

European Garden Heritage Network - Award 2015
Award ceremony in Hamburg 4th September 2015

**Laudation for category: “LARGE SCALE GREEN
CONCEPTS”**

By

**Mariachiara Pozzana, Italy
Member of the jury, EGHN**

Winner in the 4th category:

**“Green Malmö” as a successful and strategic development of
parks and public spaces.**

created by

City of Malmo, Sweden

We just love reading good stories. Most of them are created by authors and film directors doing their utmost to please us with thrilling, romantic, sentimental and even realistic stories. But storytelling is not only created within the field of art. Another discipline which is more and more in focus for storytelling is urban planning. Of course urban planning still is about investigations and surveys, social and economic analysis, scientific reports, planning documents, master planning and strategies solving upcoming problems and realizing visions. But urban planning is

also about those stories composed over time by many different competencies and responsibilities. It is about the lively and fruitful interaction between citizens and city governance.

One of the cities with such a story is Malmö in southern Sweden. Malmö was not on anybody's lips some 25 – 30 years ago when depression and despair was its daily life. But the city did face its challenges: unemployment, bad economy, segregation, sustainability and need for climate change. Malmö did say: our challenge can be used as a tool for necessary development and can in the end give us a more prosperous future.

A comprehensive planning process did start and is still ongoing. The city of today is a new city; it really has changed: increasing population, many new entrepreneurs, expanding academic education, many public-private partnerships and a new confidence and pride. It is almost a boost to live in Malmö today.

Within the planning process green visions and objectives have played a very important and strategic role. The green was a positive historic heritage (large old and beautiful city parks) and was now used to develop a modern up to day-feature and character of the city. But more important – developing the green has engaged and involved people themselves in the process of change. It has brought hope and has given many inspiring solutions and outcomes.

Let us tell you of some best practices in Malmö. Malmö did say that children's environment is even more important than adult's. A number of thematic playgrounds with different design concepts have realized children's wishes and dreams. The overall vision, which is bringing children and their families together, has

succeeded. Visits in other city districts are also an outcome – helping the breaking of social barriers.

For young people some very spectacular skating arenas and events have been a similar tool for increasing use and sharing a deeper responsibility for public spaces and parks. The skating arena “Stapelbäddsparken” was created in close cooperation with youngsters in the city and is today a venue well-known in the world-community of skaters.

The park is located in the new city district Western harbor which has been developed since 2001. This district shows us a number of very distinguished parks, squares, green roofs, playgrounds, canals and beaches. Interesting landscape architecture, quality in construction and maintenance has given the city a new valuable green structure. Some of them are today valuable public icons - almost as important as the world-famous building “Turning Torso” by Sergio Calatrava.

Behind all projects realized and in pipeline today is a strategic work with a visionary green plan and several programs and action plans for important aspects as a tree planting, restoration of historic parks, flowering and lightning as well as for urban sports and art – mentioning some. Behind programs and action plans is of course the work by skilled planners, landscape architects and engineers. Most important is the interest and demand from the inhabitants and visions from politicians for a new and better green future. This strategic work has all together already given Malmö a number of national and international awards.

Your work in Malmö is ongoing and never-ending. Just now you have focus on a new large 90 hectare park under construction at

the urban fringe. Its first phase, the Millennium forest, opened last year bringing meeting places and beautiful green experiences to people living in neighbor housing areas from the sixties and seventies. Our conclusion is clear – great visions, strategic objectives and skilled staff work hand in hand in Malmö.

Congratulations to the City of Malmo. Your storytelling is obviously realistic but in our eyes also inspiring and fantastic. You have written a “novel in urban and green planning” we just love to read. The name of the novel? Inhabitants name the city (and the novel) as “City of the parks” emphasizing it’s importance for daily life.

We congratulate all civil servants and politicians involved. We especially congratulate all inhabitants who with pleasure and confidence can experience and enjoy both an existing and a future blooming green environment! Malmo is a best practice showing that visions indeed can be realized!

We welcome our Swedish friend and colleague Mr. Ola Melin who is the Director of Urban Environment and responsible for the very successful green work in Malmö. Welcome Ola to receive the EGHN-award 2015!