cost bearing of innovative housing solutions becomes critical. But this contention can also create conditions for
new solutions and collaborative partnerships. Questions of equity are not easily solved when the need for return on investment, a driving motivation for innovation in the private sector, becomes important but these are not the only motivating forces in business or government. Vallence and colleagues make it clear that both positives and negative can emerge from these fault lines:

There is potential for [developmental and bridging] sustainabilities to align, such as when housing is made both ‘affordable’ and ‘green’ and stimulates interest in bio-physical environmental issues. On the other hand, a number of recent studies have highlighted the need to be much more aware of the social implications of the solutions to bio-physical problems. Widespread use of public transport, for example, will depend on the provision of efficient, clean and safe services, but such facilities are likely to be more expensive and limited to high demand routes. Such a situation is likely to further exacerbate the exclusion of some marginalised groups and therefore act against the principles of sustainable development. (Vallance et al., 2011, p. 345)

Contradictions and contentions arising from misalignments between all three perspectives - developmental, maintenance and bridging - are clearly present in social sustainability debates. Some of these misalignments include:

i) Meeting basic and advanced needs of all stakeholders involved in the housing development process while maintaining principles of equity for potential residents from vulnerable groups such as the elderly, unwaged youth, new arrivals and disability groups.

ii) Developing relatively expensive green infrastructures while ensuring equal access to housing alternatives.

iii) Developing processes for greater participation of vulnerable and marginalised groups be efficiently organized while also recognising the urgency of adopting measure for ecological sustainability.

iv) The implications of scientific information (bridging) point to radical and transformational shifts in public policy (developmental) but communicating and implementing this information will meet with significant resistance from community groups focused on retaining current practices (minimalist maintenance perspective).

Appreciating how various definitions and models of social sustainability converge and diverge assists in diagnosing problems and creating innovative solutions to sustainability challenges generally. It is not just that we should challenge the separation of economic, social and environmental forms of sustainability, but that a recasting of the whole relationship between them calls for a renewal in the definition of each. A fundamental dilemma exists in recognising the unique place of the economic, the social and the environmental while at the same time.
recognising that the economic and the environmental are profoundly social. The theoretical positions outlined here will help in dealing with the inherent sustainability tensions that are readily seen in the trade-off between the three sustainability pillars.

As environmental and social cries have gathered pace at the global scale, the relationship between the domains have increasingly been presented as an embedded approach where the environmental includes the social which in turn includes the economic (Griggs et al., 2013). This embedded approach is depicted in Figure 7 as a nested holarchy. A holarchy is a model where the elements are systemically nested so that sub-elements are embedded within more encompassing elements (Kira & van Eijnatten, 2008). This discussion highlights the contributions of diverse models of social sustainability. Each of them offers important understanding how human individuals, community at all scales can develop and flourish over the long term. Integrating these models requires a framework that can accommodate the unique contribution of the social and highlights the ways it is connected to the economic and the environmental. Figure 7 depicts one way of achieving this. The figure presents a nested system where the social dimension of sustainability includes all aspects of the economic dimension while also constituting part of the environmental dimension. Hence, the economic is always social but not completely definitive of the social. With this overview in mind, the status of social sustainability can be considered in more detail.

This simple but powerful model has important implications for addressing the meaning of social sustainability itself. First, the social is the only dimension of sustainability that is in direct exchange and connection with the other two domains. Social sustainability is the linking domain that connects economic activity with natural systems. Second, the social is always based on and inclusive of economic viability. However, this does not mean that conventional economics is to be maintained to support social sustainability. A sustainable society is one that will significantly transform and rejuvenate an economic system that supports that sustainability. For example, the
sustainable society is one that can be placed on renewable sources of energy would say it is essential that the fossil fuel economy transform into one that is based on renewable energy systems and infrastructures. Third social sustainability, in an embedded approach, is based on a flourishing natural environment and its priority for establishing social well-being is to protect existing healthy ecosystems and restore damaged ones. A fourth implication of the embedded approach to sustainability for the social dimension is that the economic is always a subcomponent of the social and not the other way around. The economic domain can contain numerous forms of economy and different types of markets, including not-for-profit, households, and volunteer economies and informal markets consisting of many different stakeholders. Social sustainability therefore builds on the functioning of many different stakeholder groups, public interests and economic and social sectors.

The embedded model accommodates the standalone approach in that it finds a unique place for social sustainability issues. It accommodates the developmental approach in that it respects the importance of material, psychological, community and ecological needs and their importance for human development. Some questions regarding housing and social sustainability arising from the embedded model are:

i) How are the economic and ecological dimensions embedded within the social sustainability of housing and accommodation?

ii) How are the interests of economic and ecological stakeholders, for example financiers and environmental groups respectively, and the economic and ecological dimensions of all stakeholders included within all stages of the housing development process?

iii) What are the relationships between economic, social and ecological dimensions of sustainability in housing contexts and which relationships have priority over others? For example, in deciding the investment of resources do social or environmental concerns take priority?

iv) What innovations are being developed to address conflicts and ambiguities in the relationships between economic, social and ecological priorities?

Summary of definitions and models of social sustainability

These different perspectives of independent (stand-alone), constraint, development, bridging, maintenance and embedded-integrated each provide unique and useful insights for a cup of understanding social sustainability. Table 3 presents the console of the framework for the social sustainability perspectives showing how the different constituent elements align and can be summarized within an embedded-integrative approach. Clearly, this depiction does not present a detailed model of social sustainability but it does offer important insights into how social
sustainability can be considered from different conceptual orientations. Aspects of this framework will be used in later sections to provide directions for more practical solutions, implications and recommendations. The next sections will explore emergent empirical and applied themes of the literature in further detail.

Table 3: Consolidated Framework for Social Sustainability Perspectives

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Constitutive elements</th>
<th>Social Sustainability Perspectives</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Independent (Stand-Alone)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social materiality</td>
<td>financial innovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>social equity</td>
<td>design innovations</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>community life</td>
<td>inclusion innovations</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The framework depicted in Table 3 can be applied to the housing sector to identify some of the key factors influencing the development of policy. While each of the social sustainability perspectives contributes important insights into what constitutes social sustainability, it is only an integrated approach that can accommodate many of these contributions that defines systematic forms of social sustainability. However, too frequently social sustainability in housing is equated with providing for social materiality and the provision of basic accommodation needs, that meet basic needs which are reliant on efficiency-dominated (traditional) designs and are subject to long-book standing financial constraint. A sustaining approach to policy development will aim for an embedded approach where sustainable housing options are conducive to the production and consumption of environmentally sustainable housing, an acceptable quality of housing conditions, a concern for the continuation of culture and the preservation of housing heritage (Chiu, 2004)

Overall, the literature review to here has shown that understandings of social sustainability are diverse and largely incoherent highly and coherent when taken as a group. Without adopting a generalizing metaperspective that provides some capacity for comparing and contrasting individual conceptualizations, social sustainability will continue to poorly understand with different views being studied without connection to each other. The implications of this for understanding how social sustainability theories impact on housing and planning for more inclusive communities is profound and needs to be addressed. The approach initiated here takes steps towards a more integrative alternative. These formative suggestions, as offered for example in Table 3 can be further developed to gain a more consolidated understanding of this important
aspect of sustainability. As the relevance and importance of sustainability topics becomes increasingly central to issues of urban development, quality of life, equity and environmental resilience, so the urgency for understanding social sustainability in important areas such as housing will grow accordingly.

**Social Sustainability and Vulnerable Groups**

**Social Sustainability and the Elderly**

In Sweden there are many municipalities where the overall population is dropping but the proportion of elderly is increasing (Abramsson & Hagberg, 2018). This demographic trend is happening across the world in many different countries and it is one of the main factors impacting on the provision of housing and public services. The ongoing migration of young people away from regional towns and villages has proceeded along with increasing life expectancy of older generations. Clearly this has important implication for the social sustainability of communities. It is important that the experiences of elderly people play a role in the planning and design of housing options in both the way housing developments sit with the wider community as well as the nature of the dwellings themselves.

Small municipalities, village and regional life provides a strong community and social life and retains the familial and historical connections that people feel with the towns and rural areas that they and their families have lived in. At the same time the large cities of Sweden are growing quickly as younger generations move to urban areas. Consequently, there are social issues emerging around service provision and quality of life in dwindling local communities. This impacts on the social materiality of maintaining houses and infrastructures to support community facilities, on social equity in the provision of services and on community life in maintaining and developing well-being. For most people, the opportunity to lead a good life is dependent on the provision of quality services and on being involved in social networks and community activities.

Social sustainability is a concept that becomes more important the more vulnerable groups are with regard to the physical nature of their housing, their access to personal and social economic and material resources and their capacity to enjoy and develop their potential for accessing and contributing to community life. Advancing age places many individuals, families and groups within this exposed category of residents. A study of individuals 80 years and older in three semirural municipalities (Abramsson & Hagberg, 2018) found that recent years has seen a “reduction of service levels have taken place as local shops and services in the smaller [townships] have been closed down.” (Abramsson & Hagberg, 2018, p. 115). The residents
managed these changes by relying on social networks and their on physical capacities and on
driving cars during optimal conditions. Car reliance for accessing standard services such as
health, retail and library services was one of the main findings of the study. Woman are at greater
risk of becoming isolated as their average longevity exceeds that of men by several years. Elderly
citizens also contribute much to local communities. More than half of all those surveyed
volunteer and are members of civic organisations. Taking part in community activities was
import to a majority of the respondents. However, there was a substantial proportion of the
surveyed group who were struggling to retain social networks, were resentful of the diminishing
level of services in their area, and the impact of poor health on participation in the community.
One particular problem was the growing number of houses that were left empty due to death
and/or movement of the family to urban areas. These exacerbated feelings of decline and
heightened the sense of lack of social networks and community life for elderly neighbours.

In general, the social sustainability outcomes for the elderly can be regarded increasingly diverse
as people age. For some the social outcomes are more positive with some participating more and
contributing their time and resources to community life. For others it is a different story with
some elderly becoming less independent and more reliant on the formal and informal services
that were available in their community. For this more vulnerable group, social networks were
thinning out and there was diminished participation in community activities. The very elderly in
isolated and rural parts of the country were particularly affected in this manner resulting in a less
socially sustainable local society. This resulted in several strategies to maintain quality of life and
standards of care. These strategies included i) even more reliance on private vehicle transport or
special transport serves, ii) movement to more central parts of the municipality to get closer to
service provision and iii) attempts to build local social networks and fight against the withdrawal
of government and private services to remote and rural regions. Where these strategies did not
work there was further to the depopulation of the more remote regions once again exacerbating
the problem.

Social Sustainability and New Arrivals

In a practical sense, the social sustainability of a country, region or city is its resilience to
withstand shocks, adapt and transform. This resilience is not only about bouncing back from a
shock but also to positively adapt to the changes cause by those shocks and to have the
transformative agency to move those changes in a direction that leads to well-being at all levels
from the personal to the large system collective (Folke et al., 2010). One of the major shocks for
cities in Sweden in recent years has been the large number of immigrants from the middle-east.
These new arrivals have placed pressures on the housing opportunities available in many cities
and yet there have been relatively few studies of the impact and responses to these challenges from a sustainability perspective. A recent book has shed some light on this topic at the level of the sustainable city and the local government processes that inform housing policy at that level. The overall findings appear to confirm that local government public managers lack clear frameworks for guiding the integration of sustainability measures in the practice of public management. This has been an observation made at the international level and not just within Sweden (Zeemering, 2017). Local governments are apparently finding it difficult to introduce sustainability-focused reforms into strategic planning processes. This is particularly true for social sustainability and the concomitant elements of adequate social materiality, social equity standards and engagement in community life (Grander, 2018).

However, the diverse interpretations of the term social sustainability and the complex set of elements that constitute, have lead to different interpretations and strategies for implementation and planning (Argento, Broström, & Grossi, 2018). A report on social sustainability guided housing projects in the Gothenburg area have found that the translation of social sustainability concepts and theories into strategies, designs and practices can take many different paths and can evolve over time (Argento et al., 2018). Lack of consensus means that the end results of social sustainability informed projects is highly dependent on management vision, operational skills and consultancy practices. These findings highlight both the importance of management competencies with the social sustainability concept but also points to the lack of uniform understandings, tools, protocols, intervention strategies and policy guidelines. Another study of this same sustainability driven planning project described how three different decision making groups and workshops were deliberately planned around the three sustainability pillars. This approach allowed specialisation of particular interests but also exacerbated faultlines and gaps between the different approaches (Brorstrom, 2015). To overcome these possible areas of conflict, practical issues took precedence over discussion about more fundamental differences in vision and purpose.

One interpretation is that the group invented issues to be dealt with and spent time on them instead of dealing with any conflicts arising between the three dimensions (e.g., Brunsson, 2002). The politicians and group members had difficulty agreeing on what to do in practical terms, but not on the overarching vision of Gothenburg as ‘open to the world’. This proves that some aspects of the vision – for example, the bridge – were more open to discussion than were others – for example, how to solve the segregation problem. (Brorstrom, 2015, p. 29)
These findings highlight the need for the complementary goals of shared vision, innovative solutions and practical implementation to be openly engaged with and pragmatically solved. Gaps in each of these domains can be cause for consensus and agreement but also of conflict and contention. Consultation and planning processes that openly engage with these realities form a crucial element in the adoption of social sustainability as an ideal for creating sustainable and sustaining communities.

**Social Sustainability and Youth**

Urban youth constitute a group of special concern for the socio-political development of large cities in Sweden. According to the Swedish National Board for Youth Affairs, some disadvantaged urban areas can have around 30-50% of youth aged 20-25 who do not work or study (Righard et al., 2015a). Clearly this is problematic for both these individuals and their families but it also presents challenges for neighbourhoods and communities at the social level. At a broader level, the issue of affordable housing for young people is a much more widespread problem in Sweden than is generally recognised (Lieberg, 2012). The lack of affordable housing is exacerbating this problem. Young people who have limited economic means, low social equity, and few social networks and investment in community life. Innovative solutions to increase the social sustainability of young people housing options are difficult because of the simultaneous paucity of resources in each of these three fundamental aspects to social sustainability. On top of these pressures, social tensions due to transnational migration have increased. There is even greater competition for housing from those who similarly lack available resources. The social exclusion and discrimination that young people can people encounter in the lack of socially sustainable housing leads to frustration and alienation the result.

The youth in a community are its future and so are centrally important to the topic of sustainability. More research is needed to explore innovative solutions to the housing challenges facing the community to provide good physical living and accommodation conditions (Righard et al., 2015a), socially equitable living arrangements that provide belongingness and social networks of value, and opportunities to explore their capacity to grow and contribute to their communities (Lind, 2017).

**Social Sustainability and Disability**

One and half million people living in Sweden have a disability (Swedish Institute, 2019). Given the However, very little research was found regarding the topic of social sustainability and housing for people with disabilities in Sweden. What literature was identified of that disability within elderly populations and the need for care in residential settings for those who had trouble coping with the activities of daily life (Hellström, Andersson, & Hallberg, 2004). However, there are other segments of the community who experience disability unrelated to age, for example
intellectual disability, chronic pain sufferers, sensory impairments and different kinds of ambulatory impairment. There are two common elements that run cross many of these groups - issues of in-home support and the accessibility design of housing. In-home support adds significantly to the quality of life of individuals. In-home support requires the availability of human services and the communication means to interact with those services. While this can be done in generic housing with individualised home-based serves it can also be improved through specific kinds of housing projects that have on-site services that cater for different kinds of support needs from light to intensive levels depending on the level of support and care required. Table 4 outlines factors for the measurement of the effectiveness of housing support policy for persons with disabilities. These factors include many social sustainability indicators that can be applied to development in many countries including Sweden.

Table 4: Measures of the Effectiveness of Housing Supports for Vulnerable Categories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>1. Direct outcomes for individuals and groups</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Living independently</td>
<td>Opportunity to choose place of residence, with whom to live, the conditions of support and to change housing support.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Quality of life:</td>
<td>Achieves, encourages and facilitates overall well-being (Physical, Psychological, Spiritual), personal goals in the form of practical needs, growth needs (advanced personal needs), leisure needs, connection with nature, social belonging, community belonging, physical place belonging.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Culturally appropriate</td>
<td>specific cultural and linguistic needs, the needs of indigenous people, cultural competency of services, local cultural community</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
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<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>2. Administrative Systems</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Interagency regulations and coordination</td>
<td>the collaboration and coordination of public and private agencies</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Service provider policies and practice</td>
<td>the involvement of stakeholder, complaint processes, quality of sustainability policies and practices</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>3. Service Viability</th>
<th></th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Housing support</td>
<td>availability, flexibility, mobility of services</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sustainability of service</td>
<td>over the short and long-term, economic, social and environmental aspects of the service and how it is delivered</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The social sustainability dimensions of social materiality (in this case physical housing needs, social equity needs, and community life needs) run throughout these effectiveness measures. The social supports required for elderly and people with disabilities form an important part of the infrastructure needed for social sustainability to be practically implemented.

The second common thread of design is an especially important one for the housing industry. Design is one of those fields which has immense potential for opening up innovative possibilities
in the face of multiple constraints. For example, “design thinking” is a process for creative problem solving that is stakeholder-centred and which encourages organizations to focus on the improvement of better products, services and their own internal processes to better meet customer needs (Brown, 2008). A particular variety of design thinking, called Universal Design (UD) (Ostroff, 2011), is an inclusive design approach that aims for the widest range of access possible as well as optimizing the capacities for adapting physical facilities to particular users. UD is the design and building of an environment to optimise access so that all people, regardless of their age or disability can live in and enjoy residential facilities. Design is an important element in both the planning and development of housing options. The next section considers in more detail this planning aspect of the literature.

**Social Sustainability and Planning**

Social sustainability is a desirable quality in the development and maintenance of communities because it aims for the long-term betterment of the quality of life of inhabitants. Sustainability itself is not an endpoint but rather a process that is achieved via a dynamic balance between vision, planning, adaptation and innovation. This is particularly true during periods of rapid change that characterise the current situation. In the coming decades the impact of environmental changes due to climate change and internal and external migration arising from climate-related conflicts, e.g. over water and agricultural crises, will have increasing impacts on the social sustainability of communities in Sweden. Environmental challenges leasing social and economic challenges will have ongoing influence on housing and, consequently, on the need to plan for these changes (Boström, 2012).

The impact of environmental changes on planning and design aspects of sustainability will be especially notable. Planning needs to accommodate such factors as “eco-friendly lifestyles, large-scale infrastructure planning, and planners’ attitudes towards justice” (Bradley, Gunnarsson-Östling, & Isaksson, 2008). How planning procedures do this is a complex and not well understood task. One of the few dedicated researchers in this field has found that planners often adopt a positivist, predictive approach to conceptualising the relationship between the planning process and housing outcomes (Bradley, 2009; Bradley et al., 2008). This means that planning assumes that good outcomes will be achieved as a function of optimising several key variables that are typically garnered from a small number of individuals who provide financial, regulatory or architectural inputs. With this kind of planning process outcomes typically reflect the values and ideas of those in positions of power rather than meeting the material, social equity and community life needs of those from less privileged and from particularly vulnerable social positions.
One way to reconsider these kinds of planning procedures is the review the various steps in the planning process using the lens of social sustainability and its constituent elements. Table 5 provides an integrative framework that combines fundamental aspects of planning qualities of social materiality, social equity and community life.

Table 5: Planning and various forms of social sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Planning phases</th>
<th>Sustainability dimensions</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Economic</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Materiality</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Groundwork Phase</td>
<td>Social sustainability aspects that address the groundwork phase of planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Organisation and stakeholders, Development philosophy, Legal framework, Zoning, Policy research and development</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Design Phase</td>
<td>Social sustainability aspects that address the design phase of planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Vision and agreements, Land use plan, Design and implementation Phase, Design - final design of buildings, green spaces, adaptions, Feasibility checks</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Planning Phase</td>
<td>Social sustainability aspects that address the planning phase of planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Legally required steps, Government Approvals, Permits - building environmental, Planning requirements, Preparatory planning phase exploration &amp; scoping, Master plan</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Operational phase</td>
<td>Social sustainability aspects that address the operational phase of planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Formal Agreements, Adaptation, Quality management, Monitoring, Site management</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation</td>
<td>Social sustainability aspects that address the evaluation phase of planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Evaluation, stakeholder feedback, ongoing monitoring and adaptation.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

There are unique challenges that apply to each of the planning phases from a social sustainability perspective. First there is the relationship between the social and the other two domains of the economic and the environmental. On the economic side, a major problem for each of the phases from the Groundwork phase through to Design and Evaluation phases is the lack of consultation and stakeholder engagement with people who are vulnerable to financial demands and risks (Deutz, 2014; Hedin, Clark, Lundholm, & Malmberg, 2012). On the environmental side, it is well know that “adverse environmental impacts mainly affect disenfranchised communities” (Bradley, 2009; Bradley et al., 2008). Planning to address environmental issues needs also to accommodate issues of equity and segregation and not simply assume that the latest designs for sustainability are about lifestyle choices but about issues of poverty and social inequality. A final major topic...
that runs through all planning phases related to innovation and its relationships with design. Typically design issues follow only after basic planning and budgeting considerations have set the boundaries of the project. Reversing these priorities can also, however, generate innovative solutions that can cut costs and gain efficiencies over time.

**Social Sustainability and Innovation**

The current housing shortage in Sweden is creating pressure for residential solutions that meet the social expectations and needs of the community. At the same time there is a diverse set of interests that accompanies this demand by way of social equity, community standards of living and economic factors with a resulting intensification of the need for novel solutions. As a consequence, there is an urgency to deliver practical demonstrations and experiments in this field. One research project has looked explicitly at three case studies from the “Positive Footprint Housing” project and examined the efforts to create social sustainable solutions (Andersson & Gromark, 2016).

The study made several important conclusions regarding the innovation aspect of social sustainability in these housing projects. First, there was an “inherent vagueness of general sustainability formulations, especially concerning *social* sustainability” (Andersson & Gromark, 2016, p. 1) that impacted on the capacity to develop and implement innovative social sustainability goals and concrete solutions. Second, in terms of the three aspects of social sustainability identified in the above discussion, the three cases differed in their concrete goals in ways which reflected these three perspectives (social materiality, social equity and community life) with one aiming for physical aspect of a liveable environment and an attractive city (social materiality), a second looking to social justice and avoiding gentrification (social equity), and the third case aiming for social identity, community dialogue and social networks (community life). Third, there was a lack of political interest and determination to create a socially open housing project that satisfied resident preferences through consultation processes. In contrast the key focus was on economic sustainability which weakened those aspect of social sustainability that prioritized social equity and community life. Fourth, the key difficulty faced by all stakeholders in all three cases was the dividing tensions between the economic, the environmental and the social pillars of sustainability. As the authors state:

[The housing]project demonstrates the closeness between the *environmental* and the *social* pillars, just as Murphy (2012) underlines. However, it seems much more complicated to integrate the *economic* aspects. In the beginning of the Viva procedure, economy played a very marginal role in the discussions. It was as if this would have
Table 6: Integrated indicators of social sustainability

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Integrated Model of indicator</th>
<th>Social and cultural sustainability (Axelsson et al., 2013)</th>
<th>SS Impacts (Dixon et al., 2019)</th>
<th>SS and an Integrated Way Forward (Boyer et al., 2016)</th>
<th>SS Indicators for mass housing Karji et al (2019)</th>
<th>SS and supply chain decisions (Hutchins &amp; Sutherland, 2008)</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Macro-level social sustainability</td>
<td>Social Equity</td>
<td>Democratic civil society</td>
<td>Social justice</td>
<td>Community</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Equity</td>
<td>Social and cultural life</td>
<td>Community networks</td>
<td>Equity</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meso-level social sustainability</td>
<td>Community Life</td>
<td>Human development</td>
<td></td>
<td>Education</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Living environment</td>
<td>Amenities and infrastructure</td>
<td>Neighbourhood Characteristics</td>
<td>Housing security</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Microlevel social sustainability</td>
<td>Material and physical sustainability</td>
<td>Voice and influence</td>
<td>Living conditions</td>
<td>Livability</td>
<td>Health</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Health, Safety and Risk;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
restricted the creative process. But the longer the process progressed, economy was introduced and the people representing this perspective critically engaged in what was really possible to implement. This led for example to a slimming down of space for common purposes in the suggested housing plan and to less experiments with building materials in the construction. (Andersson & Gromark, 2016, p. 5)

**Social Sustainability and its Measurement**

The measurement of socially desirable goals such as social sustainability is a particularly challenging aspect of the research into this field. Most studies have focused on the theoretical and conceptual side of evaluation by looking at the definitions and model and assessing their application in building and design projects (Boyer et al., 2016; Jensen et al., 2012; Koch & Buser, 2015). Measurement moves beyond this conceptual assessment approach to include the degree to which managers can identify success and failures, the goals that sustainable housing projects have reached or failed to reach targets, or to accurately assess the outcomes for residents and other stakeholders (Axelsson et al., 2013). This more demanding aspect of measurement has been addressed by several authors (Axelsson et al., 2013; Dixon et al., 2019; Eckerberg & Mineur, 2010; Fisher, Parker, & Purcal, 2009; Gibson, 2006; Hutchins & Sutherland, 2008). The following table lists some of these research findings and calibrates these into an integrated set of indicators. Table 6 provides an integrated summary of these indicators. At a very general level these indicators conform with the approach to social sustainability described in the embedded model discussed above. The implications of this for social sustainability within the housing sector in Sweden will be briefly discussed in the following concluding comments.

**CONCLUSION**

This integrative review has identified a number of major themes from the assembled body of representative literature. These themes are listed in Table 5. A central finding is that social sustainability elements and goals are best conceptualised as constituted by the domains of social materiality (physical living conditions, physical health and economic fairness), social equity (justice, human rights and economic opportunities) and community life (community wellbeing and social networks). These factors are nested within an embedded perspective within environmental aspects of sustainability and as inclusive of economic aspects of sustainability. There are several reasons for this. The social touches both the economic and the environmental pillars and therefore is the nexus between the need for developing housing that supports flourishing ecosystems and planetary processes while utilising and generating sustainable financial resources. It is at this nexus point of the social that human creativity and entrepreneurial
innovation lies and the lack of priority given to the social pillar in developing housing projects to this date has been harmful to the development of innovative processes and solutions. Another Of relevance here is that it is the constraints placed on housing developments by economic and environmental factors that generate solutions and the need for greater inclusion of the voices of those who are often missing from consultation and decision-making groups. Hence, social sustainability elements and goals are best conceptualised as being embedded within environmental aspects of sustainability and as inclusive of economic aspects of sustainability. The environment forms the basis of all biological and human life, while the economic is an expression of the creative capacities of communities to (potentially) collaborate through processes of exchange, value negotiation and competitive innovation. agreement.

Table 5: Identified themes

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Identified Themes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The history of Social Housing in Sweden</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Modeling and Defining Social Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Diverse models of sustainable development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As independent pillar (Stand-Alone Perspective)</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As limiting constraint on other sustainability dimensions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As human development</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As bridging economic and ecological pillars</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As Maintenance</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• As Integrated System</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Summary of definitions and models of social sustainability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sustainability and Vulnerable Groups</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Elderly</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• New Arrivals</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Youth</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Disability</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sustainability and Planning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sustainability and Innovation</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Social Sustainability and its Measurement</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Perhaps the most useful application of the findings of this review are to point out that any of these or other important themes and applied topics in the social sustainability of housing can be usefully analysed using integrated frameworks to generate assessment and evaluation tools, measures, guidelines and other pragmatic instruments. For example these frameworks provides means for i) analysing trends to position initiatives with the housing industry, ii) developing innovative solutions for experimentation, iii) assessment tools for evaluating resident satisfaction, iii) organizational tools for quality assurance and monitoring and iv) research tools for developing surveys and measures of social sustainability. The major limitation of this study is
that it has provided only the outline of how these frameworks can be used for the development of such tools and further research is needed for their development.

It is apparent that social sustainability in Sweden is developing quickly as an applied science for improving the liveability and long-term viability of housing, neighbourhoods and cities in Sweden. This review has also found it apparent that this is only the beginning of an important new approach to urban development, housing project and town planning. Much further research is needed to support the emergence of this field so that it can become a widely recognised and understood aspect in the planning and design cities and communities across Sweden and other countries that aim for sustainable and sustaining forms of human habitation.

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Harju, A. (2015). Inclusion and exclusion in a residential narrative of “us” and “them”. In E. Righard, M. Johansson, & T. Salonen (Eds.), Social Transformations in Scandinavian Cities: Nordic Perspectives on Urban Marginalisation and Social Sustainability (pp. 181-198).


Hilgers, M. (2013). What is urban social sustainability?


McKenzie, S. (2004). *Social sustainability: Towards some definitions*. Magill, South Australia, Hawke Research Institute, University of South Australia.


Many municipalities in Sweden have decreasing population rates combined with an increasing proportion of older people. Such a demographic shift will influence the way life is led as the foundation for service provision and social activities becomes undermined. This leads us to question the extent to which shrinking municipalities can be considered socially sustainable. The aim of the paper was to investigate older people’s participation in the local community and to study the perceived changes in the local community as reported by older people and how these are experienced. A postal survey was sent out to all inhabitants aged 80 years and older living in their own household in three small, semi-rural municipalities in
southern Sweden, in total 1386. The response rate was 60%. Thus, focus was on the experiences of the oldest individuals. The research questions analysed for this study concerned the ageing population’s social networks, community involvement, car dependence and service provision. The results are used to discuss the social sustainability of the societies in which these people have lived for a long time.


The issue of residential segregation has been on the Swedish political agenda since the early 1970s. This paper analyses the background for this interest, presents some basic features of socio-economic and ethnic residential segregation, and discusses some fundamental contextual properties regarding the Swedish welfare state, its institutional set-up and changes in housing and other policies that have affected the conditions for segregation processes. Three more specific anti-segregation policies are also identified and analysed: housing and social mix policy (first initiated in the 1970s); the refugee dispersal policy (initiated in the 1980s); and the area-based urban policy (initiated in the 1990s). Of these three, the last two have a clear ethnic focus while mix policies primarily aim for socio-economic and demographic mix. The analysis shows that none of the policies have managed to affect levels of segregation more than marginally, the reasons being ineffective implementation (the mix policy), failures in the design (the refugee dispersal policy) or conflicting aims inherent in the policy (area-based interventions).


The purpose of this paper is to understand why and how the concept of social sustainability evolves over time by generating a gap between the initially desired strategy and the daily practices at the city level. An extensive ethnographic study was conducted focusing on how social sustainability, as defined in the smart strategy of the city of Gothenburg, was first translated and then turned into practice. Through the lens of Actor Network Theory, findings reveal that the translation of a smart city strategy aimed at ensuring social sustainability depends on how the actors involved at various organisational levels interpret the concept of social sustainability and work to translate it into practice. Such translation takes different directions and may lead to a transformation of the concept itself which becomes foggier over time.


Recent resurgence of interest in social aspects of sustainability has enjoined with on-going debates on environmental justice and equity. However, discussions on the socio-geographic distribution of environmental (dis-)benefits have substantially overlooked the issue of class (as defined by Marx). This paper begins to address that deficit by presenting a new conceptualization of sustainable development explicitly drawing on Marxist theorizations of class. Capital and labour have a fundamental conflict of interest; governments have limited potential, or interest, in intervening on labour's behalf. Environmental policies have been portrayed as offering economic and social benefits including so-called green jobs. This paper argues that such policies generate competition for investment rather than promoting equity. Green jobs may offer distributional benefits to individual workers, in certain locations, but cannot benefit labour as a class.

Grander, M. (2018). For the Benefit of Everyone?: Explaining the Significance of Swedish Public Housing for Urban Housing Inequality, Malmö University.

Housing has a special place in the Swedish welfare state. Ever since Gustav Möller, Minister for Social Affairs, in 1945 was handed the result of Bostadsociala utredningen, a state investigation on housing from a social perspective, housing has been a bearing pillar in the Swedish ‘Folkhem’. Since the post-war period, Swedish housing policy has been universal in the sense that housing consumers have not been categorized by income or living conditions. Instead, the policy has had the aim of ‘good housing for all’. The main instrument for achieving this goal—the figurehead of the universal housing policy—has been allmännyttan, the national model of public housing, constituted by municipal housing companies with the task of offering rental housing of high quality, for the benefit of everyone. This PhD thesis analyzes allmännyttan based on the observation that the contemporary housing situation is largely characterized by inequality. The housing consumer is to a lesser extent independent from inherited conditions: Access to housing and the characteristics of housing are increasingly dependent on economic resources. The dissertation highlights the role of public housing in this development. The municipal housing companies and the context they exist in have changed over the past decades through gradual political reforms and alignment with European competition law. Such a development might influence the ability of allmännyttan to contribute to keeping housing inequality at bay. The purpose of the thesis is thus to study the potential and actual significance of allmännyttan for housing inequality in Swedish cities. The thesis is grounded in critical realist ontology and analyzes how and why (or why not) allmännyttan’s latent mechanisms to counteract
inequality are actualized. Through studies of municipal housing companies throughout Sweden, including eleven in-depth case studies, the thesis seeks to answer whether the contemporary allmännytta counteracts housing inequality, or if it rather contributes to a more unequal housing provision.


This article suggests that there is a need for innovative approaches in the complex field of housing and health. It argues that the traditional roles and responsibilities of scientists and professional practitioners ought to be redefined because shortcomings in academic research and professional practice are mainly the result of a narrow vision that does not address the fundamental issues at stake. In contrast to traditional disciplinary approaches which are sectoral, interdisciplinary contributions offer a broader approach. Interdisciplinary approaches highlight the difference between a biomedical model that often adopts a symptom-treatment interpretation of housing and health, and a holistic or integrated model that combines biological, cultural, economic, political, psychological and social factors in a new way. One example of an interdisciplinary approach is an ecological perspective which has been applied to interpret the multiple factors that influence both housing and health. This article argues that an interdisciplinary approach of this kind can be the foundation for transdisciplinary research and professional practice. (C) 2004 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.


After the economic crisis in the early 1990s, there was excess supply of housing, but over the last 25 years, demand has increased because of rising population, rising incomes and low levels of housing construction. The result has been rising prices and longer queues for (rent-regulated) rental housing. The lack of affordable housing has made the situation especially difficult for low-income 'outsiders', e.g. immigrant groups and various marginalised groups. In the debate about explanations and policies one can find demand for 'more market', e.g. deregulating the rental market, weakening the municipal planning monopoly and cutting back on building regulations. There are also proposals for 'less market', e.g. state directives about municipal planning volumes, subsidies for housing construction and more active municipal housing companies. As the current government is weak, most initiatives come from the local level, e.g. both below-market rents for lower-income households and planning for more low-cost housing.

Lifelong Housing: The Anchor in Aging-Friendly Communities. This article describes the role of housing in aging-friendly communities, the problems of living in conventional housing as people age and the need to adapt existing dwellings for older people. The authors discuss ways to make homes better, "visitability" and universal design, relocation options, and resources for low income elders to help them with home modification.


The essays collected in this volume bring new understanding to the dynamics of urban marginality from a Scandinavian perspective. They highlight that Scandinavian cities share many of the problems and challenges that are well known from other countries, and how these unfold in Scandinavian cities and their social-democratic welfare state context. In this way, they challenge the standard view that Scandinavian countries are equal and peaceful. The essays are grouped into three parts, bracketed by this general introduction to the scope of the anthology and a concluding essay discussing the main lessons learned. Of the three parts, the first presents the key theoretical perspectives in the field and introduces the reader to the questions of social sustainability and social disintegration in the Scandinavian context. The second part consists of case studies-qualitative and quantitative analyses of urban marginality in Danish, Norwegian and Swedish cities-while the third focuses on responses to inequality, both in public management and in civil society.


Scandinavian countries are generally associated with extensive public services and low levels of poverty. However, reality has changed dramatically over the last three decades, and Scandinavia’s cities now share many of the problems and challenges familiar from other Western cities. How do the welfare states handle these global societal transformations? In Social Transformations in Scandinavian Cities, researchers highlight the changing face of social sustainability and social disintegration in Scandinavian cities. They offer theoretical and empirical analyses of how migration, inequality, and residential segregation intersect with shifting national and local policies, charting their impact on urban landscapes in Denmark, Norway, and Sweden. The authors challenge the standard view of Scandinavia as
a haven of equality and peace. Unemployment, criminality, and poor school performance in ethnically and socio-economically segregated residential areas have finally been recognized and tackled through urban policies since the 1990s. In Social Transformations in Scandinavian Cities we learn why and in which ways progress is being made.


The elderly population of the United States is large and growing rapidly. Since disability rates increase with age, population aging will bring substantial increases in the number of disabled persons and have a significant impact on the nation's housing needs. Purpose: We demonstrate the impact of population growth and aging on the projected number of households with at least one disabled resident and estimate the probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will have at least one disabled resident during its expected lifetime. Methods: We calculate disability rates using two alternative measures of disability and construct projections of the number of households with at least one disabled resident. We develop and apply a technique for estimating the probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will house at least one disabled resident using data on the average lifespan of those units, the average length of residence for households occupying those units, and the projected proportion of households with at least one disabled resident. Results and conclusions: Under our medium assumptions, we project that 21% of households will have at least one disabled resident in 2050 using our first disability measure (physical limitation) and 7% using our second (self-care limitation). We estimate that there is a 60% probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will house at least one disabled resident during its expected lifetime using our first measure, and a 25% probability using our second measure. When disabled visitors are accounted for, the probabilities rise to 91% and 53%, respectively. Given the desire of most people to live independently for as long as possible, these numbers reflect a large and growing need for housing units with features that make them accessible to disabled persons. Takeaway for practice: The lack of accessible housing provides an opportunity for homebuilders to develop and market products that meet the needs of an aging population. In light of concerns about the civil rights of people with disabilities and the high public cost of nursing home care, housing accessibility is a critical issue for planners and policymakers as well. We believe planners should broaden their vision of the built environment to include the accessibility of the housing stock. Research support: None.

This article presents our research on contemporary urban developments in major Swedish cities. First, we present an analysis of new forms of urban governance in major cities, particularly focusing on inner city developments. Second, we present research on the transformation of housing policies and the so-called Million Program. Third, we highlight new conflicts that have emerged as consequences of these developments, including urban collective action.

MULTI-SCALE


Sustainable development as a process towards sustainability requires collaboration among societal actors and stakeholders at multiple levels. A key issue is to provide them with that they have comprehensive and transparent knowledge base representing the state and trends of different dimensions of sustainability. This study addresses the need to analyse and present data of sustainability as a foundation for the sustainable development process within municipalities and among them. As a case study, we focus on 18 municipalities in the crisis-struck Bergslagen region in Sweden and compare them with 101 surrounding municipalities. Data from 2001 and 2006 on 15 indicators representing ecological, economic and social sustainability criteria were transformed to a common scale through normalization around the median, and summarized. Bergslagen region municipalities performed poorer than the surrounding ones for all dimensions in 2006. The change from 2001 to 2006 was positive for economic and social criteria, while the ecological dimension developed negatively in all municipalities. We stress the need for municipalities to collaborate with each other and other actors both at municipal and regional levels, and to use sustainability indicators as a base for informed planning processes. We propose visualization of indicators using maps to support decision-making and social learning.


Social sustainability is one of the three dimensions in the concept of sustainability and is seen as the weakest pillar of sustainable development. Previous literature concludes that social sustainability is a difficult concept to define and achieve. Therefore, the social dimension has not been addressed to the same extent and has been frequently avoided in research and practice. However the importance of the social dimension of sustainable
development has been recognized from both the private and the public sector during the last decade. The social aspect of sustainability requires more attention and it is important to define the social sustainability processes that should be integrated during the planning phase of residential development projects. The purpose of this research is to contribute with knowledge about how social sustainability can be addressed in the housing industry and within the scientific fields of urban planning and project development. By looking deeper, from both the developer and municipality perspective, into how social sustainability aspects are addressed today, how cooperation regarding these aspects is working, what values a focus on social aspects can create for both parties as well as desires for the future, the research also aims to provide a recommendation of how residential developers can improve their working process. Four projects located both in Stockholm and Gothenburg have been used as a basis for the empirics in this research. Empirical information has been collected primarily through interviews but also from existing social sustainability tools. Interviews were conducted with representatives from JM AB and the municipalities of Stockholm and Gothenburg. The research has identified that concrete tools, cooperation, clear objectives, and an understanding of each other’s aims and goals are crucial for a good working process regarding social sustainability. A recommended working process has been developed with the aim of helping residential developers to address social sustainability in residential projects. The identified steps in the recommendation provide an understanding of how developers should work with social sustainability internally and in cooperation with the municipality. By working systematically with social sustainability in residential development, the research indicates that developers can become more attractive in the eyes of the municipality and thus gain a competitive advantage over their competitors as well as increase the possibility of creating shared values.


Concerns about the sustainability of urban property development are increasing amid broader concerns of sustainable development and contemporary financial crisis. Central to the sustainability agenda are the physical, economic, social, and cultural features of the built environment, together with various institutional parameters therein. This is a review article on property development and neighbourhood dynamics with focus on three interlinked issues: property, neighbourhood and – as a category at the interface of these two topics – urban regeneration; and lastly, about methods and methodology to study such phenomena. The common denominator for these issues here is the location (urban renewal areas, neighbourhoods) in relation to property prices. The paper concludes with a suggestion for a
methodology to evaluate the sustainability of area-level property development activity. Keywords: Neighbourhood, property development, sustainability, urban regeneration.


Since the launch of LA 21 in 1992, local governments in many countries have been seeking to improve sustainability. Various studies have been conducted in the past two decades. A brief review of the literature reveals general progress in citizen participation and a shift from the agenda-setting stage to action, including the Cities and Climate Change Initiative (CCCI). However, the difficulty of taking a three-dimensional (environmental, economic and social) sustainability approach is being experienced in many places. Local communities are therefore adapting sustainable development to their individual context. Some past studies have investigated what influences local sustainability performance; this includes such factors as institutional capacity and the availability of community networks and champions in the public, private, and voluntary sectors. Drawing on their findings, this paper examines in particular the workings and effects of community networks in targeting sustainable development at the local level; it looks at three examples of current action towards sustainability in Japanese cities, focusing on social capital networks and the role local government is playing in the process. Investigating quantitatively whether social capital accumulation through citizen participation does in fact make a difference in the progress towards sustainability, and also examining qualitatively how it is possible to generate and make the most of social capital networks towards the same end, this paper concludes that social capital accumulation can indeed make a difference to the level of sustainability that can be achieved, but that the types of governance and of networks available in communities also make a difference to LA 21 outcomes. There is an essential role for local government to play: that is to (1) create an environment in which citizens empower themselves by collaboratively making the rules for participation, and (2) identify key individuals who connect the various networks and involve them in the development of sustainability strategies; thereby expediting the process of reaching the stage where local government and citizens share the same sustainability goals. (C) 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.


Housing plays an important role in the development of welfare policies and also often in achieving sustainability goals. There exists, however, implementation gaps between policies and practices in urban development and housing. Here it should be possible to draw lessons
from policy implementations in the past. In this article we explore the strategies of the Swedish central government in implementing a social housing policy in the mid-20th century. The policy was successfully implemented in that it resulted in the rapid expansion and modernisation of the Swedish apartment stock in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and acute housing shortages and poor housing standards were overcome. The main lesson learned from the Swedish case study is the critical role of the central government in implementation through the strategic coordination of policy aims, instruments, stakeholders and interests throughout the implementation process. Although the central government could have used hard, almost authoritarian policy instruments to force the realisation of the new policy, it mainly used soft policy tools and focused on coordination. In the contemporary networked governance setting, the central government, like no other player, still has the potential to guide and coordinate implementation processes for the realization of sustainable housing visions.


Learning partnerships are becoming increasingly common for municipalities to fulfill their roles as important actors in adaptive governance regimes for sustainability. However, there is little theoretical guidance for municipalities, endangering the effectiveness of partnerships. The BallBearing Framework used in this thesis is one of the first attempts to understand inter-municipal partnerships, but lacks wider application and theoretical grounding. Simultaneously, transdisciplinarity has emerged as a valuable research approach to provide socially robust knowledge for the solution of complex, societal problems. These two trends have resulted in an increasing need to understand trans-municipal partnerships. Taking a critical realist perspective, I therefore aim to improve the understanding of the generative mechanisms of successful trans-municipal learning. I do so by applying the Ball-Bearing Framework as well as the Lang et al. (2012) framework for transdisciplinary research processes on the trans-municipal learning partnership “Urban Transition Öresund”, and then integrating the two frameworks theoretically and empirically, following a mixed methods approach. Thus, my research contributes to the problem-solving aspect of sustainability science, to further the transition towards a sustainable society. My findings show a strong overlap between the two concepts by enhancing each other and forming a more complete picture of trans-municipal partnerships. Especially the Mutuality, Valuation and Reframing / Transformation components of the Ball-Bearing Framework show strong, internal as well as interconnected, logical relationships that can be described with the Lang et al. (2012) framework. I argue that a clear methodological framework is highly important.
to achieve mutuality, valuation and reframing. Researchers can strongly contribute to reframing activities, but need to be integrated properly in the project structure. An unclear definition of roles and the subsequent wrong expectations as well as a lack of structures are the biggest hurdles to an effective trans-municipal cooperation. It is not only a challenge to integrate academia and practice but also various academic disciplines and different research paradigms, making it difficult to establish clear roles. In large, mixed research teams, inherent conflicts of interest make a mutual, transdisciplinary partnership challenging but ever more necessary to ensure valuation from all parties. With practice often still having a science-advice expectation, reframing needs to be clearly articulated as a project aim to avoid expectancy dissonances. Lastly, there is a conflict between the informal nature of reframing exercises and the necessity to produce formal outcomes for external dissemination. I conclude that these connections can be seen as generative mechanisms for successful trans-municipal learning.


Ideas and thinking about sustainability and sustainable development have permeated over the last decades into most disciplines and sectors. The area of urban studies is no exception and has generated an impressive body of literature, which aims to marry 'sustainability' and 'urban development' by grounding the many interpretations of sustainability in an urban setting. This has taken many forms and inspired a range of initiatives across the world including 'healthy cities', 'urban villages', 'millennium communities' and the 'mixed communities' movement. Moreover, urban regeneration has come under considerable scrutiny as one of the core mechanisms for delivering sustainable urban development. At the most basic level, it can be argued that all urban regeneration contributes to a certain extent to sustainable development through the recycling of derelict land and buildings, reducing demand for peripheral development and facilitating the development of more compact cities. Yet, whether urban regeneration bears an effect on urban sustainability is an underresearched area. In addition, little is known about these impacts at local level. This paper aims to extend our understanding in these areas of research. We do so, by taking a closer look at three neighbourhoods in Salford, Newcastle and Merseyside. These neighbourhoods underwent urban regeneration under the Housing Market Renewal Programme (2003-2011), which aimed to 'create sustainable urban areas and communities' in the Midlands and North of England. Approximately 130 residents from the three areas were interviewed and a further 60 regeneration officials and local stakeholders consulted. The paper looks at the impact of urban regeneration on urban sustainability by examining whether interventions under the Housing Market Renewal Programme have helped urban areas and communities to become
more sustainable. It also discusses impacts at local level, by probing into some of Housing Market Renewal's grounded 'sustainability stories' and looking at how change is perceived by local residents. Furthermore, it re-opens a window into the Housing Market Renewal Programme and documents the three neighbourhoods within the wider context of scale and intervention across the whole programme. (C) 2012 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.


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The paper provide an insight into the research conducted by the University of Ljubljana, and the Urban institute of Slovenia committed to the assessment of the efficiency related to the management of local resources at the level of neighbourhoods. The reduction of energy consumption and energy efficient built environments are key objectives of many sustainability agendas which is followed by suitable assessment methods in urban analytics. However, there are two important hesitations occurring: first, traditional assessment methods that focus solely on the energy reduction and efficiency are often too narrow in their analysis and limited in their scope of impact. According to the recent advances in research worldwide, efforts solely related to reduction of energy consumption will unlikely lead to more responsive environments or rise the living quality. Thus, more comprehensive methodologies for assessing and monitoring the change and transformation in built environments shall be sought for to reach long-term sustainability. Second, to date, the majority of the evaluation methods - whether focusing to energy consumption or broader sustainability issues - are building- or household- oriented, thus systematically examining separate spatial and social entities, but neglecting the spaces between, the holistic aspect and the community aspect. The research develops structured evaluation model, where two main research pillars are addressed: 1) the development of the structured and modular system of indicators; and 2) the development of the methodology to interpret the resulting values. The paper presents first two stages of the research process and subjects the outcomes to the debate.

PLANNING


Sustainable development as a process towards sustainability requires collaboration among societal actors and stakeholders at multiple levels. A key issue is to provide them with that they have comprehensive and transparent knowledge base representing the state and trends of different dimensions of sustainability. This study addresses the need to analyse and present data of sustainability as a foundation for the sustainable development process within municipalities and among them. As a case study, we focus on 18 municipalities in the crisis-struck Bergslagen region in Sweden and compare them with 101 surrounding municipalities. Data from 2001 and 2006 on 15 indicators representing ecological, economic and social sustainability criteria were transformed to a common scale through normalization around the
median, and summarized. Bergslagen region municipalities performed poorer than the surrounding ones for all dimensions in 2006. The change from 2001 to 2006 was positive for economic and social criteria, while the ecological dimension developed negatively in all municipalities. We stress the need for municipalities to collaborate with each other and other actors both at municipal and regional levels, and to use sustainability indicators as a base for informed planning processes. We propose visualization of indicators using maps to support decision-making and social learning.


Policies on economic use of natural resources require considerations to social and cultural values. In order to make those concrete in a planning context, this paper aims to interpret social and cultural criteria, identify indicators, match these with verifier variables and visualize them on maps. Indicators were selected from a review of scholarly work and natural resource policies, and then matched with verifier variables available for Sweden's 290 municipalities. Maps of the spatial distribution of four social and four cultural verifier variables were then produced. Consideration of social and cultural values in the studied natural resource use sectors was limited. The spatial distribution of the verifier variables exhibited a general divide between northwest and south Sweden, and regional rural and urban areas. We conclude that it is possible to identify indicators and match them with verifier variables to support inclusion of social and cultural values in planning.


Swedish cities are becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse in terms of lifestyles and socioeconomic conditions. However, cultural and social diversity is seldom considered when planning for sustainable urban development. This paper examines planning for more eco-friendly living in the increasingly diverse population of a city district of Stockholm. The study reveals the prevalence of a discourse in which a Swedish identity carries environmental responsibility in the form of tidiness, recycling and familiarity with nature. It is argued that planning for urban sustainability is underpinned by Swedish middle-class norms, indirectly entailing processes of (self-) disciplining and transforming the other (foreign and/or troublesome dwellers) into well-behaving Swedes. A clearer definition of the environmental improvement intended, its goals and target groups is needed. Finally, an appreciation of the multiple ways we can save natural resources would make urban planning policies more attuned to social and cultural diversity as well as more environmentally progressive.

Environmental challenges, especially climate change, are highly discussed topics in the Swedish public debate, but questions about who is causing the problems and who is affected by them are seldom asked. This also applies to questions of who defines what should be regarded as acute environmental problems and what constitutes high-quality environments. This paper explores how environmental (in)justice issues can be framed in a Swedish social context, drawing from three cases: municipal promotion of eco-friendly lifestyles, large-scale infrastructure planning, and planners’ attitudes towards justice. The three cases deal not only with distributional, procedural, and substantive aspects of justice, as is common within the US environmental justice framework, but also with discursive dimensions of justice. We argue that elucidating such examples of environmental (in)justices is crucial to nuance the mainstream, consensus-oriented sustainability discourse in Sweden.


Abstract. In the United Kingdom planning favours a more compact, high-density, and mixed-use urban form. Many of the claims made for such compact forms in terms of the sustainability benefits are contested, and few have been rigorously researched. Drawing upon policy and academic literature we identify two key dimensions of social sustainability: social equity and sustainability of community. Using data from the Survey of English Housing this paper analyses the relationship between key aspects of urban form, density, and housing type, and selected social sustainability outcomes. Simpler analyses suggest strong relationships between urban form and a range of outcomes, although in opposite directions for the equity and community dimensions. However, the impact of urban form on these outcomes is substantially modified once we control for exogenous and intervening demographic and socioeconomic factors. In addition, outcome patterns relating to access to services and facilities favour denser urban forms at the same time as outcomes relating to sustainability of community remain adverse in denser areas. This suggests trade-offs within the social dimensions of sustainability, as well as between the social, environmental, and economic dimensions.

Sustainable development has become increasingly influential. In light of environmental concerns, the social dimension of sustainability is now encompassing a growing number of concerns. Together with more traditional hard concepts, including basic needs, equity, and employment, soft themes, such as greater wellbeing, are becoming significant. The present paper compares qualitatively these theoretical themes with the concrete, lived experiences of inhabitants within deprived suburbs. To do so, a framework for understanding social sustainability is proposed, and then applied to analyze three literary accounts of residents within Swedish suburbs. The three accounts are analyzed through the lens of critical discourse analysis. The results indicate that employment and functional infrastructures did not prevent the stigmatization of these residential areas. Important social and cultural segregations are occurring, supported by the physical organization of urban space. Using biographical accounts incorporates subjective and emotional perspectives usually left aside in the context of urban development. These allow a better understanding of the complex realities of these suburbs and could therefore help urban developers to better grasp the complex and predominantly culturally oriented set of challenges confronting the establishment of socially sustainable communities.


In The Netherlands, a debate continues to take place on how to allocate the available space among several types of land use. The rural area is under constant pressure from urban developments. Multi-purpose land use is becoming more and more important. Land-use allocation problems can be identified as complex planning problems, with a large number of stakeholders involved. Therefore the decisions made with respect to land use must be clear and transparent to these stakeholders. Various methods have been developed to support land allocation issues. Typically, however, the analysis of topological relationships, initiated by biophysical and socio-economic processes, and the spatial configuration of different land uses, is often neglected, especially for agricultural planning. Neglecting the spatial configuration and these relationships can result in spatial fragmentation of land use, thus endangering sustainable land use. This paper focuses on a method to address land-use allocation issues where the topological relationships are taken into account. The method is implemented in a Geographical Information System (GIS). Two cases for Dutch agriculture are discussed.

In 2014, 54% of the world’s population of 7.2 billion people lived in urban areas. This figure is projected to reach at least 66% by 2050 (of a global total population of around 9.5 billion), representing an increase of 2.5 billion urban dwellers within the next 35 years. Although all regions worldwide are expected to urbanise further in the coming decades, 90% of additional urban dwellers are likely to be concentrated in Africa and Asia, whose urban populations were 48% and 40% respectively in 2014. The remaining 10% or so will be shared between: i) Europe, whose urban population is projected to grow from 73% (2014) to over 80% by 2050; and ii) the Americas, where urbanisation levels are already around 80%. The spatial distribution of urban populations around the world varies substantially: 75% of Europe’s population live in urban areas with a population averaging half a million people (2014), of whom 24.2% live in small and medium-sized urban areas. In Africa, this figure is around 50%, whilst for North America it is only 33%. Urban density also varies considerably due to uncontrolled urbanisation patterns. The world’s fastest growing cities – those with half a million to 1 million inhabitants – are located in Africa and Asia. Megacities and large cities are also growing both in number and in proportion to the global urban population predicted for 2030. In contrast, many EU regions are experiencing urban demographic decline. Furthermore, in 2050, half of the urban population will be living in deltas or coastal cities. Most of the growing migratory flows across the borders tend to have urban areas as their final destinations. Thus, there is no one-size-fits-all solution to the challenges ahead that affect cities and urban areas of all sizes – including small and medium-sized ones – which differ according to their population size and dynamics, history and location, economic opportunities as well as their regional, national or international standing. In addressing urban challenges, a shared vision should reflect the urban diversity and specificities of each context, including those of the EU Member States. It should address these challenges by also taking into account the impacts on the rural space, such as urban sprawl, soil sealing, the role of peri-urban zones and spatial segregation. Furthermore, this vision should seize the development opportunities offered by cities on a larger territorial scale, including the important role the small and medium-sized urban areas can play, in particular at the intersection of large cities and rural areas. More generally, it should be a vehicle to promote worldwide principles of integrated urban development and global sustainability issues. The most important of these concern ending extreme poverty and hunger by 2030, the sustainable use of natural resources, minimising environmental degradation, ensuring sustainable energy for all, and increasing resilience to cope with the effects of climate change. Indeed, urban development is not sustainable if it takes place at the expense of, or separately from, rural development. Whilst recognising that urbanisation and economic progress go hand in hand, urban policy should be developed in partnership with rural and agricultural policy, in particular to ensure that the agricultural systems of the future can feed the cities of the future.

This discussion paper examines the evolution of the concepts of Socially Responsible Investment (SRI) (or Responsible Investment (RI)) and Responsible Property Investment (RPI) and compares their meanings with Corporate Social Responsibility (CSR) (or Corporate Responsibility (CR)) and Corporate Governance (CG) within the context of the wider sustainability agenda. The increasing emphasis of financial institutions and private sector real estate developers to focus on urban regeneration projects in the UK and Europe is examined in the context of (1) the growth of public and private partnership arrangements (PPPs), one of a range of joint venture and partnership vehicles which have emerged, and (2) real estate asset allocation by financial institutions as part of a diversified investment portfolio. The development of these PPP arrangements is discussed, in terms of models emerging the UK and Europe which have been developed to underpin urban regeneration partnerships. The problems and issues surrounding the measurement of social impacts arising from institutional investment, bank lending and property-based projects (including urban regeneration) are discussed in the context of SRI and RPI. Relevant experience from the USA is also reviewed in this respect. The paper concludes by drawing out the lessons learned from ‘best practice’ measurement within CSR/SRI/RPI and within real estate-based projects (including regeneration), drawing on PPP-based vehicles in terms of delivery and social impact assessment in the UK and Europe, highlighting the need for further research in the field, and developing a conceptual model for this work.


The aim of this article is to see how awareness of sustainable development and environmental justice can be increased and operationalized in planning through the use of scenarios. On scrutinizing four long-term urban development strategies for Stockholm, we found that they all intend to depict a sustainable urban development, but the resultant images are very different. This article underlines the importance of combining environmental justice with an understanding of environmental threats and risks. We see that the carrying capacity of nature is limited, but we also see the need to share resources justly and make sure that environmental degradation does not systematically strike certain groups only. The conceptual elements are applied to four scenarios for a future Stockholm, zooming in to
some extent on a suburban shopping node just outside the city. The point of focusing on it is that such shopping areas are sometimes seen as symbols of non-sustainable city development, but, since they are already in place, their function in the future city needs to be discussed.


Urban planning is increasingly focusing on the social aspect of sustainability. The 2014 report *Differences in Living Conditions and Health in Gothenburg* shows important and increasing inequalities between different parts of the city, a development seen in cities across the world. The city of Gothenburg has set as its goal the decrease in inequalities by joining forces with civil society, the private sector, academia and people living in the city. Participation and inclusion become important tools in city planning processes for the authorities to understand local conditions, particularly to understand the living conditions of people in socio-economically marginalised areas, whose voices are rarely listened to, and to enable their active participation in shaping outcomes. In this article, we explore the role of trust in improving urban planning, and in shaping possibilities for participation that is positively experienced, in the sense that it increases people’s sense of control over their neighbourhoods. Based on empirical work in Hammarkullen, a socio-economically marginalised area in Gothenburg, the article shows how specific local configurations of trust have an impact on local development plans. It further shows how participatory practices coarticulate with the local social situation to shape outcomes in a certain way. Grounded in the empirical study, the paper argues for the importance of understanding the local conditions of trust and how they interact with planning processes in shaping outcomes and future possibilities of cooperation. Further, the paper argues for the need to take the local conditions of trust into account early in the planning phase.


A society’s values are the basis upon which all else is built. These values and the ways they are expressed are a society’s culture. The way a society governs itself cannot be fully democratic without there being clear avenues for the expression of community values, and unless these expressions directly affect the directions society takes. These processes are culture at work. Cultural vitality is as essential to a healthy and sustainable society as social equity, environmental responsibility and economic viability. In order for public planning to be more effective, its methodology should include an integrated framework of cultural
evaluation along similar lines to those being developed for social, environmental and economic impact assessment.


Recently the largest Swedish contractors have advertised social sustainability as a new competence in their social housing portfolios. They have created organisational functions related to the concept and integrated it in their strategies. Their presentation includes terms such as: attractive, safe and fair areas; social responsibility; consultation and involvement of the residents; as well as new forms of partnership and financing. In doing so, these companies have stepped aside of their traditional contractors roles as providers of technical and environmental friendly new build and renovation. This development of the contractors’ business towards societal issues brings new challenges. Based on one in-depth case study juxtaposed with two other cases we analyse how the in-depth case company has tried to introduce social sustainability in its organisation and why it has failed to do so. We show that the two others are far thinner in their claim of social sustainability. The case studies include interviews, workshops, grey publication and advertising material. We draw on the theoretical concepts of hybrid organisation, project based organisation, marketing and sustainable leadership approaches, in particular the concept of “ambivalent supplication” defined by Parkin as the moment when a company is willing to engage in a sustainable process but at the same time not quite ready to leave business as usual. The results underline the following issues: the competing strategic priorities, the complexity of implementing strategy across various business functions, the lack of recognition from the financial markets and the differing definitions of sustainability across cultures.


This monograph looks at experiences of communities with spatial planning and applies those empirics to an underexplored area of participatory theory. While issues of power and communication have been well examined this work rests on the argument that the associated production of knowledge needs to be better understood. Theories of engagement draw on issues of ‘voice’ and the means to achieving deeper democracy. Similarly, participatory planning theories frame the debate in terms of communicative processes or competing rationalities. Within that body of work, however knowledge is seen as an adjunct of power and there is little focus on the spatial particularity of knowledges. In particular there has not as yet been a thorough study of how understandings of space are produced in a spatial
planning context that includes lay participants. This monograph starts to broach that gap, conceptualising a potential 'socio-spatial learning' where community engagement is framed as a collaborative learning arena within spatial planning. Through an English case study it unpacks the dynamics between different types of knowledge around spatial planning where there is lay participation. This draws on two years of embedded observation within a joint planning unit and a review of the North Northamptonshire Core Strategy of 2008, which culminated in substantial community engagement work early in 2011. Findings indicate that local knowledge has a distinctive spatiality and that there is a clear role for lay knowledge in the context of spatial strategy-making. It is hoped that this work can help in understanding the production of planning knowledge, help identify non-tokenist engagement of the public, and inform interactions between communities and policy makers. (C) 2015 The Author. Published by Elsevier Ltd. This is an open access article under the CC BY license.


Contemporary urban planning for the past decades has concentrated on sustainable development, for instance through the promotion of dense development (Echenique et al., 2012). Important components for sustainable urban development concerns increasing residential and building density, as means of counteracting the consequences of urban sprawl (Jenks and Jones, 2008). Because it is argued that high-residential density is more economically, environmentally and socially sustainable than low-density since a higher concentration of people contributes to for instance shorter transportation distances as well as makes services and amenities more economically viable (Frey, 1999; Haughton and Hunter, 2004). However, whether the densification of cities has desirable or undesirable social, economic and ecological impacts is highly contested. The purpose of this study is to analyze the socioeconomic outcomes of the urban densification process in the Lundby District, Gothenburg, over time. Through a mixed method approach, statistical information for Lundby District, for the years 2008 to 2015 have been processed and two semi-structured interviews with employees in the City Planning Authority and Lundby District Administration were conducted. The densification in Lundby presents certain strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats. As more than 6300 new housing units has been constructed during this time-period, and more is to come in the near future, Lundby experienced a repopulation as the housing construction has facilitate a population increase of more than 11 000 new inhabitants. However, as the favored tenure developed during this time-period been condominiums certain weaknesses exist. Nonetheless, densification and the rapid increase in population has contributed to the number of vehicle per 100 inhabitants
decreasing, which presents opportunities for being more environmentally friendly. On the other hand the claim that through densification could diversity and social mixing be achieved is flawed, as seen in Lundby the densification process has brought changes in population structure and socioeconomic characteristics, which suggest some form of gentrification is occurring.


Sustainable development has become a worldwide goal. Swedish municipalities were early to introduce Agenda 21, but the meaning of sustainable development is not always clear. This article illustrates how the sustainability discourses within two Swedish municipalities have shifted from focusing on adapting to the ecocycle to focusing on sustainable growth. The shift is seen parallel with municipalities? growing role in the global economy, which has been argued to have become interwoven with a sustainability agenda. The analysis, informed by policy documents and interviews with municipal officials in Växjö and Stockholm, is based on a combination of Foucauldian discourse and governmentality.

**PARTICIPATION CONSULTANCY**


Drawing on a EU-funded research project on urbanisation in China and Europe (URBACHINA), the purpose of this inquiry is to explore the potential of foresight – through visionary scenarios and related participatory processes – in promoting learning and sustainable futures in China’s centrally planned context. Our research explores the use of backcasting, of Donella Meadows’ “levers” and Paul Raskin’s “proximate-ultimate drivers” and of archetypal worldviews to further our understanding of how we think about the future, and of the tension between transition scenarios and transformative, paradigmatic or deep change. A review of recent foresight studies and literature provides an overview of the latest approaches: in particular the methods, scope, process, level of participation, themes discussed and wild cards considered. Building on this, the inquiry designs and implements a participatory, normative and qualitative scenario building to explore sustainable urban futures for China, adapting the elements of Joseph Voros’ basic foresight process to include a total of nine steps, with five workshops, two international surveys, an adapted backcasting step and internal consistency mechanisms. The combination of a participatory iterative process with normative approaches to envisioning, helped question assumptions and deeply ingrained development models, as well as the narrow space for “alternatives” resulting from
China’s centralised, top-down planning and decision-making. The experience confirms the power of scenario/storyline building in helping reflect and question strategic policy choices and enrich urban policy debates. The process successfully proposed a number of steps that ensured triangulation of the envisioning outcomes and additional learning also through backcasting. Finally, the research shows a clear link between the development of scenarios space, the debate on transition and transformative futures and archetypal worldviews, which were shown to be stable even after decades.


The notion of smart cities needs to be broadened beyond the fascination with technology to incorporate an approach that invests in the growth of human, social, and environmental capitals to generate ‘smart sustainable cities’. One of the most recent debates in this context is digital citizen participation. This study aimed to identify the potential role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in citizen participation as a major contributor towards ‘smart sustainable cities’. A systematic and exhaustive literature review, coupled with critical content analysis, was conducted. The focus was on a central research question: What kind of relationship is fostered in the literature between sustainability and digital citizen participation, and how can ICT contribute to social sustainability through digital citizen participation (DCP)? The results suggested a connection between smart sustainable cities and DCP. This article is concluded by emphasizing the role of ICT in citizen participation processes and its significant contribution to social sustainability and the creation of more-than-human smart cities.


During 1965–1974 one million dwellings were built in Sweden, most of these financed by state housing loans and available for renting. Although most of these 850,000 apartments are considered decently maintained about 300,000 are considered in need of thorough refurbishment. This is a great opportunity for technological innovations, contributing to energy saving and climate mitigation on a broad scale. However, many of these estates have also been associated with spatial segregation, social exclusion and related challenges. The empirical focus of this article is on an attempt by a municipal housing company to approach the residents of a multi-family housing estate with a redevelopment scheme expressing a will to combine social, ecological and economic qualities under the brand “My Green
Neighbourhood”. Drawing upon data describing the initial phase and the dialogue activities undertaken during the planning phase, and the residents’ reactions the study is conceptually framed by an eclectic approach inspired by the spatial triad of Lefebvre, Relph’s notion of place identity, and Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation, including references to some related, recent works. Considering a common picture of municipal, multi-family housing in Sweden as a “success story” the case study is of relevance in the wider context of coping with the challenges of sustainable urban development. It is concluded that projects like this have a potential to decrease energy consumption substantially, as well as contributing to long-term financially sound management by housing companies. However, when it comes to social aspects of sustainability the picture becomes more complicated. First, most sitting tenants would have preferred a change in terms of proper maintenance and modest improvements. Second, most of them will not return to their apartments after rehabilitation, partly due to rising rents. Third, the position of the tenants was not very strong, instead planning rather had a tokenist bias. Fourth, the local government’s social mix strategy has to be questioned on theoretical as well as empirical grounds. Despite these and other critical observations, My Green Neighbourhood should not be disregarded as just one more in a never-ending parade of low impact ad hoc projects. Up-scaling the experience of this and similar running projects would represent a substantial contribution to urban sustainable development, at least in terms of energy saving. Finally, to understand the complexities of a redevelopment planning process it is concluded that decisionmakers have to be very observant of the different time perspectives linked to the structural positions and interests of the various stakeholders, for example a building company’s desire to make short time profits through major reconstruction, sitting tenants’ demand for sustainable maintenance and cautious refurbishment, local politicians’ wish to create another social mix in the area, and a public housing company’s attempt to reconcile the views of different actors.


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trust in improving urban planning, and in shaping possibilities for participation that is positively experienced, in the sense that it increases people’s sense of control over their neighbourhoods. Based on empirical work in Hammarkullen, a socio-economically marginalised area in Gothenburg, the article shows how specific local configurations of trust have an impact on local development plans. It further shows how participatory practices coarticulate with the local social situation to shape outcomes in a certain way. Grounded in the empirical study, the paper argues for the importance of understanding the local conditions of trust and how they interact with planning processes in shaping outcomes and future possibilities of cooperation. Further, the paper argues for the need to take the local conditions of trust into account early in the planning phase.


This essay examines the tensions between citizens in a narrative of 'Swedes' and 'immigrants'. The point of departure is fieldwork in Landskrona, a post-industrial city in southern Sweden with a population of 40,000. In recent decades, the city has undergone radical economic and social changes. Until the mid-1970s, it had several large-scale industries, including a huge shipyard; since then, Landskrona has steadily declined in economic importance, leading to high unemployment and considerable population losses (Johansson 2011; Salonen 2011; Scarpa 2011). Other cities in the region, such as Malmo, have gone through the same transformation, but Landskrona has not benefited from its location to the same extent. In fact, it has higher unemployment and greater numbers on benefits than elsewhere in the region (Scarpa 2011). The decline in the economy and the population losses have left flats vacant in the city. By way of a solution, the city council agreed to house refugees, who had their living expenses covered by the state and therefore would not, in the short term, be a burden on the local economy. Since the 1980s, Landskrona has thus experienced new population gains by taking in refugees (Johansson 2011; Salonen 2011; Scarpa 2011). People of foreign background now account for approximately 30 per cent of the city's population (Statistics Sweden 2013).


Building assessment tools are used as a means to assess and encourage the adoption of sustainability-led thinking and practice in the delivery of buildings. However, the established tools focus primarily on the aspects of green or sustainable building (i.e. building as an end-product), rarely exploring the contributions towards sustainable product delivery (i.e. the
building process). However, some principles of sustainable development are best implemented within the process rather than by being embedded in the product. By addressing the issues of equity via participation through stakeholder-oriented sustainability assessment, building assessment tools could be used to enhance significantly the overall sustainability of project delivery in the construction sector. A theoretical justification is advocated for implementing a participatory approach that is underpinning the development of a specification for a building sustainability assessment model currently under development. The barriers to participation in the construction process are considered as well as the need to develop innovative mechanisms to broaden membership of the construction project team. The philosophical approaches and resultant practices drawn from Environmental Assessment and the Process Protocol are presented as examples of potential solutions for incorporating stakeholder participation in a modified building assessment process.


The assessment of sustainability requires that the diverse values of the stakeholders are represented in the context-specific interpretation of sustainability and in the choice of a desired course of action. Sustainability is a broad concept, and the stakeholders in sustainability are many. In order to have effective stakeholder engagement, it is crucial that all the relevant stakeholders are identified early in the process. In urban development projects, some stakeholders may be obvious, but there might be others who are excluded from the usual decision-making processes and may bear disproportionate environmental, social or economic costs leading to inequitable outcomes. This situation has created the need for a systematic approach to defining and identifying stakeholders for different contexts. This paper evaluates existing approaches for defining and identifying stakeholders in development projects and the requirements of a sustainability assessment process. From this analysis, an approach for defining and identifying stakeholders appropriate for sustainability assessment has been developed. The paper also argues that it is important to map out the levels of interest of different stakeholders in relation to the power that they hold. This is useful in determining the appropriate engagement techniques at each stage of a project and also in understanding any potential conflicts. It is thus important to understand the relationships between the different stakeholders because this can affect the success of the engagement process. Such a mapping of stakeholders can also be useful in anticipating their expectations.

This study aims to incorporate user values into housing design. Incorporating user values is essential for developing quality housing. Data was gathered in three stages using the Means-End Chain and Quality Function Deployment models. To identify the factors that create values, the MEC model was conducted using soft laddering interviews with 15 apartment occupants in Bushehr, Iran. Next, weight assessments were done for value creators. With data from the first phase, a hard laddering questionnaire survey of MEC was created and distributed among 150 respondents. Nine architects developed design strategies in a focus group discussion to establish the House of Quality of QFD based on responses. The developed strategies involved four main categories including Building Organizational Emphasis, Interior Design Emphasis, Exterior Design Emphasis, and Indoor Environmental Emphasis. The combination of MEC and QFD facilitates indirect user participation and fulfills person environment congruence.


This monograph looks at experiences of communities with spatial planning and applies those empirics to an underexplored area of participatory theory. While issues of power and communication have been well examined this work rests on the argument that the associated production of knowledge needs to be better understood. Theories of engagement draw on issues of 'voice' and the means to achieving deeper democracy. Similarly, participatory planning theories frame the debate in terms of communicative processes or competing rationalities. Within that body of work, however knowledge is seen as an adjunct of power and there is little focus on the spatial particularity of knowledges. In particular there has not as yet been a thorough study of how understandings of space are produced in a spatial planning context that includes lay participants. This monograph starts to broach that gap, conceptualising a potential 'socio-spatial learning' where community engagement is framed as a collaborative learning arena within spatial planning. Through an English case study it unpacks the dynamics between different types of knowledge around spatial planning where there is lay participation. This draws on two years of embedded observation within a joint planning unit and a review of the North Northamptonshire Core Strategy of 2008, which culminated in substantial community engagement work early in 2011. Findings indicate that local knowledge has a distinctive spatiality and that there is a clear role for lay knowledge in the context of spatial strategy-making. It is hoped that this work can help in understanding the production of planning knowledge, help identify non-tokenist engagement of the public,
Desertification can be effectively managed only through a thorough understanding of its principal ecological, socio-cultural, and economic driving forces. This has stimulated research that pays specific attention to the social causes and consequences of land use change and land degradation. Improving the management of complex environmental problems through land use planning has resulted in policy makers becoming increasingly aware of the need to place emphasis upon problem analysis. This has involved placing greater institutional value upon widening the decision-making community to include actors not normally considered as ‘experts’ but who possess equally valid and valuable knowledge and perspectives of the realities of the problems affecting their region. Active involvement of the wider stakeholder community can play a crucial function in better consideration of problems by identifying different stakeholder perspectives, provide an active learning arena for all those involved, and provide an interactive basis necessary for generating joined-up thinking. Scenario construction is one such approach that can be used to actively engage stakeholders. This paper will describe the theory surrounding interactive stakeholder involvement, reflecting upon a two-part workshop process for undertaking a participatory scenario construction process in the Northern Mediterranean region. The case study will be used to illustrate the opportunities such interactive approaches can provide for communities having to deal with complex issues surrounding their region. The focus is upon creating greater awareness of the value and need for more fundamental institutional recognition in support of greater actor involvement and interactive dialogue in problem definition, planning and decision-making.


This article presents the results of an investigation, conducted in Sweden, of how inviting tenants to participate in renovation of large-scale housing in marginalized areas can lead to increased tenant power over renovation. The results show that the "Consultation model for renovation" employed, which was developed by the Union of Tenants, gives more power to tenants than previous models used in Sweden, although certain dilemmas exist that seem to be hard to overcome. The article concludes by discussing the role of "consultation models". It suggests that it would be very interesting if such models not only aimed to give tenants
power over renovation—within the framework housing companies are prepared to offer at the
time—but also contributed to challenging practices and played a role in system change.

Renewal Based on Sustainable Development: Public Participation Perspective." Icsdec 2016 -
Integrating Data Science, Construction and Sustainability, 145: 1509-1517.

Urban renewal project as a tool to efficiently improving urban competitiveness, increasing
urban housing quality as well as balance the wealth gap. As sustainable urban renewal projects are
applied around the world, which considers not only economic, but also public health, environment
as well as civil requirement above the entire life cycle. In recent years, the problem of public
participation in urban renewal is considered by researchers to attribute more acceptable urban
renewal plan. Although many GDM modes have been created, they still have some defects. In order
to improve those defects, this paper provides a two-stage PLS model to build a hierarchical linear
public participation approach and make the process reliable and stable.

INNOVATIONS

Case. Sustainable Housing 2016 - Proceedings Of The International Conference On Sustainable
Housing Planning, Management And Sustainability, Porto, Portugal, Green Lines Institute For
Sustainable Development.

Currently there is a mounting demand on housing providers to contribute to sustainability in
residential situations and to deliver practical demonstrations and experiments in this field.
One such example in Sweden has been initiated as a research based project development
process by a cooperative housing association in Göteborg, Riksbyggen EF, also a major actor
on national level. During a period of three years a transdisciplinary collaboration, involving
Chalmers Architecture and the University of Gothenburg, a building project comprising
more than a hundred flats has been defined and is now going to be built starting November
2016 at Chalmers University campus site. The collaborative project, the so called Positive
Footprint Housing claims a future realization of a number of radical implementations in a
design strategy of significantly raised residential resilience implemented in Brf Viva, as the
name given. Examples range from a wide variety of components like sharing of electric car
pool, limited parking lots, extensive application of rooftop pv-cells and electric production
to the introduction of low cost starter flats for young residents and structural flexibility of
apartments in addition to extensive common facilities like a winter garden for parties,
meetings and plant cultivation. Efforts to create social sustainable solutions have been both
procedural and substantial in character. This paper will take a critical stance towards this
endeavor building upon related conducted research with insights and observations of authors
from participation within this process of research informed residential projective realization.
The focus has been set on unfolded and identified crucial social aspects of sustainability and
related architectural residential solutions in particular of long term alterability and flexibility. Our study shows the inherent vagueness of general sustainability formulations, especially concerning social sustainability, and the importance of doing research directly in the conflicting social fabric where sustainability goals are negotiated and given a concrete significance.


The purpose of this paper is to understand why and how the concept of social sustainability evolves over time by generating a gap between the initially desired strategy and the daily practices at the city level. An extensive ethnographic study was conducted focusing on how social sustainability, as defined in the smart strategy of the city of Gothenburg, was first translated and then turned into practice. Through the lens of Actor Network Theory, findings reveal that the translation of a smart city strategy aimed at ensuring social sustainability depends on how the actors involved at various organisational levels interpret the concept of social sustainability and work to translate it into practice. Such translation takes different directions and may lead to a transformation of the concept itself which becomes foggier over time.


The notion of smart cities needs to be broadened beyond the fascination with technology to incorporate an approach that invests in the growth of human, social, and environmental capitals to generate ‘smart sustainable cities’. One of the most recent debates in this context is digital citizen participation. This study aimed to identify the potential role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in citizen participation as a major contributor towards ‘smart sustainable cities’. A systematic and exhaustive literature review, coupled with critical content analysis, was conducted. The focus was on a central research question: What kind of relationship is fostered in the literature between sustainability and digital citizen participation, and how can ICT contribute to social sustainability through digital citizen participation (DCP)? The results suggested a connection between smart sustainable cities and DCP. This article is concluded by emphasizing the role of ICT in citizen participation processes and its significant contribution to social sustainability and the creation of more-than-human smart cities.
Throughout Europe, the issue of urban regeneration has risen up the policy agenda in Member States since the mid 1990s (Berg et al., 1998). It is being increasingly recognised throughout the European Union (EU) that cities are the motors of regional economic growth and often the location of significant prosperity. Yet within European towns and cities, there exist considerable disparities between different social groups, in terms of their access to employment opportunities, decent housing and environmental conditions, and socially inclusive networks. It is these disparities that urban-regeneration policies aim to address, often taking an integrated approach to tackling the physical, economic and social challenges that they present (Parkinson, 1998). The Commission of the European Communities (CEC), the executive body of the European Union, has only lately started to embrace these urban challenges, by putting greater emphasis on urban interventions. The principle of subsidiarity framing EU policies envisages that decision making takes place at the level where it is most effective, usually the one closest to citizens affected by the measure. Urban policy was therefore considered to be essentially the responsibility of national, regional and particularly local government. However, as 80% of Europe’s population currently live in urban areas (CEC, 2007), it is clear that the majority of EU policies have a strong local impact and it seems therefore logical that some common action at the urban level is undertaken in order to ensure the effectiveness of European policies such as innovation, energy efficiency, the environment and, in particular, social cohesion. In the social arena this need is particularly acute, as disparities are often more dramatic within particular regions and cities themselves, rather than amongst the wealthier regions and the ‘convergence’ regions supported by traditional EU regional development policy. No real convergence in the quality of life of EU citizens could be achieved globally without attacking urban inequalities. In parallel with this increased attention given to urban areas, there has been a drive to encourage partnership working within EU programmes. This reflects a more general shift throughout the EU to develop modes of governance (as opposed to government) that are inclusive, responsive and proactive in addressing policy challenges (CEC, 2001a).


The intersection of urban regeneration and sustainability has long been separated at birth, with much of the research, policy and practice focused on linking the two through a greater understanding of environmental sustainability. Yet social sustainability, especially in an urban regeneration context, remains underdeveloped, theoretical and oversimplified when
compared to the progress of the environmental movement. In their new book, the authors now look to break down more silos and explore the social sustainability side of urban regeneration. The book highlights a range of best practice from the efforts of governments of major European cities to those of private investors such as igloo, and is honest about the challenges of isolating impact and developing indicators that measure the all-important ‘soft stuff.’ I am thrilled that the authors throw the lid open on the difficulties of past efforts which tried to apply a simplified triple bottom line framework to urban regeneration. They clearly highlight the need for a more sophisticated approach that understands the socio-economic needs and complexities of people, cities and investment. This is a big book which raises big questions on a big subject – the challenge of achieving socially sustainable regeneration in European cities. It provides much important analytical discussion of – as well as empirical evidence about – this big idea at a European level based on good studies in five European cities – Barcelona, Leipzig, Turin, Rotterdam, and Cardiff. It clearly outlines the development of European thinking and policy about the issue. It also has important things to say about how to measure the elusive ideas implied in the concept as well as the principles and practices of delivery vehicles. Importantly it brings in the roles, contribution and views of the private sector – a critical player, but often absent in the discussions of these issues.


Urban renewal has a social impact, and, here, we present the Fortitude Valley Renewal Plan (2007), in order to assess its process as a case study in relation to the concept of social sustainability. The objective is to develop recommendations to incorporate social sustainability in a proactive manner within the urban regeneration process. This research is based on the analysis of planning documents and semi-directed interviews with urban stakeholders involved in the regeneration process, particularly in the development of the Fortitude Valley Urban Vision statutory planning document. We analyse the case of Fortitude Valley’s regeneration process in regards to three components: urban design, provision of affordable housing and the public engagement process. In conclusion, we explain how the tool of Sustainability Assessment (SA) could be used to improve strategic decision-making for the development of urban regeneration strategies for this case study.

Planning of compact and green urban areas has become an emerging issue. Thus, there is a need to examine strategies for implementing green infrastructures in compact urban areas. The aim of this paper is to examine how green infrastructure is developed in a compact urban structure in a case study of the city of Malmö. Six examples of urban greening were selected. The selection was made to obtain a variety of types of green spaces that were not public parks and that were developed (or were intended to be developed) in compact urban structures. The findings suggest that there are reasons for analysing and discussing urban greening strategies in new categories, like building attached, grey and brown green infrastructure. The supply and distribution of cultural ecosystem services that these strategies offer were assessed by how they offer access for viewing, staying or interacting with the places. In this assessment the green infrastructure was divided in public, private and private-personal structures. The limitations and possibilities of different strategies need to be further explored with respect to the kinds of services supplied as well as how benefits are distributed. Cultural ecosystem services, such as recreation and social cohesion, cannot be taken for granted based on quantitative measures of green space alone. The spaces must be assessed in terms of types of access offered and who has access.


This report examines underlying motives and forces of the West-Link project in Gothenburg Sweden, understood as a case of contemporary politically governed urban transformation. It analyzes and compares similarities and differences of contemporary international patterns of urban transformations as well as the continuity or discontinuity in relation to previous local transformations. The report also maps and analyzes different networks that resist the project and their overarching critique, which in turn is compared with contemporary international critique of urban transformation. The case of the West-Link is studied from a critical discourse perspective inspired by a Foucauldian approach of analyzing dispositives or “apparatus”. Meaning, how motives and forces of the West-Link project is part of historical and on-going heterogenous discourse-network-complexes that produces reality and becomes part of its materialization. The report draws upon previous research on the contemporary governing ideology of neoliberalism and advance liberal urban governance, as well as theoretical concepts such as “ribbon-development”, “place politics”, “gentrification”, and overarching critique of urban planners’ concept “sustainability” analyzed as an “empty master signifier” masking neoliberal agendas in the signifying order of text. The main result of the report is that the West-Link can be understood as a dispositive or “apparatus” that binds all the above historical and on-going heterogenous discourse-network-complexes
together. In other words, the result shows that the West-Link is part of the overall global discourse of neoliberal urbanism and the implementing of advanced liberal urban governance in the context of Gothenburg.


A renewed focus on innovation in the building sector calls for research strategies that will strengthen the position of holistic architectural knowledge for the benefit of a sustainable built environment. This paper presents research that focuses on future homes that will enable radical reduced resource use related to living. In order to reduce the environmental impact of living and dwelling we need to address not only buildings and physical structures but also user behavior and lifestyle choices. Contemporary housing development is defined by a view of the housing market based on surveys among limited groups of people and not on actual needs and wishes representing the wider population. Furthermore, the actual housing market does not deliver structures that will enable sustainable changes to the environmental impact of living. The aim for the paper is to define architectural research for future homes in relation to a planned purpose built Living Lab. Research should support a radical reduction of the environmental impact of living. A review of 20th century housing research and development in Sweden and France provides insights from previous successes as well as failures in the field. Results point to the importance of involving end-users and to build on solid understanding of the use of homes. In addition, already explored innovation regarding space use can with advantage be repeated, as contemporary users are likely to react differently than users did in the past. We propose a three-step model for research starting with empirical studies of the use of homes among a large variety of households (i.e. regarding size, age groups, cultures etc.), prototyping of new architectural concepts (e.g. related to layout, interiors, equipment, products etc.) and test and evaluation of these in the Living Lab.


Social sustainability is one of the three dimensions in the concept of sustainability and is seen as the weakest pillar of sustainable development. Previous literature concludes that social sustainability is a difficult concept to define and achieve. Therefore, the social dimension has not been addressed to the same extent and has been frequently avoided in
research and practice. However the importance of the social dimension of sustainable development has been recognized from both the private and the public sector during the last decade. The social aspect of sustainability requires more attention and it is important to define the social sustainability processes that should be integrated during the planning phase of residential development projects. The purpose of this research is to contribute with knowledge about how social sustainability can be addressed in the housing industry and within the scientific fields of urban planning and project development. By looking deeper, from both the developer and municipality perspective, into how social sustainability aspects are addressed today, how cooperation regarding these aspects is working, what values a focus on social aspects can create for both parties as well as desires for the future, the research also aims to provide a recommendation of how residential developers can improve their working process. Four projects located both in Stockholm and Gothenburg have been used as a basis for the empirics in this research. Empirical information has been collected primarily through interviews but also from existing social sustainability tools. Interviews were conducted with representatives from JM AB and the municipalities of Stockholm and Gothenburg. The research has identified that concrete tools, cooperation, clear objectives, and an understanding of each other’s aims and goals are crucial for a good working process regarding social sustainability. A recommended working process has been developed with the aim of helping residential developers to address social sustainability in residential projects. The identified steps in the recommendation provide an understanding of how developers should work with social sustainability internally and in cooperation with the municipality. By working systematically with social sustainability in residential development, the research indicates that developers can become more attractive in the eyes of the municipality and thus gain a competitive advantage over their competitors as well as increase the possibility of creating shared values.


The construction of new urban transport infrastructure transforms the accessibility patterns of the immediate areas, modifying people's movements and, with that, the demand for land, its uses, activities and densities. In the case of the Chilean capital, Santiago, the underground (Metro), has generated subcentralities, densification and potentiated real estate development in certain parts of the city, but has had negligible effects in others. Our research aims at trying to enhance the positive effects of a mass transit network such as Metro, to improve two large malaises of the city: its increasing urban sprawl and its unacceptable social segregation. Both problems are not unique to Santiago, but are shared by many Latin
American conurbations. To do so, we first analysed and classified the areas around Metro stations, based on their social and urban characteristics, and densification potential. We then identified existing and potential subsidies to promote social integration and densification and, finally, we applied a stated choice experiment to real estate developers to inquire into their willingness to build in the vicinity of selected GIS-classified stations. In a previous paper, we discussed the models estimated with the stated choice data, and the expected results of applying packages of incentives for densification in the vicinity of different Metro stations. In this paper, we seek to identify mechanisms to increase both housing density and, at the same time, promote social integration in the vicinity of Metro stations, by identifying a typology of urban areas that respond differently to such incentives. Our results show that the effectiveness of the various incentives depends, to a great extent, on the urban characteristics of the Metro station surroundings. For example, in stations located in the central areas of the city incentives to stimulate real estate activity are not really necessary, as the process is well underway; however, in Metro stations located in industrial areas incentives are more effective in triggering real estate dynamics, especially direct demand incentives for any buyer or with a limited time frame. Finally, in peripheral Metro stations located in low standard social housing areas, the incentives tend to be less effective and are probably not enough to trigger a significant densification or integration process; hence, probably other type of governmental action, such as pilot or demonstration projects, should be sought for these cases.


The visionary goal of many urban planners is to develop an attractive and sustainable city, socially, economically, and ecologically. This essay discusses the conceptual assumptions of social sustainability in Swedish urban governance, and the urban strategy of the city of Malmo in particular. Social sustainability programmes in Malmo take as their starting point 'the whole city' when identifying structural mechanisms of marginalization and spatial segregation, as opposed to circumscribing the problems to so-called problem areas and marginalized groups. However, when the social sustainability agenda is incorporated into the visionary urban strategy, 'the whole city' translates into 'the city as a whole', which invokes a unifying notion of one future for the city as a single entity. The overall goal of a social sustainability agenda, in the frame of urban strategy, is to progressively transform immigrant-dense 'problem areas' of the city into 'innovation areas', according to given criteria of success. I shall argue that unless the social sustainability agenda discards the
spatiotemporal coordinates of visionary urban strategy, it risks reproducing the status quo and contributing to further marginalization of targeted populations.


One million homes were built in Sweden during the period 1965-1974, mostly financed by state housing loans and made available for renting. Large-scale rented housing then became commonplace, mostly built on virgin land on the outskirts of cities and towns. Although most of these 850,000 apartments are considered decently maintained, some 300,000 are still in need of refurbishment, especially with regard to bathrooms, kitchens, insulation and ventilation. This is a great opportunity for technological innovations, potentially contributing to energy-saving and climate mitigation on a broad scale. However, many of these estates have also been associated with social problems like spatial segregation and social exclusion. Under the label “suburb” [förort], these estates have become stigmatized, triggered by massive critique from journalists, writers, politicians, architects and even researchers. The empirical focus of this report is on an attempt by a municipal housing company to approach the residents of a multi-family housing estate with a redevelopment scheme expressing a will to combine social and ecological qualities under the brand “My Green Neighbourhood”. The company wants to change their everyday behaviour by constructing energy-saving technical solutions, increase residents’ participation and social inclusion and redress the identity of the area in the eyes of residents, visitors and outside spectators. Drawing upon data describing the aim and scope of the redevelopment scheme, the dialogue activities undertaken during the planning phase, and residents’ reactions, the analysis relates to current debates on the potentials and limits of citizen participation in urban renewal in terms of the sustainability discourse. Although the study only covers the planning process until the end of 2011 when the housing company took its final decision, conclusions also consider the potential of future implementations. Whereas prospects of success with regard to energy-saving investments are bright, other results are more open to question. Thus, whether technological innovations will also inspire households to lead a more climate-friendly life in general must also take other things than housing into consideration, in particular their life situations and lifestyles in a broad sense. Thus, residents’ willingness to participate in planning and politics, and their social inclusion in society at large are matters not only related to housing. Depending on the capacity and willingness of residents to pay and stay it is unclear how many of the present inhabitants will stay or leave for other households to move in. There is little doubt regarding the housing company’s commitment in terms of professional and long-term financial responsibility. In addition, the company’s social ambitions do not only include a willingness
to engage residents in planning and caring for their apartments and the outdoor environment. The housing company also cooperates with the main contractor with a view to employing more than 50 until now unemployed residents in the building process. Finally, at the time of writing, it seems that My Green Neighbourhood should not be disregarded as just one more number in a never-ending parade of temporary projects. Its brand of social, economic and technological innovations have multi-dimensional sustainability potential that may even contribute to a decent make-over and a positive branding of a large, previously stigmatized multi-family city district.


During 1965–1974 one million dwellings were built in Sweden, most of these financed by state housing loans and available for renting. Although most of these 850,000 apartments are considered decently maintained about 300,000 are considered in need of thorough refurbishment. This is a great opportunity for technological innovations, contributing to energy saving and climate mitigation on a broad scale. However, many of these estates have also been associated with spatial segregation, social exclusion and related challenges. The empirical focus of this article is on an attempt by a municipal housing company to approach the residents of a multi-family housing estate with a redevelopment scheme expressing a will to combine social, ecological and economic qualities under the brand "My Green Neighbourhood". Drawing upon data describing the initial phase and the dialogue activities undertaken during the planning phase, and the residents’ reactions the study is conceptually framed by an eclectic approach inspired by the spatial triad of Lefebvre, Relph’s notion of place identity, and Arnstein’s ladder of citizen participation, including references to some related, recent works. Considering a common picture of municipal, multi-family housing in Sweden as a “success story” the case study is of relevance in the wider context of coping with the challenges of sustainable urban development. It is concluded that projects like this have a potential to decrease energy consumption substantially, as well as contributing to long-term financially sound management by housing companies. However, when it comes to social aspects of sustainability the picture becomes more complicated. First, most sitting tenants would have preferred a change in terms of proper maintenance and modest improvements. Second, most of them will not return to their apartments after rehabilitation, partly due to rising rents. Third, the position of the tenants was not very strong, instead planning rather had a tokenist bias. Fourth, the local government’s social mix strategy has to be questioned on theoretical as well as empirical grounds. Despite these and other critical observations, My Green Neighbourhood should not be disregarded as just one more in a
never-ending parade of low impact ad hoc projects. Up-scaling the experience of this and similar running projects would represent a substantial contribution to urban sustainable development, at least in terms of energy saving. Finally, to understand the complexities of a redevelopment planning process it is concluded that decisionmakers have to be very observant of the different time perspectives linked to the structural positions and interests of the various stakeholders, for example a building company’s desire to make short time profits through major reconstruction, sitting tenants’ demand for sustainable maintenance and cautious refurbishment, local politicians’ wish to create another social mix in the area, and a public housing company’s attempt to reconcile the views of different actors.


How we design, build and maintain our homes are increasingly seen as instrumental to the environmental, social and financial impact of the built environment. By examining perspectives on and interpretations of sustainability in housing development, with a focus on discourses within the Swedish housing sector, the aim of this Licentiate thesis is to explore and provide an account of contemporary conceptualizations of the sustainable home. Along with theoretical developments, empirical insights from interviews and focus groups conducted with actors in the housing market (developers and architects), as well as within academia (researchers and students) are presented. A series of pilot studies explore the two areas of study, relating to discourses regarding two particular cases that are portrayed as the ‘frontline’ of sustainability in housing. The empirical material indicates that outspoken aims of radically challenging the normative and resource intense ideals of the modern home generally appear to be lacking in new market-led housing development, with a rather unilateral interpretation of sustainability in eco-efficient or generally vague terms. It is suggested that a holistic perspective is required in the alignment between how different actors perceive housing development, and what is sustainable, where the academic case presented gives points for further discussion. In conclusion, a need to visualize ideals and various conflicting images of home in the housing sector is emphasized. This provides a point of departure for positioning sustainability in housing, introducing less resource intense ways of residing that also consider issues related to equality and diversity in the built environment.

Changing governance paradigms has been shaping and reshaping the landscape of citizen-administration relationships, from impartial application of rules and regulations by administration to exercise its authority over citizens (bureaucratic paradigm), through provision of public services by administration to fulfil the needs of citizens (consumerist paradigm), to responsibility-sharing between administration and citizens for policy and service processes (participatory paradigm). The recent trend is the administration empowering citizens to create public value by themselves, through socio-technical systems that bring data, services, technologies and people together to respond to changing societal needs. Such systems are called “platforms” and the trend is called “platform paradigm”. The aim of this article is to offer a conceptual framework for citizen-administration relationships under the platform paradigm. While existing models of citizen-administration relationships mainly focus on specific types of relationships, e.g. citizen trust versus administrative transparency, or citizen satisfaction versus administrative performance, the proposed framework identifies a comprehensive set of relationships that explain how decisions by citizens or administration and the policy environment mutually agreed by them contribute to shaping such relationships and building individual and collective capacity for pursuing sustainable development. The framework comprises 15 types of relationships organized along the four governance paradigms. It is illustrated through the analysis of 11 case studies published in the current issue. Based on this analysis, the article also formulates some insights that are relevant to researchers and policymakers who intend to utilize platform governance for sustainable development.


The purpose of this paper is to identify research gaps and potential new topics for research in relation to the management of sustainable building renovation. The paper is based on a literature review of current research on sustainable building renovation. It analyses the research to pinpoint main focus areas and strengths, as well as identifying areas of weakness and research gaps, which are seen as potential topics for new research. The emphasis is on comprehensive renovation projects of buildings with a holistic sustainability approach. The analysis focuses on the management and process aspects in relation to planning, decision-making, conducting, and evaluating renovation projects. The result is a proposal for new research topics for sustainable building renovation. The current research shows a dominating focus on developing new tools for design support and measuring environmental performance, while there is limited research on developing strategies for renovation and improving the productivity of renovation processes. Out of the three pillars of sustainability,
social sustainability is the least defined, and there is a need to develop methods to make a holistic prioritization and evaluation of all aspects of sustainability


In this essay, an urban development project with the overarching intention of meeting the effects of crises and supporting socially sustainable development in a specific area is analysed using the phronetic approach (Flyvbjerg 2001). The empirical material is a case study of a dialogue process, which was part of a large-scale urban regeneration project in a socio-economically exposed area of the city of Malmö in southern Sweden. The aim was to create a dialogue between a property development company and the municipality that would result in the construction of new homes, thus supporting the social transformation of the area. The starting point was an application from the property developer about a housing project, which the municipality first rejected. Instead, the planning office tried to convince the property developer to adjust its plans and build something that could support local, sustainable urban development. The dialogue was very far-ranging, but in the end the company withdrew its application and abandoned the whole project.


Sweden is widely considered a forerunner in environmental policy and one of the most ecologically modernized countries in the world. However, like most other countries, it has not been able to escape from economic recession, high unemployment rates and increasing social segregation. Doubts have also been raised as to whether the rosy picture of successful eco-modernization corresponds to policy in practice. How does Sweden stand the test when bold sustainable development goals confront the challenges of financial and economic crisis and strong pressure on its social welfare system? The analysis finds that Sweden has officially adopted an eco-modernist understanding of society where economic growth, social welfare and environmental values and interests support each other, with economic growth notably considered the crucial driver. However, reconciling these dimensions into one integrated strategy for sustainable development is easier said than done, and it is shown that the gulf between policy rhetoric and practice is deeper than recognized and may even be increasing. The article finally addresses the question of whether this conclusion indicates the dead-end of eco-modernization as a discursive guideline for sustainable development or if it is rather a trigger for a more radical approach to eco-modernization.
Social Sustainability and Housing for Vulnerable Groups


Despite increased awareness of the urgency to respond to climate change and to promote sustainable development, there are few powerful initiatives that are decisively shifting urban development in a sustainable, resilient and low-carbon direction. This Special Volume of the Journal of Cleaner Production explores sustainable urban transformation focusing on structural transformation processes – multi-dimensional and radical change – that can effectively direct urban development towards ambitious sustainability goals. The 20 articles are based on 35 cases and over 130 surveyed examples of urban initiatives on sustainability in many countries. While cities in Europe dominate, there are also examples from North America, South America, Africa, Asia and Oceania. The combined articles in this Special Volume contribute to knowledge and understanding on sustainable urban transformation across a range of areas, including governance and planning, innovation and competitiveness, lifestyle and consumption, resource management and climate mitigation and adaptation, transport and accessibility, buildings, and the spatial environment and public space. Overall, this Special Volume documents and analyses real-life action in cities and communities around the world to respond to sustainability challenges and it provides critical insights into how to catalyse, intensify and accelerate sustainable urban transformation globally. A main finding of the articles is that governance and planning are the key leverage points for transformative change.


Sustainable Stockholm provides a historical overview of Stockholm’s environmental development, and also discusses a number of cross-disciplinary themes presenting the urban sustainability work behind Stockholm’s unique position, and importantly the question of how well Stockholm’s practices can be exported and transposed to other places and contexts. By using the case of Stockholm as the pivot of discussions, Sustainable Stockholm investigates the core issues of sustainable urban environmental development and planning, in all their entanglements. The book shows how intersecting fields such as urban planning and architecture, traffic planning, land-use regulation, building, waste management, regional development, water management, infrastructure engineering—together and in combination—have contributed to making Stockholm Europe’s "greenest" city.

The vast and growing array of concepts, methods and tools in the sustainability field imply a need for a structuring and coordinating framework, including a unifying and operational definition of sustainability. One attempt at such framework began over 25 years ago and is now widely known as the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development. However, as with the larger sustainability field, the social dimension of this framework has been found to not be sufficiently science-based and operational and thus in need of further development. In this two-part series an attempt at a science-based, operational definition of social sustainability is presented. In this paper (part one), a systems-based approach to the social system is presented, as a basis for presenting a zero-hypothesis of principles for social sustainability in part two. Extensive literature studies as well as conceptual modelling sessions were performed and the social system was examined from various angles—complex adaptive system studies, human needs theory and other social sciences, and insights from these fields were woven together. The whole work was structured and guided by the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development. The focus of the study was on the essential aspects of the social system that need to be sustained (that cannot be systematically degraded) for it to be possible for people to meet their needs. These essential aspects were found to be trust, common meaning, diversity, capacity for learning and capacity for self-organization. Trust seems to be generally acknowledged to be the overriding aspect of a vital social system. A sense of common meaning is also stated by several authors as an important part of social capital and something that helps to keep a group or society together. Diversity is acknowledged as essential for resilience; in the human social system this can be interpreted as, e.g., diversity of personalities, ages, gender, skills. Capacity for learning and self-organization are also motivated from a resilience point of view by several authors. These results form a basis for the hypothesis for a definition of social sustainability presented in paper 2, which in turn is a step towards creating an enhanced support for strategic planning and innovation for sustainability.


This paper examines the planning paradigm shift related to the contested “urban renaissance” mega-project in Downtown Seoul (Korea). Similar to other global cities, over the last few decades, different mega-projects have been successfully implemented in Seoul. These projects have been considered engines for urban renewals and transformation. This paper builds on the analysis of the failure and re-framing planning strategy for the Green Corridor (GC) mega-project, part of the “Urban Renaissance Master Plan for Downtown Seoul”. The GC case reveals various critical insights for urban sustainability: (i) the current mega-projects’ sustainability fallacy, related to top-down, technocratic densification, and greening
practices; and (ii) the untapped potential of Asian traditional and irregular small scale urban patterns, and their related socio-cultural value in addressing the renaissance of the long term urban sustainability. In particular, the discussed research findings point out that urban renaissance enabling sustainability principles requires integrated, small scale, incremental, and adaptive (stepwise) urban planning and design processes that go well beyond general strategies following the so-called “green growth” paradigm. Keywords: urban regeneration; sustainability fallacy; gentrification; industrial district conservation; Seoul; Seun district


Purpose: The development of sustainable facilities management (FM) practices requires active and integrated engagement of the FM organization. Building on a three-year research project (2015-2018) within Nordic Built that aims to strengthen FM competencies in the Scandinavian countries, this paper aims to list and document the challenges and barriers of implementing sustainability as identified by the Scandinavian FM practitioners who took part in this research. Design/methodology/approach: The paper builds on the understanding gained from using an interpretive sociological approach and uses qualitative mixed methods to collect data from four workshops, group sessions and expert group discussions with a mix of representatives including owners, property managers, facilities managers, consultants, teachers and academics. Four case studies were completed of refurbishment projects implementing sustainable solutions; these encompassed in-depth interviews with the stakeholders, site visits, observations of meetings and gathering project documentation. The data were complemented by a systematic literature review on a selection of topics focusing on articles referring directly to FM, the sustainability of FM, ends-user and stakeholder involvement, energy performance and sustainability. The challenges and barriers identified in practice were compared to those found in the literature. Findings: The concept of sustainability, and its different dimensions and implications, seems to be well understood now by the practitioners who participated in this study, who claimed they were able to provide the required solutions. What seems to be lacking, though, is the possibility of convincing the end-users, who are expected to operate and maintain the facilities, to act according to the standards that these solutions require. It appears to be easier to focus on the technical aspects than on the end-users’ behaviors. The practitioners reported a shortage of social competencies and tools to deal with the situation, and despite an increasing awareness of smart technology, they lacked solutions to engage the end-users in optimizing the facilities. Besides, not all FM companies were well equipped to face the challenges imposed by the sustainable agenda; the small and medium enterprises in particular seemed to be struggling to implement the different dimensions of sustainability. Research
imitations/implications: The limitation of this research rests in the chosen research approach as it focuses on the FM practitioners. The contribution of the end-users’ perspective is not strongly represented or systematically explored, but is identified as a new topic that needs to be investigated further to provide further insight. This study focuses on refurbishment and/or retrofit of existing buildings and the operation of facilities. The authors do not embrace the design phase or the construction phase of new buildings. Practical implications: The paper underlines the need for frameworks and concrete tools to help FM practitioners to integrate the social and cultural aspects of sustainability. It identifies end-users, both in housing and in offices, as creating a bottleneck to the implementation of sustainable FM. To gain insight into this bottleneck, the authors suggest implementing a sociologically inspired method using an integrative approach. Highlighting such issues will mean that future research will be able to define further solutions for managing and maintaining existing and future built assets and fulfilling sustainability requirements by engaging end-users. This study also emphasizes the need to introduce these topics as part of the curriculum for FM education. Originality/value: This paper provides an update on the level of the development of sustainable FM in the three Scandinavian countries. This is highly relevant for Scandinavian practitioners, but the authors consider this relevant for international practitioners, researchers, academics and teachers and developers as well. Practitioners and researchers are invited to join in these efforts to explore how to find practical frameworks, tools, policies and instruments and new services that will improve sustainable FM practices.


It has been 20 years since Neil Smith published his classic The New Urban Frontier. In this paper we argue for the continuing relevance of his concepts by analysing the development of a new exclusive residential area (New Kvillebäcken) in the Gustaf Dalén area, a repurposed industrial site on the edge of the central city of Gothenburg, Sweden. We show how the early millennial plans to create a new city district?Alstaden (River City)?involved a redrawing of the city map that changed the conditions for this former industrial area from symbolically peripheral (though geographically central) to attractive, but insufficiently exploited, central city land, thus producing a ?rent gap?. In our reading of Neil Smith? s concept of the urban frontier, we emphasise the close relationship between the frontier mythology that rationalises redevelopment as inevitable through stigmatisation?and the movements of capital?how and where rent gaps are created. The urban frontier creates an analytical space to unravel how the joint forces of the elite (in our case, the close cooperation between private real estate owners and the municipality of Gothenburg) displace long-time
inhabitants in urban spaces such as the Gustaf Dalén area to accomplish more financially profitable land use.


This study focuses on elaboration of scenario parameters to support strategies for an integrated renovation process of culturally valuable pre-boom housing stock from the People’s Home (Folkhemmet) period i.e. 1945-1960 in Sweden. This stock, now in focus for renovations, combines older craftsmanship with thorough planning on a neighbourhood level. Their qualities refer to aesthetics, material use, living qualities and efficient use of space. Present renovation strategies often reduce the complexity of the problem to technological and energy saving measures in a short-term perspective. Integrated and differentiated strategies are needed in order to improve energy efficiency and environmental performance, whilst respecting and safeguarding potential loss of invaluable cultural, architectural and social values (immaterial values). This paper presents a model to identify and describe both material and immaterial parameters which need to be known, valued and balanced in integrated sustainable renovation of the People’s Home housing stock. The model covers ten areas: (a) general description, (b) architectural quality, (c) social quality, (d) cultural quality, (e) technical description, (f) technical performance, (g) functional performance, (h) environmental performance, (i) economic performance, and (j) renovation process quality. A special attention is given to our exploration to define and describe immaterial values such as architectural, cultural and social qualities.


Urbanicity presents a challenge for the pursuit of sustainability. High settlement density may offer some environmental, economic, and social advantages, but it can impose psychological demands that people find excessive. These demands of urban life have stimulated a desire for contact with nature through suburban residence, leading to planning and transportation practices that have profound implications for the pursuit of sustainability. Some might dismiss people’s desire for contact with nature as the result of an anti-urban bias in conjunction with a romantic view of nature. However, research in environmental psychology suggests that people’s desire for contact with nature serves an important adaptive function, namely, psychological restoration. Based on this insight, we offer a perspective on an underlying practical challenge: designing communities that balance settlement density with satisfactory access to nature experience. We discuss research on four issues: how people tend
to believe that nature is restorative; how restoration needs and beliefs shape environmental preferences; how well people actually achieve restoration in urban and natural environments; and how contact with nature can promote health. In closing, we consider urban nature as a design option that promotes urban sustainability.


There is a fragmented approach to social sustainability in the literature, and this paper aims to contribute to a better understanding of the meanings and interpretations of that concept while reviewing and discussing the social dimension of sustainability from the perspectives of two fields: urban development as well as companies and products. The analysis identifies commonalities and differences in the understanding of the conceptualization of social sustainability and helps to identify core aspects that cross disciplinary boundaries. The paper shows that compiling a list of comprehensive aspects that is representative of social sustainability is not straightforward, as interpretations are context dependant and aspects are often closely interconnected. Differences often occur because of variations in scoping and context, or whether or not a life cycle perspective is used. Nonetheless, there seems to be an underlying common understanding of what social sustainability is, and a set of key themes (social capital, human capital and well-being) is suggested as an alternative to put more specific measures and indicators in perspective. However, context-specific information is still necessary in practical applications. Copyright (c) 2011 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd and ERP Environment.


There has been worldwide concern for sustainable development especially after the 1992's Rio's UN Conference on Environment and Development. Rapid encroachment of urban development on valuable agricultural land will have great influence on whether sustainable development can be achieved. A sustainable land development model is developed using GIS in an attempt to control urban sprawl under rapid rural urbanization. The objective of the model is to ensure that equity between generations and efficiency in land use can be achieved in land development so that development can be sustained in the future. The model is used to study the impacts of agricultural land loss in Dongguan in 1988-93, a rapidly growing area in the Pearl River Delta of China. The impact of unplanned urban growth is evaluated by comparing the actual development with optimal development derived from the sustainable land development model. Land use problems are identified in both spatial and time dimensions as some land conversions are found to occur at the 'wrong' time and locations. Future land development which can meet the objective of sustainable development is proposed using the model. By testing different development scenarios and land consumption parameters, planners and government officials can use the model as a decision
support system for sustainable land development in areas in the world that are under great pressure of rapid urban growth.

METHODS AND MEASURES


Policies on economic use of natural resources require considerations to social and cultural values. In order to make those concrete in a planning context, this paper aims to interpret social and cultural criteria, identify indicators, match these with verifier variables and visualize them on maps. Indicators were selected from a review of scholarly work and natural resource policies, and then matched with verifier variables available for Sweden's 290 municipalities. Maps of the spatial distribution of four social and four cultural verifier variables were then produced. Consideration of social and cultural values in the studied natural resource use sectors was limited. The spatial distribution of the verifier variables exhibited a general divide between northwest and south Sweden, and regional rural and urban areas. We conclude that it is possible to identify indicators and match them with verifier variables to support inclusion of social and cultural values in planning.


Drawing on a EU-funded research project on urbanisation in China and Europe (URBACHINA), the purpose of this inquiry is to explore the potential of foresight – through visionary scenarios and related participatory processes – in promoting learning and sustainable futures in China’s centrally planned context. Our research explores the use of backcasting, of Donella Meadows’ “levers” and Paul Raskin’s “proximate-ultimate drivers” and of archetypal worldviews to further our understanding of how we think about the future, and of the tension between transition scenarios and transformative, paradigmatic or deep change. A review of recent foresight studies and literature provides an overview of the latest approaches: in particular the methods, scope, process, level of participation, themes discussed and wild cards considered. Building on this, the inquiry designs and implements a participatory, normative and qualitative scenario building to explore sustainable urban futures for China, adapting the elements of Joseph Voros’ basic foresight process to include a total of nine steps, with five workshops, two international surveys, an adapted backcasting step and internal consistency mechanisms. The combination of a participatory iterative process with normative approaches to envisioning, helped question assumptions and deeply ingrained development models, as well as the narrow space for “alternatives” resulting from
China’s centralised, top-down planning and decision-making. The experience confirms the power of scenario/storyline building in helping reflect and question strategic policy choices and enrich urban policy debates. The process successfully proposed a number of steps that ensured triangulation of the envisioning outcomes and additional learning also through backcasting. Finally, the research shows a clear link between the development of scenarios space, the debate on transition and transformative futures and archetypal worldviews, which were shown to be stable even after decades.


With increasing attention in urban design theory paid to conditions conducive to sustainable forms of urban experience, there is emerging emphasis on the non-technical perspective of sustainable urban design. This perspective focuses on design for urban social sustainability. Despite increasing exploration in this area, much of the theoretical conditions remain as text-based descriptions that lack graphic representation. This is due, in part, to contributions from disciplines traditionally not associated with visualisation. In considering the suggestive potential of this perspective for designers, this research seeks to ascertain if it can be represented visually. This article illustrates the beginning of a wider exploration into how to make visual the design of conditions for urban social sustainability. Testing how the non-technical perspective of sustainable urban design could be applied and communicated, this article highlights not only the value of the perspective but also the role of imaging in narrowing the gaps between urban design theory and practice and in the development of performative forms of imaging in the revelation of performative urban conditions.


In the context of UK housebuilding this paper explores and critically reviews the initial measurement of social sustainability in the first phase of a new housing project on a large estate regeneration development in South Acton, London (conducted in March–April 2015). The research uses an existing “ex post” social sustainability framework adopted for use in other new UK housing projects and also examines local residents’ attitudes to the first phase of the estate regeneration. The social sustainability assessment framework (created to reflect a UK housebuilder's perspective) is based on the analysis and comparison of a range of national datasets and interviews and survey work with new and existing residents and other stakeholders on the estate, and the surrounding areas. The research shows stronger ratings for a number of physical improvements in the new development, but weaker scores for local
identity and links with neighbours. The research also shows a mixed picture in their attitudes towards the urban regeneration. The paper provides a critical discussion of the results and the framework, and concludes by setting out the lessons learned from the research for social sustainability assessment. The research will be useful for practitioners, housebuilders and policy makers involved in housing, and those with a wider interest in community wellbeing.


This article contributes to the debate on the role of local sustainability indicators in ongoing democratisation efforts. We examine the extent to which five different systems of local sustainability indicators within two Swedish municipalities?Stockholm and Sundsvall?are either expert or citizen oriented, and relate these findings to the indicator systems' profile, function and political/ administrative context. Even though three of the indicator systems can be classified as citizen oriented, there are few signs of true engagement and dialogue with the citizens over a longer period of time. The remaining two indicator systems are expert oriented with an environmental focus. Hence, we conclude that the systems in use are largely symbolic responses to the demands for democracy within the agenda for sustainable development albeit attempts to include environmental, economic, social and democratic perspectives of sustainability. Despite the fact that Stockholm and Sundsvall show differences in governing styles in their approaches to sustainability indicators it seems difficult for both municipalities to put sustainable development into practice in terms of citizen participation.


Housing support policy for persons with disabilities who require access to 24-hour formal or informal support is changing throughout Australia. This is consistent with international trends including: independent living in generic housing; facilitating choices about where and with whom people live; individualised home-based support; and community integration. Are these trends leading to policies that are effective in the Australian context? This article presents a framework for analysing the effectiveness of new approaches to housing support using a rights perspective. The framework consists of four domains: client outcomes; administrative systems; service viability; and coordination between formal and informal carers. Applying the framework to six case studies found that they all aim to foster independence, while providing effective individualised, holistic housing support.


Sustainability recognizes the interdependence of ecological, social, and economic systems—the three pillars of sustainability. The definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) often advocates ethical behavior with respect to these systems. As more corporations commit to sustainability and CSR policies, there is increasing pressure to consider social impacts throughout the supply chain. This paper reviews metrics, indicators, and frameworks of social impacts and initiatives relative to their ability to evaluate the social sustainability of supply chains. Then, the relationship between business decision-making and social sustainability is explored with attention initially focused on directly impacting national level measures. A general strategy for considering measures of social sustainability is proposed, and a variety of indicators of CSR are described. Several of these indicators are then employed in an example to demonstrate how they may be applied to supply chain decision-making.


Indicators and performance measures have become an important element in policy initiatives relating to sustainability and to the re-invention of government. This article reviews the research and practice of indicator development and use, summarizing several key lessons from this review. One of the key lessons is that to be useful, indicators must be developed with the participation of those who will use and learn from them. The article then proposes a strategy for community indicators based upon the conception that cities are like living organisms functioning as complex adaptive systems. Three types of indicators are needed. System performance indicators are required to provide information to the public about the overall health of a community or region. Policy and program measures are required to provide policy-makers with feedback about how specific programs and policies are working. Rapid feedback indicators are required to assist individuals and businesses to make more sustainable decisions on a day-to-day basis. There is no simple formula for how to develop a system of indicators. Each community and region should develop a system based upon their own circumstances and needs.
Building assessment tools are used as a means to assess and encourage the adoption of sustainability-led thinking and practice in the delivery of buildings. However, the established tools focus primarily on the aspects of green or sustainable building (i.e. building as an end-product), rarely exploring the contributions towards sustainable product delivery (i.e. the building process). However, some principles of sustainable development are best implemented within the process rather than by being embedded in the product. By addressing the issues of equity via participation through stakeholder-oriented sustainability assessment, building assessment tools could be used to enhance significantly the overall sustainability of project delivery in the construction sector. A theoretical justification is advocated for implementing a participatory approach that is underpinning the development of a specification for a building sustainability assessment model currently under development. The barriers to participation in the construction process are considered as well as the need to develop innovative mechanisms to broaden membership of the construction project team. The philosophical approaches and resultant practices drawn from Environmental Assessment and the Process Protocol are presented as examples of potential solutions for incorporating stakeholder participation in a modified building assessment process.


Mass housing is one of the primary solutions implemented by the construction industry to meet the current rapidly growing housing demand. Corresponding with the recognition of the significance of sustainable development, the construction industry has evolved to incorporate more sustainable methods to reduce the negative impacts of the built environment. While various studies have investigated the environmental and economic aspects of mass housing, limited studies have addressed the social impact. This research aims to fill this gap by developing a method to assess the social sustainability of mass housing construction projects. To determine key sustainability indicators, this assessment began by narrowing the scope to the following five major internationally recognized sustainable rating systems: LEED, Envision, BREEM, CASBEE and Green Globes. These rating systems are then investigated by focusing on criteria relating to social sustainability. The 33 indicators extracted from the analysis are ranked and validated using subject-matter experts. Using the ranked indicators, a framework is developed to assess the mass housing construction projects from a social sustainability standpoint. The study utilizes the Mehr Housing Project in Iran in the city of Parand as a case study to illustrate the outlined approach.
Considering the lack of clear guidance regarding the way business could include social sustainability into their operations, the objective of this research project was to study the functionality of social sustainability tools which are used worldwide by business practitioners and assess how useful these tools are to overcome barriers related with social aspects of sustainability as they are described in the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD): health, influence, competence, impartiality and meaning-making. A qualitative method analysis was selected, based upon direct content analysis. Elements from the 5 Level Framework (5LF) and the FSSD were used for designing two review processes to analyse selected social sustainability tools. The 5LF is useful for planning in complex systems, while the FSSD is designed to address complex challenges and recognize opportunities which aim to sustainability. The findings from the research show which tools, based on their functionality, can help a company move towards sustainability and illustrate how they address different social sustainability aspects. Based on these findings, recommendations were developed which included key features of the selected social sustainability tools. These recommendations could help business practitioners to choose the most appropriate tool for specific business context depending on the company’s needs.


In the field of sustainability assessment of built environment, the focus has started shifting from buildings to neighbourhoods and cities. As a result, numerous assessment systems have emerged to support investors in the design and development of sustainable neighbourhoods. Such approaches, however, can hardly be applied to existing neighbourhoods. The paper explores how “flexible” indicator systems can support the process of sustainable development of existing neighbourhoods. It also deals with issues related to the selection of indicators, identification of data sources and data protection. It is recommended to use such indicators systems to support housing improvement districts (HID) among others.


This paper debates the evolution and importance of the urban dimension of EU policies and in particular EU Cohesion Policy in the past three decades. It discusses the growing
relevance for supporting a Urban Agenda for the EU, and the gradual adoption and implementation of Integrated Sustainable Urban Development Strategies (ISUDS), by pointing out their advantages vis-à-vis mainstream sectoral-focused policy strategies. In this light, the article proposes an evaluation framework to assess and compare ISUDS across Europe. Based on the Portuguese case study this analysis argues that despite their limited impacts, EU financed urban programmes (URBAN, POLIS, ISUDS) contributed positively to promoting a policy integrated approach, and enhanced urban physical and social environment of deprived urban neighbourhoods. More concretely, the initial results from the recent implementation of the 103 ISUDS reveal a gradual adoption by the urban and local authorities of more holistic and integrated urban development policy approaches to increasing policy effectiveness and efficiency.


Social sustainability is a new strand of discourse on sustainable development. It has developed over a number of years in response to the dominance of environmental concerns and technological solutions in urban development and the lack of progress in tackling social issues in cities such as inequality, displacement, liveability and the increasing need for affordable housing. Even though the Sustainable Communities policy agenda was introduced in the UK a decade ago, the social dimensions of sustainability have been largely overlooked in debates, policy and practice around sustainable urbanism. However, this is beginning to change. A combination of financial austerity, public sector budget cuts, rising housing need, and public and political concern about the social outcomes of regeneration, are focusing attention on the relationship between urban development, quality of life and opportunities. There is a growing interest in understanding and measuring the social outcomes of regeneration and urban development in the UK and internationally. A small, but growing, movement of architects, planners, developers, housing associations and local authorities advocating a more ‘social’ approach to planning, constructing and managing cities. This is part of an international interest in social sustainability, a concept that is increasingly being used by governments, public agencies, policy makers, NGOs and corporations to frame decisions about urban development, regeneration and housing, as part of a burgeoning policy discourse on the sustainability and resilience of cities. This paper describes how social sustainability is emerging as a practice in urban regeneration in the UK and draws on Social Life’s work in improving the social outcomes of development for communities. It includes a detailed assessment of experimental work carried out in 2011 for the Berkeley Group, in partnership with the University of Reading, to develop a social sustainability measurement framework, which will enable Berkeley to evaluate community strength and quality of life in regard to new housing developments.

**DESIGN**

In Sweden social sustainability perspectives on housing design are rare, this strikes the group of weaker households. Due to the present housing shortage a dwelling providing a qualitative space for everyday life is not a realistic alternative for many households. The groups of households that not have the economical strength to involve in the housing market have little power to change their residential situation. The housing market focus on the limited group of buyers and the alternative, the rental apartment, implies years of abeyance in a que-system to get hold of an apartment. Meanwhile the on going demographic transformation challenges existing residential design and the design practice in turn tends to employ a narrow perspective on household constructions and residential use. The research work is focused on residential usability (flexibility) and how this can affect social sustainability dimensions in a residential situation. It also focuses on how social sustainability issues can be activated into the practice of residential floor plan design. The methodological approach is based on a mixed method research where qualitative, empirical studies and research by design are employed. The work embrace a theoretical perspective based on assumptions from Schneider and Till. Findings from the research show that flexibility in residential design represents an important factor in the realisation of a sustainable society. A salient finding is that flexible space can provide more equitable residential solutions as the extended spatial capacity can provide qualitative residential situations for diverse households during a residential process. This paper concentrates on the magnitude of flexible space as an agent for the dimension of equity, presenting parts of the work with empirical studies. The continuing research intends to delve deeper into the question of residential usability and social sustainability from the perspective of time and the residential process.


The ongoing demographic transformation poses challenges for the field of residential design. Meanwhile rules and regulations maintain a conventional approach to the subject. The housing market is considering the home as a commercialized lifestyle question, not focusing on the long-term residential resilience of the housing stock. These preconditions imply a misfit between accelerating diversity in articulated consumer preferences and appropriate offers in the housing market. This situation impacts the quality of life in housing, in particular regarding issues of social sustainability. In order to obtain a sustainable housing stock we need to develop a new focus and new perspectives for the design professions. This study constitutes a part of a larger research and development experimental project, the Positive Footprint Housing project. This licentiate thesis concentrates on the notion of residential usability and how it relates to aspects of social sustainability. It also focuses on
how these issues can be incorporated into the practice of residential design. The mixed methodological approach is based on the combination of studies of residential life situations with non-directed interviews and research by design in master studios. The work adopts a theoretical perspective presented by Schneider and Till and tests the hypothesis of residential usability as a critical precondition for socially sustainable residential processes. Findings from the research show that enhanced usability in residential design represents an important factor in the realisation of a sustainable society. A main result is the elaboration of a model for implementing social sustainability aspects in the design work in order to promote future housing design innovations. Further research intends to address the complexity of residential user participation and accompanying social consequences.


Formas, the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, has, on the Swedish Government’s behalf, conducted a proactive survey of research in the field of sustainable urban development. This was undertaken in close collaboration with the other authorities entrusted with the remit, namely the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the National Heritage Board and the Swedish Museum of Architecture. The remit was to shed light on the social and cultural dimensions of sustainable urban development and its links with neighbouring research fields. The research overview was compiled, on Formas’ behalf, by Consultant Lena From in the autumn of 2010. The overview takes as its jumping-off point another research overview, State of the Art: Sustainable Urban Development in Sweden, which Formas commissioned from the same Consultant in 2004.* The purpose, then as now, was to present a picture of Sweden’s research landscape on the subject of sustainable urban development, but also a picture of the terms of research and what the research community and practitioners concerned regarded as urgent research needs. An additional purpose has been to learn from and follow up the findings presented in the 2004 report and by doing so to highlight the changes occurring in the field since then. As a result of the present overview concentrating on the social and cultural dimensions of sustainable urban development, the present overview has expanded into partly new fields of research, thereby shedding light on urban issues and the structural complexity of urban development.


The green and the subsequent sustainable building movements have been framed by changing societal contexts. Their main focus has been on the design of new buildings.
However, these movements have neglected the life span of existing buildings and the long-term management of building stocks. The reasons why are considered: the changing interpretations of sustainability, the evolution of different forms of tacit knowledge, lack of a metabolic framework covering the built environment and lack of a consistent multi-scale building information modelling (BIM). The transition toward a "risk society?, with an increasing diversity and frequency of threats, challenges the current optimistic definition of sustainability. Resilience addresses fast- and slow-moving threats that can lead to unknown consequences and new risks. Alternative planning approaches (e.g. scenario planning, adaptive change and resilience heuristics) are discussed. The differences between anticipation- and resilience-based strategies are considered. Possible heuristics can be found in social-ecological systems, in resilience engineering and in the historic evolution of the built environment. Resilient solutions generally lead to a higher level of complexity and carry additional environmental costs. In the creation of resilience capacity, new knowledge will be co-produced through transdisciplinary research, scenario planning and design experiments under conditions of uncertainty.


The idea of energy efficient, healthy buildings has existed since 1970s. However, a one-dimensional approach for many housing issues does not assure sustainability. Therefore, near the end of the 20th century, the built environment became a focus of attention within the environmental movement with wider focus on building certification schemes and sustainability issues such as interrelationships between social, environmental and economic dimensions. This thesis argues that the unsustainability of current housing practices is ingrained from different occupants’ perceptions and levels of residential satisfaction. Therefore, understanding and bridging the gaps of housing practices based on occupants’ perceptions and satisfaction levels allows achieving transition from green buildings to sustainable urban environment which include three-strands of sustainability. The data presented in this work are mainly derived from survey results based on the two cases: 1) certified (LEED and Miljöbyggnad) buildings, and 2) uncertified buildings in the Southern Sweden. Case studies of housing projects are compared to investigate the gaps and areas of improvements based on a framework of sustainability and theoretical underpinnings from residential satisfaction theory. The results showed that due to different social, environmental and economic conditions in each site the elements from sustainability framework varied slightly. However, the two cases proved that perceptions about housing and levels of satisfaction are context dependent. This means that solutions for improvements of housing
conditions may not be transferable to other localities and should be developed from the start based on three-dimensional sustainability approach. Furthermore, despite the framework’s dependency on the setting, with some criteria adjustments it can be used as guidelines for sustainable housing projects in other contexts. In addition, the outcome and final recommendations of this thesis may serve as a basis for constructors’, architects’ and designers’ teams, also as for clients and environmentalists striving for more sustainable urban environment.


This paper explores the conditions for taking the social dimension into consideration when trying to aim for increased sustainability through activities organized in projects. Among the three commonly accepted pillars of sustainable development – economic, ecological and social – the social dimension is often the most vague and least explicit in practical attempts to shape sustainable development. The aim with this study is to explore the role of organizing in shaping the balance between the pillars. The two cases examined are projects explicitly related to sustainable development goals set by the national government or parliament and implemented by other actors. The cases concern two topics: food production and electromagnetic fields. On the basis of relevant organizational dimensions and case analyses, the paper shows how the organization of sustainability shapes the ways in which the projects articulate the social dimension. This leads to practical advice for organizing new projects in the future. Copyright © 2010 John Wiley & Sons, Ltd and ERP Environment.

CHALLENGES


Since publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987, the notion of sustainable development has come to guide the pursuit of environmental reform by both public and private organizations and to facilitate communication among actors from different societal spheres. It is customary to characterize sustainable development in a familiar typology comprising three pillars: environmental, economic, and social. The relationships among these dimensions are generally assumed to be compatible and mutually supportive. However, previous research has found that when policy makers endorse sustainable development, the social dimension garners less attention and is particularly difficult to realize and operationalize. Recent years though have seen notable efforts among standard setters, planners, and practitioners in various sectors to address the often neglected social aspects of
sustainability. Likewise, during the past decade, there have been efforts to develop theoretical frameworks to define and study social sustainability and to empirically investigate it in relation to "sustainability projects," "sustainability practice," and "sustainability initiatives." This introductory article presents the topic and explains some of the challenges of incorporating social sustainability into a broad framework of sustainable development. Also considered is the potential of the social sustainability concept for sustainability projects and planning. This analysis is predicated on the work represented in this special issue and on related initiatives that explicitly discuss the social pillar of sustainable development and its relationship to the other dimensions.


In Sweden many suburbs built at the end of the 1960s are in need of physical renovation to comply with new energy regulations. Some of these neighbourhoods face serious social challenges which also need to be tackled. The three largest Swedish contractors, usually very active in providing technical and environmentally friendly renovation, claim now they can provide social sustainability solutions on a commercial basis. For many years the problems of deprived suburbs have attracted the attention and the care of the public institutions, and though many initiatives have been carried out to address these issues, results have been sometimes quite limited. To discuss the social challenges linked to suburbs’ renovation, an alternative method is proposed: the analysis of literary accounts. The goal is to assess whether stories relating the lives of residents in deprived Swedish suburbs can inform and therefore contribute to the development of socially sustainable solutions. Referring to the literature on social sustainability, this qualitative and explorative study uses critical discourse analysis as the method. Results suggest that focusing on renovated housing, employment, social services and leisure activities is not enough to rehabilitate disadvantaged neighbourhoods. They also indicate some specific problems linked to the built environment that contractors could help to solve.


A renewed focus on innovation in the building sector calls for research strategies that will strengthen the position of holistic architectural knowledge for the benefit of a sustainable built environment. This paper presents research that focuses on future homes that will enable radical reduced resource use related to living. In order to reduce the
environmental impact of living and dwelling we need to address not only buildings and physical structures but also user behavior and lifestyle choices. Contemporary housing development is defined by a view of the housing market based on surveys among limited groups of people and not on actual needs and wishes representing the wider population. Furthermore, the actual housing market does not deliver structures that will enable sustainable changes to the environmental impact of living. The aim for the paper is to define architectural research for future homes in relation to a planned purpose built Living Lab. Research should support a radical reduction of the environmental impact of living. A review of 20th century housing research and development in Sweden and France provides insights from previous successes as well as failures in the field. Results point to the importance of involving end-users and to build on solid understanding of the use of homes. In addition, already explored innovation regarding space use can with advantage be repeated, as contemporary users are likely to react differently than users did in the past. We propose a three-step model for research starting with empirical studies of the use of homes among a large variety of households (i.e. regarding size, age groups, cultures etc.), prototyping of new architectural concepts (e.g. related to layout, interiors, equipment, products etc.) and test and evaluation of these in the Living Lab.


As global and local visions for sustainable living environments are increasingly supported by policies and concrete practices in construction, the building and housing sector is seeking to mitigate its environmental impact as well as assume a greater social responsibility. The overarching policy objectives set to concretize what a sustainable housing development entails, however, tend to rely on equivocal terminology, allowing a varied interpretation by key industry practitioners. Though in line with an ecological modernization paradigm in policy, the promotion of a market-driven environmentalism in housing faces multiple challenges as varying interests and perspectives collide. Supported by empirical findings of a semi-structured interview study conducted with housing developers in a new ‘green’ urban district in Göteborg, Sweden, theoretical frameworks surrounding the paradoxical path towards a sustainable housing development are presented. Inconsistencies between outspoken ambitions; social dimensions; and the framing of efficiency in new housing are discussed. Possibilities for the housing sector are given in the recognition of new forms of development, where a systemic perspective is required in the alignment between how industry, policy and the market perceives housing development and what is actually sustainable.

During the last twenty-five years, housing policy in Sweden has radically changed. Once forming a pillar of the comprehensive welfare system, abbreviated the ?Swedish model,? neoliberal housing politics have established market-governed housing provision with a minimum of state engagement. This shift has had consequences on the social geography of housing conditions. The research reported here analyzes social geographic change in Sweden's three largest cities?Stockholm, Gothenburg, and Malmö?between 1986 and 2001, relating observed patterns of gentrification and filtering to cycles of accumulation and to neoliberalization of housing policies. First, we outline the neoliberalization of Swedish housing policies. We then present an empirical analysis of gentrification and filtering in the three cities, spanning two boom periods (1986?1991, 1996?2001) and a bust period (1991?1996). The data reveal social geographic polarization manifested in the growth of supergentrification and low-income filtering. The analysis also introduces the concept of ordinary gentrification, supporting the move in gentrification research toward a broad generic conception of the process. Political reforms after 2001 are summarized and we argue that these underlie the continued increase in inequality and that the social geographic polarization mapped between 1986 and 2001 has probably intensified during this decade.


Social questions become especially tangible in the context of human-nonhuman interrelations. This article focuses on coexistential practices in the context of management, protection, and production and it clarifies how the social in particular empirical cases is enacted. The work is based on three empirical case studies. We explore the conflicts in forestry and urban planning caused by the Siberian flying squirrel; the increased presence of the grey wolf; and the paradox of the domestic pig?a clever animal that is treated harshly by factory-farming practices. As our cases indicate, the social is not a group of people living in a certain setting according to certain norms and traditions. The social is a contingent, activated constellation of interagentivities that emerges together with a shared concern that particular customs and habits are not serving the purpose they are expected to serve. The cases challenge efforts to adopt a human-centered view of the social as the basis for developing the concept of sustainability. They also indicate that there is no one social sustainability, but rather many articulations of the concept.

DEFINITIONS AND MODELS

Since the late 1980s, much of the debate on sustainability has been dominated by ecological perspectives. However, the last decade has seen an increasing interest in the social aspects of sustainability. While, to some extent, general consensus has been reached regarding the definitions of ecological sustainability, the definition of social sustainability is still in the making. Therefore, there is a need for conceptual frameworks and theoretical constructs in order to develop the understanding of social sustainability further. This article addresses the lack of theorisation and is composed of three different sections. The first section is a literature overview covering some of the most influential texts on social sustainability. The second section introduces and relates a number of existing, polemically constructed theoretical frameworks. In the third section, Jacques Derrida's theory of différance is used to suggest a way of understanding the relationship between the oppositional positions identified in the frameworks.

Boström, M. (2012). "A missing pillar? Challenges in theorizing and practicing social sustainability: introduction to the special issue." Sustainability: Science, Practice, & Policy 8(1). Since publication of the Brundtland Report in 1987, the notion of sustainable development has come to guide the pursuit of environmental reform by both public and private organizations and to facilitate communication among actors from different societal spheres. It is customary to characterize sustainable development in a familiar typology comprising three pillars: environmental, economic, and social. The relationships among these dimensions are generally assumed to be compatible and mutually supportive. However, previous research has found that when policy makers endorse sustainable development, the social dimension garners less attention and is particularly difficult to realize and operationalize. Recent years though have seen notable efforts among standard setters, planners, and practitioners in various sectors to address the often neglected social aspects of sustainability. Likewise, during the past decade, there have been efforts to develop theoretical frameworks to define and study social sustainability and to empirically investigate it in relation to "sustainability projects," "sustainability practice," and "sustainability initiatives." This introductory article presents the topic and explains some of the challenges of incorporating social sustainability into a broad framework of sustainable development. Also considered is the potential of the social sustainability concept for sustainability projects and planning. This analysis is predicated on the work represented in this special issue and on related initiatives that explicitly discuss the social pillar of sustainable development and its relationship to the other dimensions.

Sustainability is often conceived of as an attempt to balance competing economic, environmental and social priorities. Over the course of three decades of scholarship, however, the meaning and appropriate application of the ‘social pillar’ continues to inspire confusion. In this paper, we posit that the inherent challenge of understanding social sustainability is its many legitimate meanings plus a lack of interdisciplinary scholarship. We draw from literature in multiple disciplines to illustrate five different ways that the concept of social sustainability has been applied in scholarship and professional practice, and highlighting the importance of applications that acknowledge placed-based, process-oriented perspectives that understand social, economic, and environmental imperatives as integrated concepts. Ironically, this framing forecloses on social sustainability as an entity distinct from environmental and economic sustainability. We believe that organizing the conversation around these five applications can help advocates of sustainability use the concept of social sustainability in clear and powerful ways while avoiding applications that relegate the social dimensions of sustainability to an afterthought.


Swedish cities are becoming increasingly multicultural and diverse in terms of lifestyles and socioeconomic conditions. However, cultural and social diversity is seldom considered when planning for sustainable urban development. This paper examines planning for more eco-friendly living in the increasingly diverse population of a city district of Stockholm. The study reveals the prevalence of a discourse in which a Swedish identity carries environmental responsibility in the form of tidiness, recycling and familiarity with nature. It is argued that planning for urban sustainability is underpinned by Swedish middle-class norms, indirectly entailing processes of (self-) disciplining and transforming the other (foreign and/or troublesome dwellers) into well-behaving Swedes. A clearer definition of the environmental improvement intended, its goals and target groups is needed. Finally, an appreciation of the multiple ways we can save natural resources would make urban planning policies more attuned to social and cultural diversity as well as more environmentally progressive.


This paper focuses on the relationship between urban form and social sustainability. Although a social dimension to sustainability is widely accepted, exactly what this means has not been very clearly defined and agreed. We propose two main dimensions to the concept, relating to equity of access and the sustainability/quality of community. Claims for
the allegedly greater social sustainability of certain urban forms, such as the ‘compact city’, have not been adequately tested. We therefore develop performance measures for these dimensions, and relate these to systematic measures which characterise differences in urban form. New evidence is presented on the relationships between these two sets of measures, controlling for relevant demographic and socio-economic factors, for five UK cities benchmarked against the wider UK context. The broad story suggests that there is a tradeoff between the greater accessibility of more compact forms and the apparently more socially stable and cohesive suburbs. However, it is clear that the socio-economic dimension of poverty-affluence cuts across this and may account for much of latter appearance. Thus urban form must be considered alongside the spatial location of social groups.


As an important component of the built environment, housing has a crucial role to play in the sustainable development of cities. The sustainability of housing development embraces the environmental, social, cultural and economic aspects of housing, which intertwine with one another. This paper specifically investigates the concepts of social and cultural sustainability and then situates them within the housing context. It discusses the areas of concern of these two strands of sustainability in housing, arguing that they converge where the use of environmental resources for and the ecological impacts of housing activities are influenced and determined by socio-cultural factors. Social and cultural sustainability diverge where “social well being” and “culture” respectively become the subjects of sustainability. Some results of a residents' survey conducted in Hong Kong are used to provide empirical examples for some of the arguments raised in this paper. This article concludes that the sustainable development perspective offers an integrative approach to housing inquiries.


Housing policies have passed through many permutations in the last 50 years, based on differing, even conflicting, approaches that, if we were totally truthful, have not really solved the housing problems faced by the majority of the world's population. For most people, remembering that over half the world's population subsists on less than $2 per day, the challenge of housing is a simple one: the need for a healthy shelter at an affordable price.
recent years, the concept of sustainability has become central not just in housing policy, but in the consideration of human settlements, employment, infrastructure, transportation and urban services. In fact, the concept of sustainability may be one of the most over-used and misunderstood urban policy component in use today. This paper attempts to clarify the concept of sustainability, leading to what is hopefully an operational definition that can be used to measure progress toward this desirable state. The ideas developed are then applied to the field of housing policies, that is, the guidance that governments can give to housing providers, whether they be commercial, public or self-builders, placing housing activity within the overall framework of the sustainability of human settlements and national and international economic activity. In the course of this discussion, certain criteria for sustainability will emerge, including the need for poverty reduction and slum eradication, as well as the broader goal of environmental preservation and the importance of developing channels for making viable finance available. Of course, without improvements in employment opportunity and incomes, whatever is done within the housing policy area is likely to lead to disappointing results.


Sustainable development is a widely used term, which has been increasingly influential on UK planning, housing and urban policy in recent years. Debates about sustainability no longer consider sustainability solely as an environmental concern, but also incorporate economic and social dimensions. However, while a social dimension to sustainability is widely accepted, exactly what this means has not been very clearly defined or agreed. This paper aims to address this disparity through a detailed exploration and definition of the concept of social sustainability within the urban context. The relationship between urban form and social sustainability is explored and two main dimensions of social sustainability are identified and discussed in detail: equitable access and the sustainability of the community itself.


There is a lack of theoretical and empirical studies regarding social sustainability. The literature reveals that the "social" was integrated late into debates on sustainable development. This paper aims to fill this gap and proposes a new conceptual framework of
social sustainability. We suggest that risk is a constitutive concept of sustainability and that the contemporary conditions of risk resulting primarily from climate change and its ensuing uncertainties pose serious social, spatial, structural, and physical threats to contemporary human societies and their living spaces. Within the framework of sustainability, we propose that social sustainability strives to confront risk while addressing social concerns. Although we agree that without socially oriented practices, efforts to achieve sustainability will be undermined, as too many gaps exist in practice and theory. Thus, we propose a comprehensive Conceptual Framework of Social Sustainability, which is composed of four interrelated concepts of socially oriented practices, where each concept has a distinctive function in the framework and incorporates major social aspects. The concept of Equity encompasses three dimensions: recognition, which "revalues unjustly devalued identities", redistribution, which suggests that the remedy for injustice is some form of economic restructuring, and parity of participation, which promotes substantive public involvement in the production of space. These efforts may, in turn, reduce alienation and enhance civility and a sense of community and place attachment. The concept of Safety is the ontological foundation of sustainability in general and social sustainability in particular. The concept refers to the right to not only be safe but adopt all measures of adaptation and security to prevent future casualties and physical harm. The concept of Eco-prosumption refers to modes of producing and gaining values in socially and environmentally responsible ways. The concept of Urban Forms represents the physical dimensions of socially desired urban and community physical forms. Eventually, a desired physical form should promote a sense of community, safety, health, and place attachment, among other environmental objectives.


The visionary goal of many urban planners is to develop an attractive and sustainable city, socially, economically, and ecologically. This essay discusses the conceptual assumptions of social sustainability in Swedish urban governance, and the urban strategy of the city of Malmo in particular. Social sustainability programmes in Malmo take as their starting point 'the whole city' when identifying structural mechanisms of marginalization and spatial segregation, as opposed to circumscribing the problems to so-called problem areas and marginalized groups. However, when the social sustainability agenda is incorporated into the visionary urban strategy, 'the whole city' translates into 'the city as a whole', which invokes a unifying notion of one future for the city as a single entity. The overall goal of a social sustainability agenda, in the frame of urban strategy, is to progressively transform
immigrant-dense 'problem areas' of the city into 'innovation areas', according to given criteria of success. I shall argue that unless the social sustainability agenda discards the spatiotemporal coordinates of visionary urban strategy, it risks reproducing the status quo and contributing to further marginalization of targeted populations.


The sustainability concepts of the “Brundtland-Report” and the “Rio documents” call for a combination of ecological, economic, social and institutional aspects of social development. This paper describes briefly several models of sustainability and discusses social sustainability as conceptualised in selected sustainability indicators. In an attempt to remedy the lack of sociological theory, the paper proposes a sustainability concept, which is based on the concepts of needs and work, as an activity to fulfil these needs and as the principal exchange process between society and nature. Moreover, this paper argues to recognize social sustainability as both a normative and analytical concept as well.


The lifestyle of industrialized countries and economic growth in the decades of the 1960s and 1970s caused a serious weakness in the balance between ecology, economic stability and natural security of planet (Blewitt, 2008). The concept of sustainability emerged in response to these weaknesses that resulted from poor resource management, and was universally accepted (McKenzie, 2004). The term, 'sustainable development' was defined in 1987 by The World Commission on Environment and Development as, known as the Brundtland definition, “development that meets the need of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs”(WCED, 1987, p. 43). The concept of sustainable development has been interpreted in various ways with a wide range of meanings. Within the first decade of its emergence “sustainable development has been interpreted as an ecological vision”(Åhman, 2013). However, in recent decades it has become more of a multifocal agenda that strongly links environmental, social and economic notions, and reconciles the conflicts between them. In the first decade after the emergence of the notion of sustainable development in 1987, the concept of social sustainability had been neglected in comparison to environmental and economic aspects of sustainability. It was in the late 1990s that social sustainability was considered a fundamental aspect within the sustainability agenda. Thereafter it gained significant recognition. Despite the enormous amount of work which has been done in this regard in the last decades, there has been no agreement about a comprehensive definition of social sustainability to date, and
this notion remains under-theorized to some extent (Åhman, 2013; Jaeger, Tàbara, & Jaeger, 2011; Littig & Griebler, 2005; Weingaertner & Moberg, 2014). Hence this paper aims to provide an understanding of the meaning of social sustainability, and the influential factors associated with it.

Hilgers, M. (2013). What is urban social sustainability? G. ULB.


Sustainability recognizes the interdependence of ecological, social, and economic systems—the three pillars of sustainability. The definition of corporate social responsibility (CSR) often advocates ethical behavior with respect to these systems. As more corporations commit to sustainability and CSR policies, there is increasing pressure to consider social impacts throughout the supply chain. This paper reviews metrics, indicators, and frameworks of social impacts and initiatives relative to their ability to evaluate the social sustainability of supply chains. Then, the relationship between business decision-making and social sustainability is explored with attention initially focused on directly impacting national level measures. A general strategy for considering measures of social sustainability is proposed, and a variety of indicators of CSR are described. Several of these indicators are then employed in an example to demonstrate how they may be applied to supply chain decision-making.


Sustainable buildings have often been niche products, but in recent years a new approach has emerged in Denmark aimed at mainstreaming and normalizing this mode of construction and seeking to attract ordinary Danes through market conditions. The aim is to present an alternative conceptualization of sustainable buildings to the ecocommunities? vision and to involve traditional building firms in their design and development. From a theoretical perspective, the mainstreaming of sustainable buildings can be seen either as an example of ecological modernization or technological transition. The new conceptualization has implied a narrower approach to sustainability and a lack of social sustainability measures. While earlier paradigms of sustainable buildings emphasized themes such as community building, self-provisioning, local empowerment, and shared facilities, such objectives are largely absent in the new types of sustainable buildings. We question to what extent it is possible to design sustainable settlements without social sustainability. By viewing sustainable
buildings as technological configurations, we argue that the multiactor approach, fragmentation of roles, and absent initiatives for social sustainability influence the buildings? environmental performance and should be important for the next generation of these structures.


Recently the largest Swedish contractors have advertised social sustainability as a new competence in their social housing portfolios. They have created organisational functions related to the concept and integrated it in their strategies. Their presentation includes terms such as: attractive, safe and fair areas; social responsibility; consultation and involvement of the residents; as well as new forms of partnership and financing. In doing so, these companies have stepped aside of their traditional contractors roles as providers of technical and environmental friendly new build and renovation. This development of the contractors’ business towards societal issues brings new challenges. Based on one in-depth case study juxtaposed with two other cases we analyse how the in-depth case company has tried to introduce social sustainability in its organisation and why it has failed to do so. We show that the two others are far thinner in their claim of social sustainability. The case studies include interviews, workshops, grey publication and advertising material. We draw on the theoretical concepts of hybrid organisation, project based organisation, marketing and sustainable leadership approaches, in particular the concept of “ambivalent supplication” defined by Parkin as the moment when a company is willing to engage in a sustainable process but at the same time not quite ready to leave business as usual. The results underline the following issues: the competing strategic priorities, the complexity of implementing strategy across various business functions, the lack of recognition from the financial markets and the differing definitions of sustainability across cultures.


Cities around the world are facing challenges of rapid population growth, social inequality, environmental degradation and climate change. Within the realm of planning and policy, one answer to these issues has been the invention of certification systems to support the transition to a sustainable urban development. In the last ten years a number of certification systems for sustainable urban development on neighbourhood level have been developed, such as BREEAM Communities and LEED Neighborhood Development. Though an important
contribution for a systematic way to treat sustainability in urban development, such systems have been criticised in a number of criteria, among which an important deficiency is their lack of factors for social sustainability. A new Swedish certification system for neighbourhood level, Citylab Action, is since January 2016 being tested in a pilot round with twelve Swedish urban development projects. The aim of this study was therefore to investigate how three of the pilot projects worked with social sustainability and within which areas the Citylab Action Guide best could be developed to support socially sustainable urban development. The following research questions were formulated: 1. What is a relevant understanding of social sustainability for contemporary urban development drawing on the academic literature? 2. How do the selected Citylab Action projects understand and work with social sustainability? What are projects’ key challenges for creating socially sustainable neighbourhoods? 3. What are the projects’ experiences with Citylab Action in relation to their work with social sustainability? The thesis had a critical approach and took ground in a literature study, which rendered an analytical framework and the normative standpoint that social sustainability needs to be concerned with increasing social justice.


Since the emergence of widespread concerns over environmental degradation in the 1960s, a great deal of work has been put into the concept of environmental ‘sustainability’: how can it be defined and measured, and what policies and institutions can be implemented or promoted in order to achieve it? More recently, economic and social sustainability have been adopted as additional and interrelated concerns. Sustainability is now a broad multi-focal agenda, and terms such as ‘triple bottom line’ and ‘sustainable development’ are being used interchangeably. As a result, ‘sustainability’ is in danger of carrying so many implications and nuances that in order for it to be properly understood it must be defined whenever it is used. The Hawke Research Institute at the University of South Australia is adopting ‘sustainable societies’ as a common research agenda. This has prompted considerable discussion, and further elaboration of the term is anticipated. This working paper explores some of the current thinking around social sustainability and attempts to provide a framework for future discussions of the social sustainability agenda within the institute. I will be attempting to discuss social sustainability as distinct from environmental or economic sustainability. Previous all-encompassing definitions of sustainability that include all three aspects have been too broad to be usefully applied in specific contexts.
The vast and growing array of concepts, methods and tools in the sustainability field imply a need for a structuring and coordinating framework, including a unifying and operational definition of sustainability. One attempt at such framework began over 25 years ago and is now widely known as the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development. However, as with the larger sustainability field, the social dimension of this framework has been found to not be sufficiently science-based and operational and thus in need of further development. In this two-part series an attempt at a science-based, operational definition of social sustainability is presented. In this paper (part one), a systems-based approach to the social system is presented, as a basis for presenting a zero-hypothesis of principles for social sustainability in part two. Extensive literature studies as well as conceptual modelling sessions were performed and the social system was examined from various angles – complex adaptive system studies, human needs theory and other social sciences, and insights from these fields were woven together. The whole work was structured and guided by the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development. The focus of the study was on the essential aspects of the social system that need to be sustained (that cannot be systematically degraded) for it to be possible for people to meet their needs. These essential aspects were found to be trust, common meaning, diversity, capacity for learning and capacity for self-organization. Trust seems to be generally acknowledged to be the overriding aspect of a vital social system. A sense of common meaning is also stated by several authors as an important part of social capital and something that helps to keep a group or society together. Diversity is acknowledged as essential for resilience; in the human social system this can be interpreted as, e.g., diversity of personalities, ages, gender, skills. Capacity for learning and self-organization are also motivated from a resilience point of view by several authors. These results form a basis for the hypothesis for a definition of social sustainability presented in paper 2, which in turn is a step towards creating an enhanced support for strategic planning and innovation for sustainability.


This dissertation developed a General Theory of Sustainability relevant to the field of public administration. The dissertation is divided into nine chapters. The first chapter surveyed briefly the economic development models and concluded with an overview of a General Theory Building Method (GTBM) used to construct our General Theory of Sustainability (GTS). The second chapter explored the classical and modern conceptions of theory,
underlined the levels of theory, defined the general theory, and described its characteristics. Chapter three discussed the theoretical bases of the GTBM, pointing out the particularity of this method in bringing the components of a complex phenomenon together into one understandable whole. The fourth chapter explained this researcher's observations/experiences regarding the "Sustainability" phenomenon while working for the Ministry of Agriculture in Rwanda. The author presented further the main research question that served as a guide for the initial review of the sustainability literature. Then, the information compiled from the reviewed literature was used to frame a "Theoretical Vision of Sustainability," which guided "Stage II: Analysis." The author developed a Meta-Theoretical Sample of the Sustainability Literature in Chapter five; categorized and coded the sampled cases in Chapter 6; and, conducted the Intra-group Analyses and Inter-Group Analyses in Chapter 7. Three outcomes derived from these analyses: (1) Theoretical Boundary Analysis Outcome Set; (2) Constructs Analysis Outcome Set; and, (3) Interrelationship Analysis Outcome Set. Chapter 8 expounded on the analysis outcome sets to present the parts of the General Theory of Sustainability: Intra-Generational Equity Theoretical Boundary; Inter-Generational Equity Theoretical Boundary; Economic Sustainability Construct; Social Sustainability Construct; Political Sustainability Construct; Cultural Sustainability Construct; Ecological Sustainability Construct; and, Spiritual Sustainability Construct; and 28 sets of Interrelationships. Chapter nine examined the General Theory of Sustainability's implications for policy analysis and development management, and emphasized the relevance of future interdisciplinary research.


There is a need to develop a clearer understanding of what the social pillar of sustainable development means and how it relates to the environmental pillar. This article contributes to this process by presenting a conceptual framework that identifies four overarching social concepts and links them to environmental imperatives. These concepts are: public awareness, equity, participation, and social cohesion. The framework builds on concepts and policy objectives outlined in research on international sustainable development indicators and the social sustainability literature. The social pillar can be expanded to include environmental, international, and intergenerational dimensions. This framework can then be used to examine how states and organizations understand the social pillar and its environmental links.

In the context of the conceptual and analytical discussion of operationalising sustainable development, institutional sustainability has so far not played a major role. The UN Commission for Sustainable Development decided in 1995 to develop indicators for assessing the progress which UN members had made with the implementation of Agenda 21. However, these indicators did not reflect the broader notion at institutions and neglected important institutional aspects that predetermine activities and policies. Yet, policy analysis showed that not just formal organisations help to support decision making. The paper explores the broader notion of institutions, including less formal, but powerful institutional structures and links them to sustainable development and good governance principles. The concluding section applies this approach to the European Union in order to assess, in general terms, the sustainability of its development and implications for the future structure of the EU.


Though the concept of sustainable development originally included a clear social mandate, for two decades this human dimension has been neglected amidst abbreviated references to sustainability that have focused on bio-physical environmental issues, or been subsumed within a discourse that conflated ‘development’ and ‘economic growth’. The widespread failure of this approach to generate meaningful change has led to renewed interest in the concept of ‘social sustainability’ and aspects thereof. A review of the literature suggests, however, that it is a concept in chaos, and we argue that this severely compromises its importance and utility. The purpose of this paper is to examine this diverse literature so as to clarify what might be meant by the term social sustainability and highlight different ways in which it contributes to sustainable development more generally. We present a threefold schema comprising: (a) ‘development sustainability’ addressing basic needs, the creation of social capital, justice and so on; (b) ‘bridge sustainability’ concerning changes in behaviour so as to achieve bio-physical environmental goals and; (c) ‘maintenance sustainability’ referring to the preservation – or what can be sustained – of socio-cultural characteristics in the face of change, and the ways in which people actively embrace or resist those changes. We use this tripartite of social sustainabilities to explore ways in which contradictions and complements between them impede or promote sustainable development, and draw upon housing in urban areas as a means of explicating these ideas.

Social sustainability is a new strand of discourse on sustainable development. It has developed over a number of years in response to the dominance of environmental concerns and technological solutions in urban development and the lack of progress in tackling social issues in cities such as inequality, displacement, liveability and the increasing need for affordable housing. Even though the Sustainable Communities policy agenda was introduced in the UK a decade ago, the social dimensions of sustainability have been largely overlooked in debates, policy and practice around sustainable urbanism. However, this is beginning to change. A combination of financial austerity, public sector budget cuts, rising housing need, and public and political concern about the social outcomes of regeneration, are focusing attention on the relationship between urban development, quality of life and opportunities. There is a growing interest in understanding and measuring the social outcomes of regeneration and urban development in the UK and internationally. A small, but growing, movement of architects, planners, developers, housing associations and local authorities advocating a more ‘social’ approach to planning, constructing and managing cities. This is part of an international interest in social sustainability, a concept that is increasingly being used by governments, public agencies, policy makers, NGOs and corporations to frame decisions about urban development, regeneration and housing, as part of a burgeoning policy discourse on the sustainability and resilience of cities. This paper describes how social sustainability is emerging as a practice in urban regeneration in the UK and draws on Social Life’s work in improving the social outcomes of development for communities. It includes a detailed assessment of experimental work carried out in 2011 for the Berkeley Group, in partnership with the University of Reading, to develop a social sustainability measurement framework, which will enable Berkeley to evaluate community strength and quality of life in regard to new housing developments.

HISTORY

This article analyses the political and ideological transformations underlying the gradual privatisation and deregulation of the mid-twentieth-century Keynesian model of housing provision in Sweden. We identify a series of three political and ideological shifts in housing policy and urban form since the 1930s: regulating Folkhem housing, deregulating Folkhem housing, and back to business in housing. We argue that even though the Folkhem parole of 'housing for all' differs extensively from the current situation where the market is 'housing the privileged', segregation trends have, from the Folkhem to the post-welfare period, been shaped by both state interventions and market forces. Second, we argue that there is a continuing trend through which newly constructed housing has metamorphosed from a basic human right for the working class into an expression of individual distinction and 'style' for the upper middle and middle classes. While privileged classes, more than ever before in modern Swedish housing history, have the possibility to choose new forms of housing, the most impoverished groups live in residual and often stigmatised peripheral housing areas. One main conclusion is that recent forms of housing for privileged groups signal a cultural and ideological shift towards new, more elitist conceptions of housing and privilege.

Cities around the world are facing challenges of rapid population growth, social inequality, environmental degradation and climate change. Within the realm of planning and policy, one answer to these issues has been the invention of certification systems to support the transition to a sustainable urban development. In the last ten years a number of certification systems for sustainable urban development on neighbourhood level have been developed, such as BREEAM Communities and LEED Neighborhood Development. Though an important contribution for a systematic way to treat sustainability in urban development, such systems have been criticised in a number of criteria, among which an important deficiency is their lack of factors for social sustainability. A new Swedish certification system for neighbourhood level, Citylab Action, is since January 2016 being tested in a pilot round with twelve Swedish urban development projects. The aim of this study was therefore to investigate how three of the pilot projects worked with social sustainability and within which areas the Citylab Action Guide best could be developed to support socially sustainable urban development. The following research questions were formulated: 1. What is a relevant understanding of social sustainability for contemporary urban development drawing on the academic literature? 2. How do the selected Citylab Action projects understand and work with social sustainability? What are projects’ key challenges for creating socially sustainable neighbourhoods? 3. What are the projects’ experiences with Citylab Action in relation to their work with social sustainability? The thesis had a critical approach and took ground in a literature study, which rendered an analytical framework and the normative standpoint that social sustainability needs to be concerned with increasing social justice.


The first part of the study concerns the concept "sustainable renovation". Four parts are identified and then used in the case study: environmental sustainability (including energy efficiency and choice of materials); social sustainability (interpreted as that the current tenants should be able to stay in the area), economic sustainability (the the project does not have to be subsidized and that there is no increase in cost for the social authorities) and finally a new interpretation that is called technical sustainability, which means that solutions with long term reliability is chosen even if this is not necessarily best from an economic and environmental perspective. The second part of the study applies this framework to analyze the renovation strategy of a municipal housing company in the suburbs of Stockholm. This
case was chosen because they had clear social ambitions and offered the tenants three alternative renovation options called mini, midi and maxi. Most tenants chose the mini-alternative and this meant that they could afford to stay and that there was not any increase in the cost for the social authorities. An investment analysis showed that the mini-alternative had a positive net present value, but that the midi/maxi alternative where more profitable. The company had no specific environmental focus and energy use was only reduced with 8%. Technological sustainability was more important for the company. As a conclusion the study shows that a sustainable renovation is possible but that there are a number of conflicts between the different dimensions of sustainability. Giving more weight to environmental sustainability would increase cost and rents which create problems from a social perspective. From an economic perspective the midi/maxi alternatives were more profitable but then some households would have to move out because too high rents.


Purpose – This work is initiated under the premise that reliable evaluation methods are necessary to ensure investments in energy conservation, and the purpose of this paper is to contribute to that literature. It describes some pilot changes and their impact in an actual field study oriented toward upgrading municipal public housing (MPH) units.

Design/methodology/approach – The research for this paper was connected to an MPH refurbishment project situated in northern Sweden. The overall energy efficiency goal within the project was a 40-50 percent reduction in the supplied energy for central electricity, domestic hot water and space heating. In order to evaluate if these goals were feasible, a measurement system was installed in a pilot building and in a neighboring building used as a reference. The evaluation was conducted by comparing the post-retrofit performance of the pilot building with the performance of the reference building when it was kept in its initial state (a comparison possible because both buildings had initial similarities). Findings – Impacts could be quantified insofar as a reference (control) building in the same environment was sustained for comparison purposes. A 43 percent improvement was observed in energy utilization in the pilot building compared to its reference companion (99.8 vs 174.5 kWh/m2 per year). When the approach described herein was applied to new construction, the present goal of 65 kWh/m2 was approached as measured by Swedish standards. Practical implications – Results should be of interest to academics in the housing field, professionals involved in refurbishment and residents themselves, renting MPH flats. Originality/value – This study is unique in the following ways: first, it really was a field experiment with a control, thus it did not have any exogenous interference in interpreting
results. To the best of our knowledge, this is the first study of its kind. The second interesting characteristic was that results were subsequently used in the refurbishment of other buildings in the complex and in the construction of others. The major value of the paper may be associated with its timing. It comes at a time when the Kyoto agreement has raised concerns about sustainability, but also at a time when many buildings are facing a need for refurbishment.


This book presents the history of modern architecture in Swedish housing. It is essential reading, especially at a time when a lack of accommodation is having such a brutal impact on Swedish society. However, this has not always been the case. Decisive public policies implemented during the 20th century led to an exemplary democratisation process of housing, unparalleled in terms of equality and inclusiveness. The first part of the book presents an overview of housing responses in Sweden. It dissects the housing question, describing it as a multidimensional phenomenon that cannot be addressed without considering social, political and economic circumstances. The second part compiles texts and materials from the exhibition Bo. Nu. Då: Bostadsfrågor och svar under 99 år (Housing. Now. Then: 99 Years of Housing Issues and Responses) held at ArkDes in 2016 and curated by Dan Hallemar. Based on the rich ArkDes collections, the book features examples of architectural solutions to the housing question from 1917 to the present. 99 Years of the Housing Question in Sweden brings together different perspectives, contributions, accounts and critiques from specialists and citizens alike, each illustrating in its own way how modern Swedish housing and society have developed and evolved hand in hand. The result is an important but relatively unknown discourse on the role of housing in the construction of the welfare state which offers vital lessons for today’s world.


In Europe, the development of housing designs which address the needs of people with disabilities began some 30 years ago with specialised housing solutions, and simple adaptations. They addressed the needs of wheelchair users, in particular. Building legislation and welfare legislation (e.g., rental subsidies) supported the building of this special housing, which enabled a higher degree of integration in the community for citizens with disabilities. The past ten to fifteen years, however, has seen a paradigmatic change in many European countries with the introduction and refinement of so-called Lifetime Adaptable Housing standards within mainstream housing. In this approach, the goal has become one of ensuring that new-build and renovated housing stock is technically capable - at low cost - of accommodating the widest possible range of user needs, that is, for persons with all types of disabilities, families with small children and seniors. This paper gives an overview of
European experiences in bringing disability access standards to mainstream housing, based on a survey of eighteen countries. The paper documents the existence of a variety of technical standards as well as differing economic incentives and legislative powers between the countries. The paper concludes that new partnerships between builders, architects and organisations of people with disabilities have advanced the practice of building adaptable housing considerably. Yet, there is considerable scope for technical research and development targeted towards new, flexible housing types.

POLICIES


The issue of residential segregation has been on the Swedish political agenda since the early 1970s. This paper analyses the background for this interest, presents some basic features of socio-economic and ethnic residential segregation, and discusses some fundamental contextual properties regarding the Swedish welfare state, its institutional set-up and changes in housing and other policies that have affected the conditions for segregation processes. Three more specific anti-segregation policies are also identified and analysed: housing and social mix policy (first initiated in the 1970s); the refugee dispersal policy (initiated in the 1980s); and the area-based urban policy (initiated in the 1990s). Of these three, the last two have a clear ethnic focus while mix policies primarily aim for socio-economic and demographic mix. The analysis shows that none of the policies have managed to affect levels of segregation more than marginally, the reasons being ineffective implementation (the mix policy), failures in the design (the refugee dispersal policy) or conflicting aims inherent in the policy (area-based interventions).


This article deals with how sustainable initiatives enfolds in practice by a rich empirical case of the city of Gothenburg in western Sweden. Here a two-year project of drafting vision and strategies for the city was completed with the aim to create a sustainable future city. The article highlights the hidden side of sustainability work and contributes to the growing literature of critical engagement with sustainability practice. The article demonstrates that, despite good intentions to create a sustainable city, practical considerations can hinder agreement on how to act, where one problem is the strive for consensus in a setting in which consensus is not, and should not be, possible. Instead, the risk is that the sustainability work will become mired in symbolic battles as the deadline approaches. (C) 2014 Elsevier Ltd. All rights reserved.
Housing policies have passed through many permutations in the last 50 years, based on differing, even conflicting, approaches that, if we were totally truthful, have not really solved the housing problems faced by the majority of the world's population. For most people, remembering that over half the world's population subsists on less than $2 per day, the challenge of housing is a simple one: the need for a healthy shelter at an affordable price. In recent years, the concept of sustainability has become central not just in housing policy, but in the consideration of human settlements, employment, infrastructure, transportation and urban services. In fact, the concept of sustainability may be one of the most over-used and misunderstood urban policy component in use today. This paper attempts to clarify the concept of sustainability, leading to what is hopefully an operational definition that can be used to measure progress toward this desirable state. The ideas developed are then applied to the field of housing policies, that is, the guidance that governments can give to housing providers, whether they be commercial, public or self-builders, placing housing activity within the overall framework of the sustainability of human settlements and national and international economic activity. In the course of this discussion, certain criteria for sustainability will emerge, including the need for poverty reduction and slum eradication, as well as the broader goal of environmental preservation and the importance of developing channels for making viable finance available. Of course, without improvements in employment opportunity and incomes, whatever is done within the housing policy area is likely to lead to disappointing results.

In this article a 'sustainable urban development' programme in Sweden (Delegation for Sustainable Cities, 2008-2012) is analysed, with a particular focus on the social dimension, and in the light of a commonly held assumption of a general shift in politics over time ?from government to governance??. However, on closer examination the programme comes out as something quite different. Taking ?policy community? as our conceptual point of departure the article first portrays how post-war housing policy in Sweden was implemented jointly by a potent central government, strong local governments, public housing companies and major interest organisations. The Delegation for Sustainable Cities, on the other hand, was launched as ?a national arena for sustainable urban development? with a multifaceted mission, including the production and dissemination of knowledge through best practice; the promotion of multi-actor dialogue and coordination; and the use and export of green
technology. Implementation of the programme was delegated to a small number of projects in selected housing districts. In relation to the narrative “from government to governance?”, the Delegation for Sustainable Cities rather indicates the opposite, i.e. government steering by a combination of structural non-intervention, rhetorical flair and selective fragmentation into project-bound issue networks. The sustainability discourse thus turned out to be a perfect umbrella for the fragmented implementation structure of the Delegation for Sustainable Cities programme. Instead of a tight, multi-level, national governance structure (policy community) we thus have a case of governing at some distance by a combination of what in recent literature have been labelled the Regulatory State and the Networked Polity.


This report examines underlying motives and forces of the West-Link project in Gothenburg Sweden, understood as a case of contemporary politically governed urban transformation. It analyzes and compares similarities and differences of contemporary international patterns of urban transformations as well as the continuity or discontinuity in relation to previous local transformations. The report also maps and analyzes different networks that resist the project and their overarching critique, which in turn is compared with contemporary international critique of urban transformation. The case of the West-Link is studied from a critical discourse perspective inspired by a Foucauldian approach of analyzing dispositives or “apparatus”. Meaning, how motives and forces of the West-Link project is part of historical and on-going heterogenous discourse-network-complexes that produces reality and becomes part of its materialization. The report draws upon previous research on the contemporary governing ideology of neoliberalism and advance liberal urban governance, as well as theoretical concepts such as “ribbon-development”, “place politics”, “gentrification”, and overarching critique of urban planners’ concept “sustainability” analyzed as an “empty master signifier” masking neoliberal agendas in the signifying order of text. The main result of the report is that the West-Link can be understood as a dispositive or “apparatus” that binds all the above historical and on-going heterogenous discourse-network-complexes together. In other words, the result shows that the West-Link is part of the overall global discourse of neoliberal urbanism and the implementing of advanced liberal urban governance in the context of Gothenburg.

Housing support policy for persons with disabilities who require access to 24-hour formal or informal support is changing throughout Australia. This is consistent with international trends including: independent living in generic housing; facilitating choices about where and with whom people live; individualised home-based support; and community integration. Are these trends leading to policies that are effective in the Australian context? This article presents a framework for analysing the effectiveness of new approaches to housing support using a rights perspective. The framework consists of four domains: client outcomes; administrative systems; service viability; and coordination between formal and informal carers. Applying the framework to six case studies found that they all aim to foster independence, while providing effective individualised, holistic housing support.

Grander, M. (2018). For the Benefit of Everyone?: Explaining the Significance of Swedish Public Housing for Urban Housing Inequality, Malmö University.

Housing has a special place in the Swedish welfare state. Ever since Gustav Möller, Minister for Social Affairs, in 1945 was handed the result of Bostadsociala utredningen, a state investigation on housing from a social perspective, housing has been a bearing pillar in the Swedish ‘Folkhem’. Since the post-war period, Swedish housing policy has been universal in the sense that housing consumers have not been categorized by income or living conditions. Instead, the policy has had the aim of ‘good housing for all’. The main instrument for achieving this goal—the figurehead of the universal housing policy—has been allmännyttan, the national model of public housing, constituted by municipal housing companies with the task of offering rental housing of high quality, for the benefit of everyone. This PhD thesis analyzes allmännyttan based on the observation that the contemporary housing situation is largely characterized by inequality. The housing consumer is to a lesser extent independent from inherited conditions: Access to housing and the characteristics of housing are increasingly dependent on economic resources. The dissertation highlights the role of public housing in this development. The municipal housing companies and the context they exist in have changed over the past decades through gradual political reforms and alignment with European competition law. Such a development might influence the ability of allmännyttan to contribute to keeping housing inequality at bay. The purpose of the thesis is thus to study the potential and actual significance of allmännyttan for housing inequality in Swedish cities. The thesis is grounded in critical realist ontology and analyzes how and why (or why not) allmännyttan’s latent mechanisms to counteract inequality are actualized. Through studies of municipal housing companies throughout Sweden, including eleven in-depth case studies, the thesis seeks to answer whether the contemporary allmännytta counteracts housing inequality, or if it rather contributes to a more unequal housing provision.

There is a need to develop a clearer understanding of what the social pillar of sustainable development means and how it relates to the environmental pillar. This article contributes to this process by presenting a conceptual framework that identifies four overarching social concepts and links them to environmental imperatives. These concepts are: public awareness, equity, participation, and social cohesion. The framework builds on concepts and policy objectives outlined in research on international sustainable development indicators and the social sustainability literature. The social pillar can be expanded to include environmental, international, and intergenerational dimensions. This framework can then be used to examine how states and organizations understand the social pillar and its environmental links.


The elderly population of the United States is large and growing rapidly. Since disability rates increase with age, population aging will bring substantial increases in the number of disabled persons and have a significant impact on the nation's housing needs. Purpose: We demonstrate the impact of population growth and aging on the projected number of households with at least one disabled resident and estimate the probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will have at least one disabled resident during its expected lifetime. Methods: We calculate disability rates using two alternative measures of disability and construct projections of the number of households with at least one disabled resident. We develop and apply a technique for estimating the probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will house at least one disabled resident using data on the average lifespan of those units, the average length of residence for households occupying those units, and the projected proportion of households with at least one disabled resident. Results and conclusions: Under our medium assumptions, we project that 21% of households will have at least one disabled resident in 2050 using our first disability measure (physical limitation) and 7% using our second (self-care limitation). We estimate that there is a 60% probability that a newly built single-family detached unit will house at least one disabled resident during its expected lifetime using our first measure, and a 25% probability using our second measure. When disabled visitors are accounted for, the probabilities rise to 91% and 53%, respectively. Given the desire of most people to live independently for as long as possible, these numbers reflect a large and growing need for housing units with features that make
them accessible to disabled persons. Takeaway for practice: The lack of accessible housing provides an opportunity for homebuilders to develop and market products that meet the needs of an aging population. In light of concerns about the civil rights of people with disabilities and the high public cost of nursing home care, housing accessibility is a critical issue for planners and policymakers as well. We believe planners should broaden their vision of the built environment to include the accessibility of the housing stock. Research support: None.


Housing plays an important role in the development of welfare policies and also often in achieving sustainability goals. There exists, however, implementation gaps between policies and practices in urban development and housing. Here it should be possible to draw lessons from policy implementations in the past. In this article we explore the strategies of the Swedish central government in implementing a social housing policy in the mid-20th century. The policy was successfully implemented in that it resulted in the rapid expansion and modernisation of the Swedish apartment stock in the late 1960s and early 1970s, and acute housingshortages and poor housing standards were overcome. The main lesson learned from the Swedish case study is the critical role of the central government in implementation through the strategic coordination of policy aims, instruments, stakeholders and interests throughout the implementation process. Although the central government could have used hard, almost authoritarian policy instruments to force the realisation of the new policy, it mainly used soft policy tools and focused on coordination. In the contemporary networked governance setting, the central government, like no other player, still has the potential to guide and coordinate implementation processes for the realization of sustainable housing visions.

REVIEWS


The involvement of private sector in offering affordable housing price for the public is very crucial in the long run. It is relevant as the developing country like Malaysia is experiencing the arising of population and urbanisation process. Therefore, a well established method such as the approach of utilising the prefabrication technology must be strategised by the stakeholders albeit many issues regarding the practice have been debated in the construction and real estate industry. Thus, this literature study is conducted to explore the arising issues in prefabrication technology so that the strategies can be well adapted by all the parties involved to ensure the sustainable supply of the affordable houses. For the purpose of this study, a systematic literature review was reviewed based on 60 papers published between
the years of 2003-2017. The analysis found that the prefabrication technology issues was focus on five main themes: assemble, workmanship, financial, logistic and project information system. Hence, the issued could be further strategised by various stakeholder and drive by three main components which are people, process and technology. The findings provide sensible technologies utilisation related to the supply chain systems in the development of affordable houses. All in all, although there were some issues in the practice of prefabrication technology, the more holistic driver approach is needed from all parties towards the sustainable supply of affordable housing with prefabrication technology.


The notion of smart cities needs to be broadened beyond the fascination with technology to incorporate an approach that invests in the growth of human, social, and environmental capitals to generate ‘smart sustainable cities’. One of the most recent debates in this context is digital citizen participation. This study aimed to identify the potential role of Information and Communications Technology (ICT) in citizen participation as a major contributor towards ‘smart sustainable cities’. A systematic and exhaustive literature review, coupled with critical content analysis, was conducted. The focus was on a central research question: What kind of relationship is fostered in the literature between sustainability and digital citizen participation, and how can ICT contribute to social sustainability through digital citizen participation (DCP)? The results suggested a connection between smart sustainable cities and DCP. This article is concluded by emphasizing the role of ICT in citizen participation processes and its significant contribution to social sustainability and the creation of more-than-human smart cities.


A renewed focus on innovation in the building sector calls for research strategies that will strengthen the position of holistic architectural knowledge for the benefit of a sustainable built environment. This paper presents research that focuses on future homes that will enable radical reduced resource use related to living. In order to reduce the environmental impact of living and dwelling we need to address not only buildings and physical structures but also user behavior and lifestyle choices. Contemporary housing development is defined by a view of the housing market based on surveys among limited groups of people and not on actual needs and wishes representing the wider
population. Furthermore, the actual housing market does not deliver structures that will enable sustainable changes to the environmental impact of living. The aim for the paper is to define architectural research for future homes in relation to a planned purpose built Living Lab. Research should support a radical reduction of the environmental impact of living. A review of 20th century housing research and development in Sweden and France provides insights from previous successes as well as failures in the field. Results point to the importance of involving end-users and to build on solid understanding of the use of homes. In addition, already explored innovation regarding space use can with advantage be repeated, as contemporary users are likely to react differently than users did in the past. We propose a three-step model for research starting with empirical studies of the use of homes among a large variety of households (i.e. regarding size, age groups, cultures etc.), prototyping of new architectural concepts (e.g. related to layout, interiors, equipment, products etc.) and test and evaluation of these in the Living Lab.


Formas, the Swedish Research Council for Environment, Agricultural Sciences and Spatial Planning, has, on the Swedish Government’s behalf, conducted a proactive survey of research in the field of sustainable urban development. This was undertaken in close collaboration with the other authorities entrusted with the remit, namely the National Board of Housing, Building and Planning, the National Heritage Board and the Swedish Museum of Architecture. The remit was to shed light on the social and cultural dimensions of sustainable urban development and its links with neighbouring research fields. The research overview was compiled, on Formas’ behalf, by Consultant Lena From in the autumn of 2010. The overview takes as its jumping-off point another research overview, State of the Art: Sustainable Urban Development in Sweden, which Formas commissioned from the same Consultant in 2004.* The purpose, then as now, was to present a picture of Sweden’s research landscape on the subject of sustainable urban development, but also a picture of the terms of research and what the research community and practitioners concerned regarded as urgent research needs. An additional purpose has been to learn from and follow up the findings presented in the 2004 report and by doing so to highlight the changes occurring in the field since then. As a result of the present overview concentrating on the social and cultural dimensions of sustainable urban development, the present overview has expanded into partly new fields of research, thereby shedding light on urban issues and the structural complexity of urban development.

Considering the lack of clear guidance regarding the way business could include social sustainability into their operations, the objective of this research project was to study the functionality of social sustainability tools which are used worldwide by business practitioners and assess how useful these tools are to overcome barriers related with social aspects of sustainability as they are described in the Framework for Strategic Sustainable Development (FSSD): health, influence, competence, impartiality and meaning-making. A qualitative method analysis was selected, based upon direct content analysis. Elements from the 5 Level Framework (5LF) and the FSSD were used for designing two review processes to analyse selected social sustainability tools. The 5LF is useful for planning in complex systems, while the FSSD is designed to address complex challenges and recognize opportunities which aim to sustainability. The findings from the research show which tools, based on their functionality, can help a company move towards sustainability and illustrate how they address different social sustainability aspects. Based on these findings, recommendations were developed which included key features of the selected social sustainability tools. These recommendations could help business practitioners to choose the most appropriate tool for specific business context depending on the company’s needs.


There is a need to develop a clearer understanding of what the social pillar of sustainable development means and how it relates to the environmental pillar. This article contributes to this process by presenting a conceptual framework that identifies four overarching social concepts and links them to environmental imperatives. These concepts are: public awareness, equity, participation, and social cohesion. The framework builds on concepts and policy objectives outlined in research on international sustainable development indicators and the social sustainability literature. The social pillar can be expanded to include environmental, international, and intergenerational dimensions. This framework can then be used to examine how states and organizations understand the social pillar and its environmental links.


Urban renewal and sustainable development are two popular issues in both policy agenda and academia. Although their importance has been increasingly recognized, an integrated
review covering sustainability, planning, and urban renewal has yet to be produced. Based on 81 journal papers, this paper presents a critical review of recent studies on sustainable urban renewal over the period 1990-2012. The review focuses on the planning sub-system and the social sub-system of urban renewal in terms of the evaluation of sustainability. The complexity of achieving sustainable urban renewal is emphasized and discussed. To better clarify the mechanism behind the urban renewal process and improve urban sustainability, recommendations of future research directions are also provided.