

# The Folkpark Valhall

## GATHERING AROUND CULTURE

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«Art and culture are places where we can meet one another and ourselves, both physically and through its content. This is incredibly important in the increasingly segregated lives we lead, where meeting places and the common points of departure are dwindling. Culture strengthens society in general. By sharing one another's stories and life, portrayed through performing arts, we boost people's ability to understand one another's prerequisites, thus reducing the gap between us. The ability to listen and observe is developed, which hones our empathy skills. We can grow as human beings by recognizing something within us and receiving confirmation. The desire to tell a story and express oneself is stimulated. This strengthens the freedom of speech and democracy.»

Susanna Dahlberg

VD Regionteater Väst/CEO Regionteater Väst

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# Part One

## Introduction

# Introduction

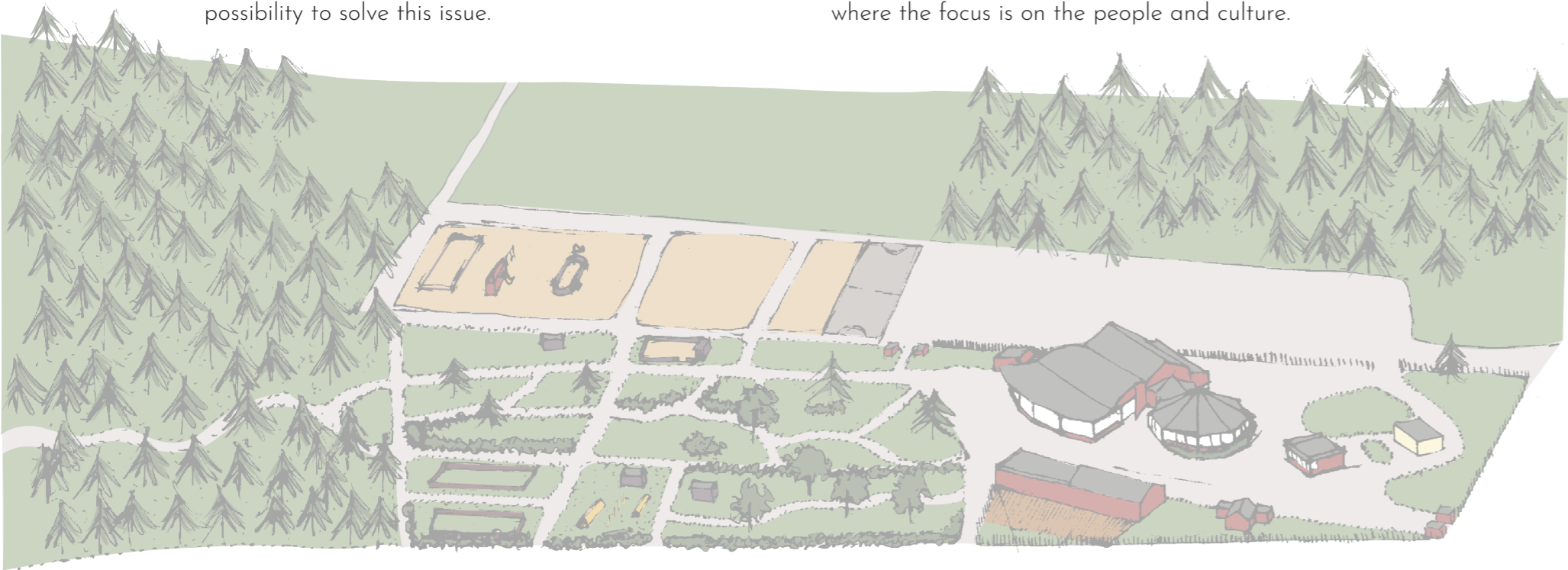
## Welcome to the New Folkpark Valhall in Bengtsfors!

In this project, we aim to create a strong meeting place in Bengtsfors town, offering a large variety of activities centered around a cultural hub. We want people from all generations to come and meet, share memorable moments, have fun, relax, have a “fika” together, and so much more. Our goal is to give the inhabitants a place to love and care for, a place that belongs to everyone willing to participate in its sustainable development.

Bengtsfors municipality is currently lacking meeting places and opportunities for social interactions or cultural activities. However, the communal engagement, existing structures and cultural heritage give the possibility to solve this issue.

Moreover, because of the Covid-19 pandemic we are kept away from our colleagues, friends and family. We are more than ever in need of real social interactions. The cultural field is also very impacted by the pandemic. Many cultural events must be cancelled or held online. Therefore, once this situation is over, we will be craving places outside of our homes to meet other people and attend all sorts of events.

For these reasons, we decided to look into the Valhall park and try to give it a new sense of purpose. We aim to work with the already existing buildings in order to make a sustainable use of the site, and make it a park where the focus is on the people and culture.



# About culture

## WHAT IS CULTURE?

According to The Swedish Arts Council, cultural activities are defined as activities within performing arts, visual arts, architecture, design, film, media, literature, arts and crafts, handicrafts and archives and museums (Bengtsfors municipality, 2014).

## THE IMPORTANCE OF CULTURE

Culture is strongly connected to history and local traditions. The cultural heritage tells stories about the society and the built environment in different times. Culture is also of importance for our identity and it contributes to a society that is open and creative, which is particularly important in rural areas. A strong cultural society attracts more cultural practitioners who can contribute with new influences and experiences (Bengtsfors municipality, 2016a). Culture has the power to build bridges between people and strengthen the sense of belonging and thereby creating more possibilities for social interaction (Bengtsfors municipality, 2014). Regardless of where you live, where you come from, age or gender, culture creates community, commitment, and confidence. An investment in culture, especially for children and youth, means an investment for a good future (Bengtsfors municipality, 2016b).

## BENGTSFORS MUNICIPALITY’S GOALS FOR CULTURE

Bengtsfors municipality strives to offer both professional cultural experiences, but also opportunities for own initiatives. The goals for culture in Bengtsfors should be characterized by democracy, gender equality, diversity and accessibility (Bengtsfors municipality, 2014).

On the right, five goals that are part of the cultural plan for children and youth in Bengtsfors are presented.

### Culture and entrepreneurship:

The goal is to let young people’s interests, knowledge and experiences take place. Bengtsfors municipality strives to create supportive meeting places and environments where people’s self-confidence and visions can grow.

### Culture and public health:

Children and youth feel good when they do things they enjoy in their spare time. Different activities can also encourage exercising, which is important for health. The municipality wants to provide a cultural life with a variety of activities, where there is something for everyone.

### Culture and accessibility:

Bengtsfors municipality wants to ensure that all children and young people who want to should have the opportunity to participate in local cultural activities. Regardless of where they live cultural activities should be available both in school and in their spare time.

### Culture as a tool for integration:

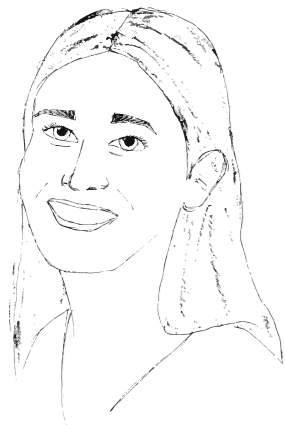
The opportunity to meet and share knowledge about culture should be given to children and youth. Culture is also a tool to welcome newcomers and creates a feeling of community.

### Culture and diversity:

Children and young people should be able to express their style through cultural practice. Bengtsfors municipality should be a place where people from different parts of the world can share knowledge and experiences, and thus develop the cultural life.

(Bengtsfors municipality, 2016b)

# About Us



**Pauline Lambert**  
Charleroi - Belgium

I completed my Bachelor's degree in architecture in Brussels and decided to do my Masters at Chalmers to improve my knowledge of sustainability in architecture. During my free time, I like to draw, sing, listen to music, knit, read, and so on. But most of all I love playing drama. Culture has always been an important part of my life, which explains my interest in the Valhall park. The potential this place has to become a cultural hub caught my attention when we visited it. I hope that through this project we will manage to strengthen the interest in culture in Bengtsfors.



**Katarina Karlkvist**  
Göteborg - Sweden

I did my Bachelor in architecture at Chalmers. My way into culture was when I started playing the flute. Later on I also started singing in a choir and taking singing lessons at my local Culture school. Nowadays I sing in a choir and have my main creative outlet through architecture. I was interested in working with the Valhall park because I believe the values a place like that holds are very important to a community. The main reason for me was that I have a personal connection to the park since my family is from Bengtsfors and my mother grew up next to the park. For me who grew up in Gothenburg it feels extra special to be doing a project like this in Bengtsfors.



**Josefin Nyman**  
Vänernborg - Sweden

I also did my Bachelor in architecture at Chalmers. My cultural background and biggest interest are connected to dancing. That is one of the reasons why I was interested in working with the Folkpark Valhall, since it used to be a place for dancing. Moreover, I see potential to create a meeting place that holds more activities and can give further values to the community. I want to give people the opportunity to express themselves and find something that makes them feel happy, whether it is through dancing or some other kind of art or activity. I believe that culture is valuable.

# Context

## STUDIO

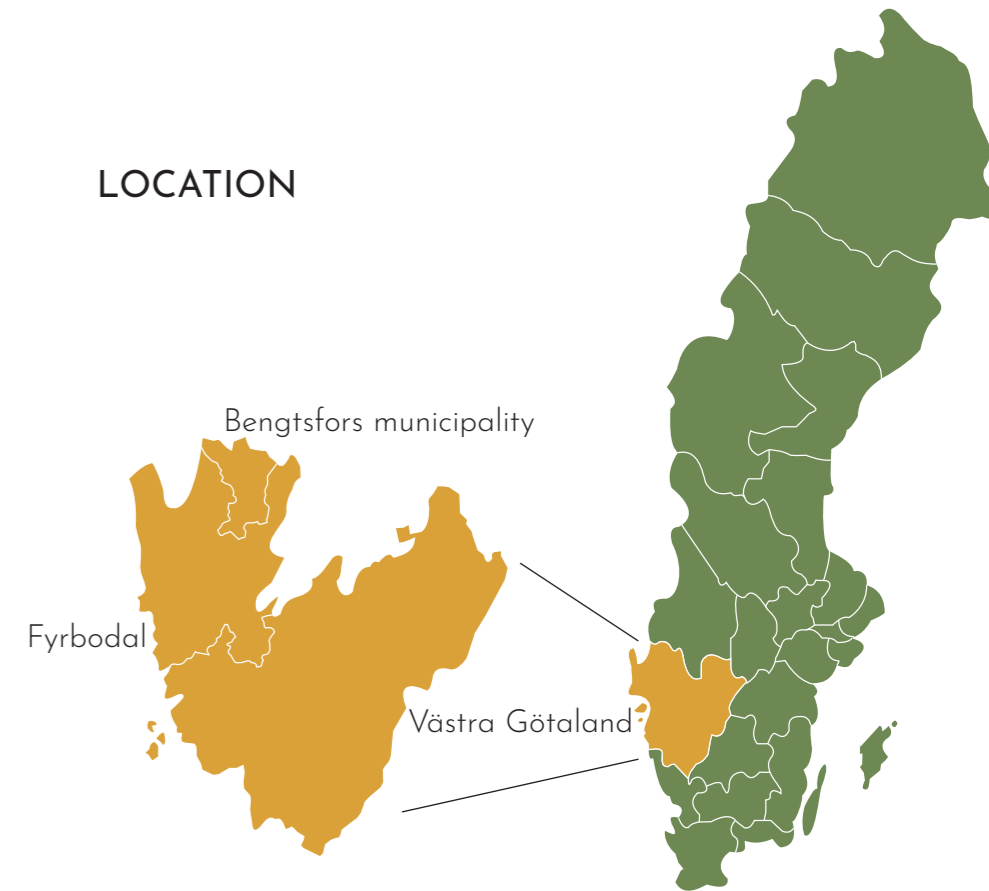
The *Planning and design for a sustainable development in a local context* studio is part of the Master programme *Architecture and Planning Beyond Sustainability* at Chalmers School of Architecture, in Gothenburg.

The purpose of this studio is to analyse a different municipality of the Västra Götaland region every year, to point out its qualities and issues and develop projects that might be beneficial for them in a sustainable perspective.

This year, the studio is working in Bengtsfors municipality and each group of students has based their project on a common analysis of the strengths, weaknesses, opportunities and threats the municipality is facing, as well as the sustainable directions.

The points of this analysis that were especially relevant to our group project are presented on the next pages.

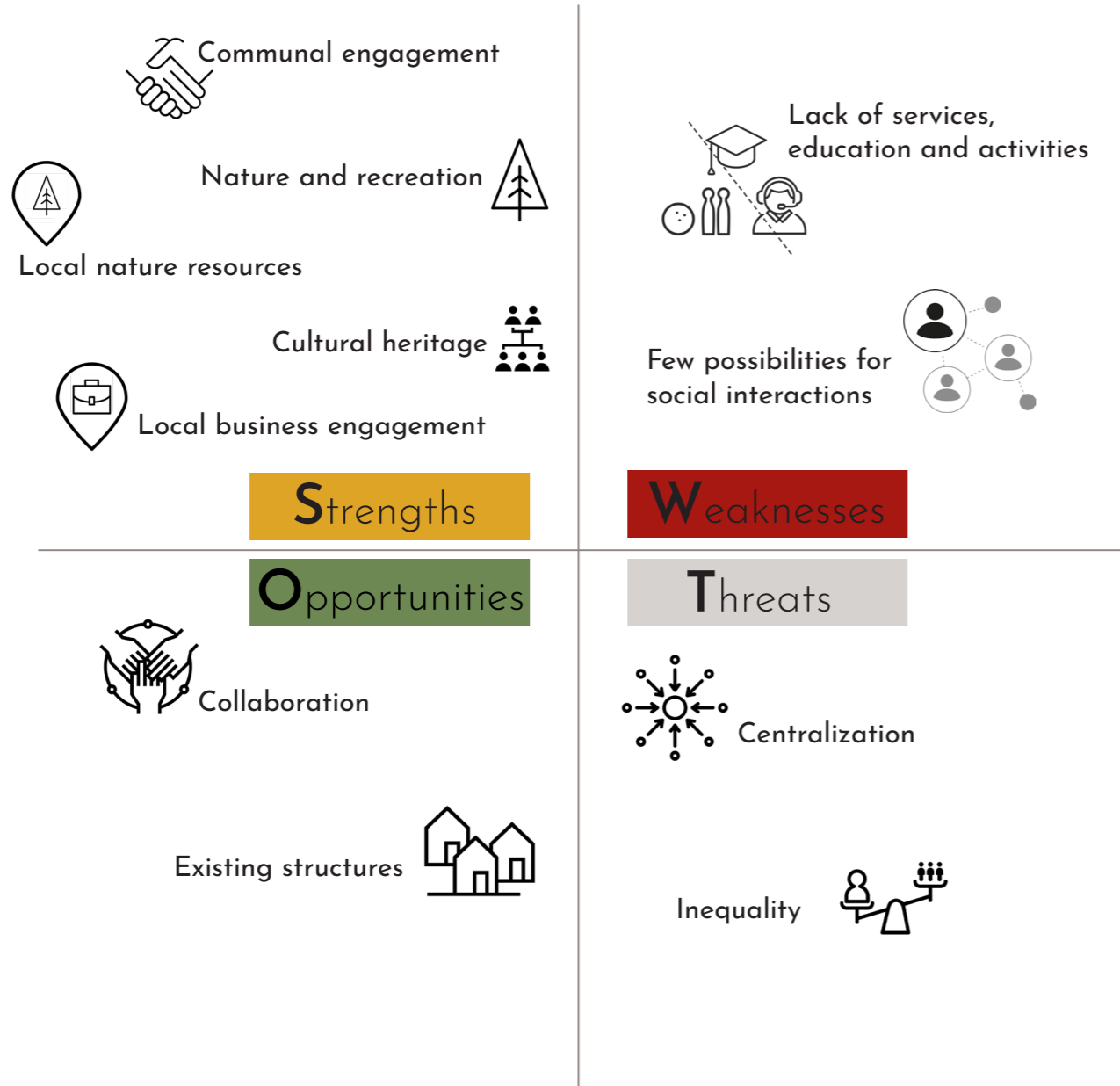
## LOCATION



Bengtsfors municipality is situated in the subregion Fyrbodalen. Fyrbodalen in turn is a part of the Västra Götaland region on the west coast of Sweden.

Bengtsfors has a peripheral location, both in regard to Västra Götaland and Fyrbodalen. However, it is closely located to both Värmland and Norway.

# SWOT



# Sustainable directions



## Development of local participation

Commitment to the local context gives a sense of responsibility and pride. A growing sense of responsibility creates a society where people care for each other and the landscape.

- » Include residents in decision-making processes
- » Create a forum for exchange of knowledge between the inhabitants and the towns in the municipality
- » Value local knowledge in decision-making processes
- » Encourage the positive commitments that already exist.



## Make nature available

Nature is a great asset in Bengtsfors municipality. By investing in and make green areas and lakes available, physical and mental health can be promoted among residents in Bengtsfors. In addition, nature is a great attraction for tourists.

- » Use nature to educate and create commitment to stop climate change
- » Create clear connections between the urban areas in the municipality and surrounding nature areas.
- » Promote physical health and exercise by developing mountain bike and hiking trails, camp fire area in the forest, canoe trials, orienteering, geocaching etc.
- » Market the fantastic nature in Bengtsfors as a destination for tourists

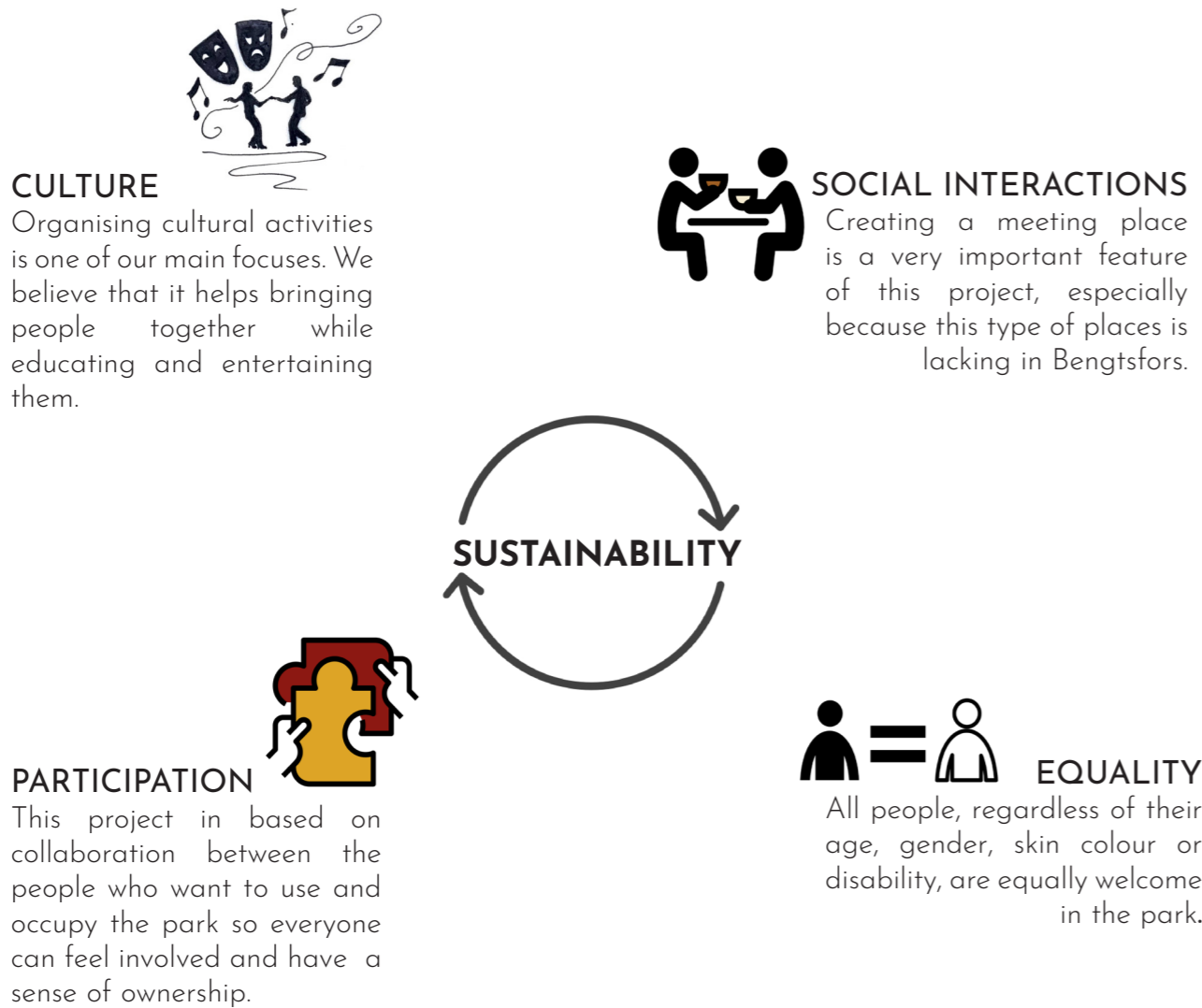


## Make use of existing physical resources

Through use of existing resources and materials, a connection to the local history is created when existing knowledge is strengthened. Emissions are reduced thanks to shorter transports and less new production.

- » Find new uses for abandoned buildings
- » Market/advertise and educate on reuse and recycling
- » Use, reuse and increase the attractiveness of local products and material
- » Spread resource awareness
- » Develop innovative and creative ways to use local resources and make them more attractive today and for the future

# Core values



# Objectives



After the common analysis in the course, we had a clear view of what our purpose would be with the Valhall park.

First of all, we want to provide the local associations and the inhabitants with a clear center where they can meet and take part in cultural events, workshops, exhibitions and so on. Most of these events would be hosted within the existing structures available on site. The buildings are not changed in the proposal but rather reprogrammed to meet the current needs of the population.

Secondly, we aim to make the stakeholders we intend to work with feel as involved as possible. We want them to feel that they own this place and that they should care for and respect it because it has become an important part of their lives. We do not only want them to feel involved, we want them to feel included and equally welcome in the park. Thus, we aim to offer a wide variety of activities and spaces, for all ages, interests and abilities.

Finally, we want to make this place more accessible than it is today, which means including more daily activities and functions; removing parts of the current fence and strengthening the connection between the park, the forest nearby and other important places in town.

The Covid situation put several obstacles on our path but it also made us be more resourceful and find other ways to achieve our goals. It also made us believe even more in the importance of places like Folkets parks.

# Delimitations

Before going further into this booklet, it is important to mention that due to the Covid-19 restrictions and our incapacity to properly visit the site, to meet and have workshops with different stakeholders as we would have liked to do at first, the project presented is more a conceptual and strategical proposal than a precise one.

We did not have access to enough information to develop something technically detailed. Therefore, what you will see in this booklet is a suggestion based on the analysis we conducted remotely, presenting a version of what the Valhall park could be, and not necessarily what it should be.

# Methods

In order to achieve the objectives and design the most relevant project, we used different methods to analyse the current situation:

- Lynch analysis
- Interviews
- Historical research and analysis
- DIVE analysis
- Survey
- Mapping of stakeholders

The initial ambitions for these analyses were unfortunately not achievable during the ongoing pandemic. However, they have been adapted to suit the current conditions while still providing as much information as possible.

These methods are explained in detail in the second part of this booklet.

## Part Two

### Analysis

# Lynch analysis

## WHAT IS A LYNCH ANALYSIS?

The Lynch analysis is a tool typically used in urban contexts. It focuses on how city image correlates to the ability to act and function effectively in spaces. The Lynch maps out barriers in the urban environment, paths that are important, landmarks that can be used as spatial references, nodes that appear in the environment and areas that have a specific character (K. Lynch, 1960).

## HOW IT WAS USED IN THIS PROJECT

For this project the Lynch concepts have been applied to a more rural setting and carried out from a distance due to the Covid-19 situation. The results surely would have been different if carried out on site, however this was the best we could achieve under these circumstances. To facilitate the analysis it was focused around the park; how the park can be accessed, what nodes and other important areas are in its proximity.

## RESULTS

Five barriers were marked. Two of them are related to the topography. As the section below shows, there is a quite steep hill between the town centre and the park. A third barrier was identified near the

water where there does not appear to be a direct access point to the larger road Floraleden leading through town, not even by foot, partly due to topography. Another one was the forest to the south of the park that does not have any accessible trails going through it. The last and most important barrier identified was the fence surrounding the park. This makes it highly inaccessible and not a natural part of the townscape.

The paths defined were focused around the park, mapping the ways of which you can reach it and the paths that might be relevant to connect the park to.

Two landmarks were identified: the park itself and Gammelgården on the mountain Majberget across the water from the park.

A few nodes were identified throughout the town centre and at the school Bengtsgården.

Two districts were marked, one at the park and one at the Långevi sports centre.

Topography of Bengtsfors Town

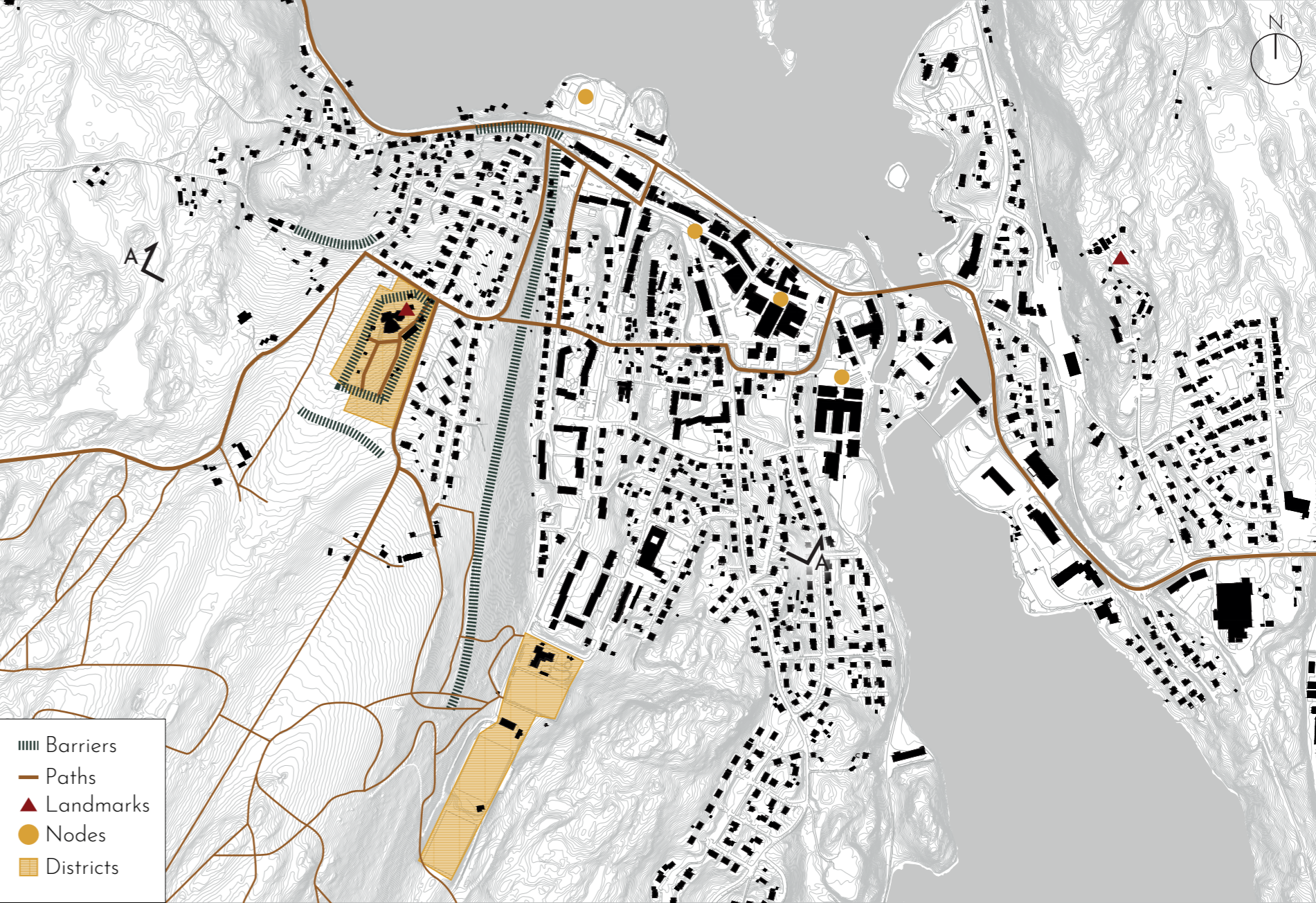


The Valhall park



Bengtsfors town centre

Landscape section A-A  
1:5000



- Barriers
- Paths
- Landmarks
- Nodes
- Districts

Map of Bengtsfors town  
1:10 000

0 200m 500m

# Lynch analysis conclusions

## Barriers

In order to make the park more accessible for the community some of the barriers would need to be altered or in some way incorporated into the design proposal, the fence and the forest being the main ones.

## Paths

There are many paths surrounding the park, coming from different directions. However, a large part of these paths are not connected to it. Connecting the existing paths to the park will increase the accessibility and the possibilities for walking around and inside the park.

## Landmarks

The Valhall park, like Gammelgården, the other landmark identified, holds cultural heritage values. Therefore, the park should be protected.

## Nodes

The nodes identified are focused in the town center and by the water. The park has paths leading towards all of these nodes. Working with the townscape and emphasizing these paths could increase the sense of accessibility to the park.

## Districts

The two districts marked could support one another as recreational hubs, but with different focuses, connected by forest trails.

# Introduction of interviewees

In this project three interviews have been conducted. They have all had different purposes and were conducted at different stages of the process.

## Tomas Sannebro

The first interview was with Tomas Sannebro, a board member of Folkparken Valhalls Framtid (the association running the park now) and graphic artist. This interview was conducted in the first week of the project. It had the main purpose of understanding the history of the Valhall park better. Tomas has been active in and around the park in different ways since he was young and had a lot of information and pictures to share with us.

## Roger Axelsson

The second interview was with Roger Axelsson, a former treasurer of Folkparken Valhalls Framtid, Vice chairperson for Västra Folkets Hus och Park Regionen, that is part of the National organisation Folkets Hus och Parker. He is also currently the treasurer in the Folkparker i Väst organisation. This interview was mainly focused on better understanding the history of the Valhall park, the economical aspects and the future visions. As a person with a lot of experience working with Folkets parks on many different levels his knowledge and input was very helpful in understanding the larger contexts around the Valhall park.

## David Dicksson and Tania Pismenskaya

The third interview was with David Dicksson and Tania Pismenskaya from the cultural association Strömmar i Dalsland. The interview with David and Tania mainly focused on getting a better understanding of how culture can take place in the Valhall park. They had been part of a theater performance at the park and had a lot of valuable information to share. This interview also helped deepen our understanding of the importance of stakeholders.

# History

## PURPOSE OF THE HISTORY CHAPTER

This part gives an historical overview of both the Folkets house and park movement in general and the Valhall park specifically. It tells the tale of the birth, rise and fall of the glory days in the parks. At the end there is an historical analysis describing what the most important historical success factors were for the Folkets park movement and how they translate into modern times to formulate guidelines and strategies for our design proposal for the Valhall park.



1. Aerial view of the Valhall park

## BACKGROUND OF FOLKETS PARKS

An open space with a roofless dance floor, a solitary rotunda with colorful lights, or an entire folk park with room for thousands of people. The party places were created for recreation, where people met to have fun, socialize and dance. Common to many of the party places and folk parks from the first half of the 20th century is the local engagement and the large amount of self-construction. Another very important success factor for these places was, and is still today, the devoted association members who put their soul and heart into their party places and parks.

In today's society entertainment has been something you could take for granted. The people who visited the parks in the early glory days had experienced war and major changes in society. Places for entertainment were their

"breathing space" and also the location where you met your friends and potential partner. At this time people lived in small apartments and there was not much space to bring your friends home. It was also a relatively inexpensive amusement that most of the people could afford.

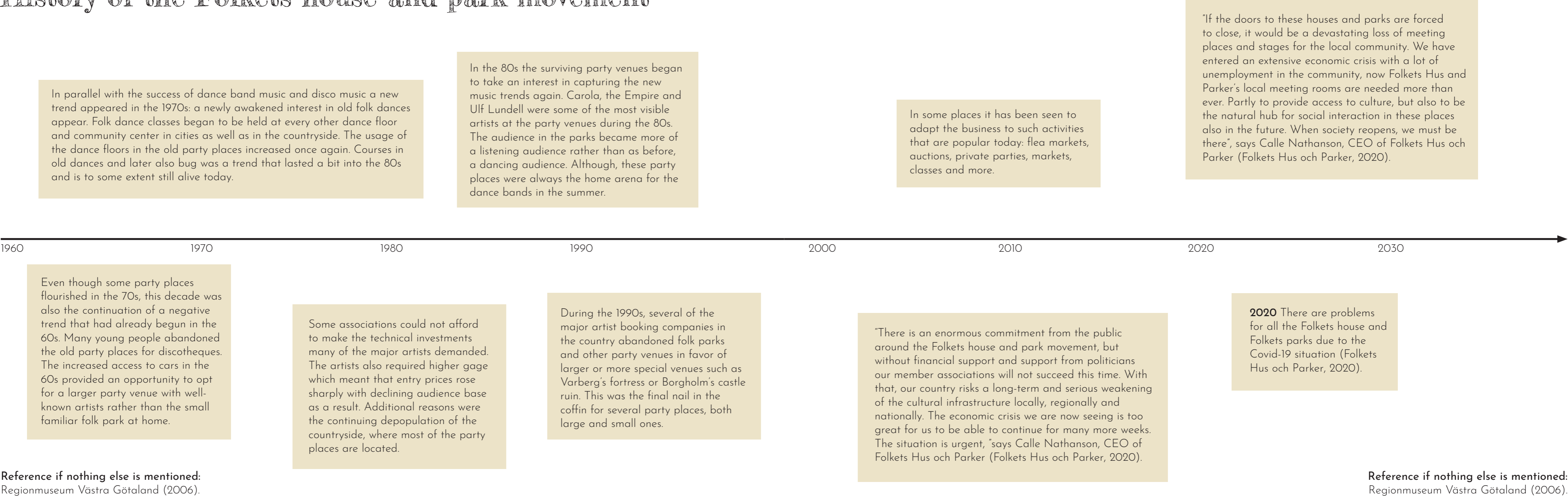
The attraction for the folk parks has varied throughout the decades, but it is clear that the original concept is not up-to-date anymore. An indication is the amount of party places that have disappeared during the years. At most 245 national parks were connected to the central organization of Folkets Parks and today that number is 122.

(Regionmuseum Västra Götaland, 2006)

# History of the Folkets house and park movement



# History of the Folkets house and park movement



# History of the Valhall park

**1929** The Valhall park was founded by the Workers association, the Bengtsfors sports association and the Folkets hus association who came together as an economical park association called Bengtsfors Folkets park that lasted until the early 70's.



3. The Tombola building

The park grew and a kiosk, a tombola, some entrance buildings and a shooting range were added, to name a few.

When more and more people had access to cars the area from which people came to the park grew. The park gained in popularity and big Swedish artists made annual visits here. The park repertoire also includes special performances of operettas, cabarets and by theater companies.



5. Performance at the Valhall park

It was common for artists to do Folk park tours in the summer (T. Sannebro, personal communication, November 5, 2020).

**1966** Audience record: 2700 people.

**1972** The Bengtsfors Folkets park association was declared bankrupt. The park was taken over by a limited company formed by some of the members in the Bengtsfors folkets park association.



7. Photo of audience

**1979** Audience record: 3500 people, still valid.



At first there were only a simple dance floor and a restaurant.



2. Myrén-Malms in front of the Rotunda, around 1930

Reference if nothing else is mentioned:  
Folkparken Valhall Bengtsfors (n.d.).

**1952** A new audience record of 2200 people was reached when Gösta "Snoddas" Nordgren visited the park. It had previously been of 1400 people.



4. The old dance floor

At this point there were two dance floors; the main one hosted the modern dance styles and the other hosted traditional dance styles.

The park was not only used for performances. The programme also included political meetings, association meetings, social evenings with local actors and much more.

A small zoo was added to try and expand the park usage. There were for example rabbits, ponies and a damm for seabirds. However, this investment did not survive long and was removed after only a few years (T. Sannebro, 2020).

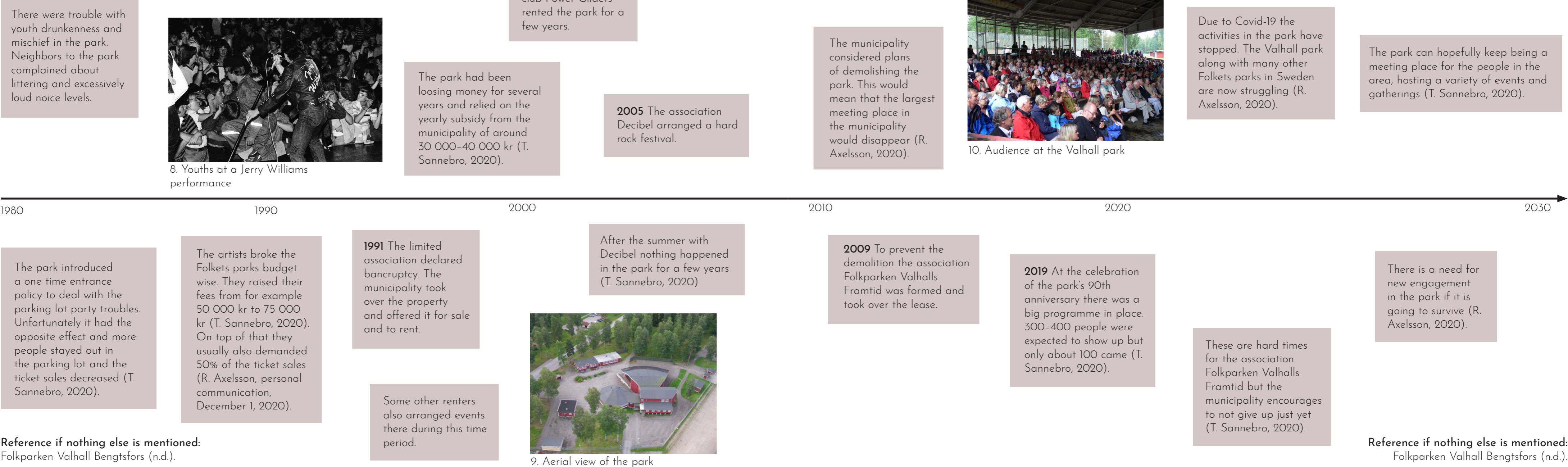


6. The old barn that probably held some of the animals in the zoo

The season begun at Walpurgis Night and ended in September, with an estimate of 60 performances per season (T. Sannebro, 2020).

Reference if nothing else is mentioned:  
Folkparken Valhall Bengtsfors (n.d.).

# History of the Valhall park



# Historical analysis

## What were the historical success factors?

Below, some important driving forces and historical functions that we found through out research are listed.

Originally the park was founded by three strong local associations that came together to create something for the people.



A successful concept in modern times ought to build upon engagement from not just one local association, but many.

The park was mainly self-built and relied on local engagement and knowledge.



The self-building method should be used when developing the park in order to save money.

The function of the party places that became Folk parks was originally to provide a place to meet your friends when the home environments were not spacious enough to do this.



The park used to provide something people could not do at home. Now people have larger homes with plenty of entertainment. What can be provided that people do not have at home?

The parks as meeting places filled an important democratic function, enabling large crowds to gather.



To have a well functioning democracy, it is important to have large gathering spaces. Thus this function needs to be protected through the park.

The trend of the parks begun around WW2 when these opportunities for leisure were very much needed in an otherwise quite harsh reality.



Today people tend to take leisure and entertainment for granted. However, the current pandemic might have an effect on this.

Another very important part of why people went to these party places were to meet people of the opposite sex. In many cases this type of place was the only place you could do that.



Society is generally more mixed today and you can meet a potential partner almost anywhere, even through online dating. Thus this function is not as important today.

# DIVE analysis

## WHAT IS DIVE?

DIVE stands for: **D**escribe **I**nterpret **V**aluate **E**nable

DIVE is a method for urban heritage analysis that consists of four steps, each corresponding to a letter in the name.

**D** What does today's landscape and environment tell us about the area's origins, development and character?

**I** Why have certain elements and characteristics of the area had a particular significance for the society?

**V** Which historical elements and characteristics are of special value, can they be developed and what is their tolerance to changes?

**E** How should the area's prioritized historical characteristics and resources be managed and developed, through concrete proposals.

(Riksantikvaren, 2010).

## DOING A DIVE ANALYSIS DURING COVID-19

Normally a DIVE analysis is carried out while carefully examining and evaluating the state of the buildings or built environment on site. Due to Covid-19, the only site visit we were able to do was a brief 20 minute visit at the start of the course, before this group had decided to work with the Valhall park as a project.

Thus this analysis is in no way complete but makes a good effort to, under the circumstances, describe, interpret, valuate and enable the cultural heritage of the site.

As a result of the circumstances where we gradually were given access to photographs and information about the park's state, the DIVE analysis has been divided into two main parts. One where the normal four stages of the DIVE is followed, but on a more general level for the park, and one where the individual buildings are evaluated more in depth.

# Stage 1: Describe

What does today's landscape and environment tell us about the area's origins, development and character?

**Meeting place**  
It was a place where people came to dance originally. Now it is not very well kept and not very frequently used.

**Forest**  
Trees have been cut around the plot, probably for forestry industry. There have been more and more felled throughout the years.

**Aesthetic**  
The buildings capture the rural aesthetics that is typical to the area. They have a familiar appearance.

**Diminishing interests**  
The state of it shows that the audience gradually has had less incentive to visit the park, due to different reasons.

**Cultural hub**  
It used to be a cultural hub for the people, by the people, on a site that is slightly removed from the town centre which provides some privacy from "authorities".

**Houses**  
There are more houses in the park's surroundings today than there was 50 years ago.

**Development over time**  
The many renovations and added structures tell a tale of growing needs. The site is a combination of different architectural standards and styles, all painted in red.

**Economics**  
There does not seem to be enough money to maintain the place and keep it running.



11. 1954 "Shoe games" and folkdance



12. 1955-1967 Aerial photos from Eniro



13. 2014-2017 Aerial photos from Eniro

# Stage 2: Interpret

Why have certain elements and characteristics of the area had a particular significance for the society?

**Place for events**  
It used to be a very popular place for entertainment and cultural events.

**Location**  
Its slightly secluded location invites the relaxed atmosphere of "people having beer" together.

**Income**  
Paying to get into the park was originally an important income for the associations running it, it helped strengthen them.

**Entertainment**  
It gave the people a place to meet and have fun, it was important for the factory workers on the weekends.

**Culture mix**  
The place has kept a mixture of old and new, modern culture at all stages. The old traditions and buildings are there but there has also always been room for new culture and usage forms throughout the park's history.

**Unique scale of function**  
The big stage has given the small town of Bengtsfors access to big events.



14. The dance floor in the 60's



15. The old dance floor and barn



16. Osmonds and orchestra

# Stage 3: Valuate

Which historical elements and characteristics are of special value, can they be developed and what is their tolerance to changes?

**Stage and dance floor**

The stage and dance floor should be kept, highlighted and could be renovated to be used all year round.

**Nature and greenery**

There are beautiful natural surroundings that should be highlighted, and more greenery could be added.

**Restaurant building**

The restaurant building is kept and simply used differently. It should not be difficult to intervene on it.

**Strengthen the essence**

It is important to strengthen the different valuable elements but still keeping the essence of the place.

**Water structure**

The current water structure, pond and ditch should be kept and developed, this would be nice features that are resilient for the future with increased rain.

**Main gates**

The front and main gate has a signature style associated with the park that should be kept and restored to its former state. The metal gate should tolerate being refurbished.

**Messy expression**

The restaurant building has clear traces of being refurbished, re-purposed and expanded and this messy expression is a challenge to work with: keep it and make it intentional or erase and fix it?

**Backstage**

The backstage area has a rustic atmosphere that could be partly repurposed to give everyday practitioners access to that unique space. It should be tolerant of interventions, but care needs to be taken to not hide the raw structures that give character.



17. The main gates



18. The greenery in the park in spring



19. The restaurant building

# Stage 4: Enable

How should the area’s prioritised historical characteristics and resources be managed and developed, through concrete proposals?

**Culture**

Culture should be prioritized in the park and its presence strengthened through different events, partnerships, activities, etc.

**Diversity**

Gathering people through different kinds of activities will build on and strengthen the historical connections and future of the park.

**Smaller scale**

Reclaim it for small scale local associations again. For some years there were bigger and bigger events there but this no longer seems to work.

**New usage form**

Bringing back the “folklight” by giving the park everyday usage increases the total usage, since the things you would go there for before no longer attract people the same way.

**Centralize the park**

The connection to the forest and secludedness of the site can be redeveloped through actually using this connection and making the park central for people using trails in the forest.

**Free entrance**

Expanding the park concept beyond paying visitors, thus including more people in the everyday activities, will be important for the locals to reclaim the park, and to sustain the park as a function.



20. Aerial view of the Valhall park



21. Four ladies in the restaurant building

# DIVE: Building inventory

## BUILINGS ON THE SITE

- 1. Dance floor
- 2. Stage
- 3. Backstage and changing rooms
- 4. Staff building
- 5. WC building
- 6. Kiosk
- 7. Tombola
- 8. Main entrance buildings
- 9. Restaurant building
- 10. Small dance floor and small stage
- 11. Two small sheds
- 12. Parking entrance buildings
- 13. Ice cream shed
- 14. Lone shed

## BUILDING INVENTORY STRUCTURE

The following pages detail the individual buildings and structures more in-depth. The qualities and challenges of each building are stated. There is also an evaluation box mapping:

- Physical accessibility** – how accessible the space currently is for someone with reduced mobility.
- Condition** – the state of the structure.
- Size** – how big or small the space is compared to other buildings on the site.
- Function** – if the current building function is more private or public.
- Intervention** – the level of intervention needed for our proposal.



## 1. Dance floor

A rotunda that is open to the outdoors. It has a wooden ceiling and a wooden floor.

### Building year

Built between 1929-1939

### Qualities

- The ceiling structure is eye-catching
- The floor has a nice polygonal pattern
- The space and structure as such is quite unique and holds cultural value
- It has good spatial qualities
- It has a nice view over town and the water
- It is a large open sheltered space that can be used for many things
- It holds many original qualities which gives an historical air

### Challenges

- It is open to the outside, thus having a limited usability
- The rounded shape creates an awkward space around it

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



22. Rotunda



23. Rotunda and stage



24. People dancing in the rotunda



25. The ceiling in the rotunda

2. Stage

An outdoor facility with roof over the spectator seats and a built in stage.

Building year  
Built in 1939

- Qualities
- It is a big space with a large capacity
  - The structure and shape of the building is quite unique
  - It has a good acoustic
  - It has possibilities for managing a full light show
  - The stage is large enough to be able to host a variety of different performances

- Challenges
- It is an outdoor space which limits the usage to some extent
  - The outdoor qualities of the space might hinder some digital usage of a projector, for example

Physical accessibility	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Condition	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Size	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large
Function	Private	<div><div></div></div>	Public
Intervention	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large



26. Audience at the park



27. Stage building



28. Paint flaking on stage building



29. Stage seats

3. Backstage and changing rooms

A backstage area in a barn style with a high ceiling. It has an extention dedicated to changing rooms for the performers.

Building year  
Main area built in 1939. Date unknown for the extension.

- Qualities
- It is an interesting space with a lot of character
  - It has a lot of storage space, including a loft
  - The backstage rooms are decent sized and well equipped which makes them flexible
  - It has multiple entrance points: 4
  - The ceiling hight opens up for activities that require a high ceiling
  - If the curtains are moved to the side the space can be open and flexible

- Challenges
- The space is cold because it is connected to the outdoor stage
  - The extension of the dressing rooms has created a large space under the building that is very unclear

Physical accessibility	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Condition	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Size	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large
Function	Private	<div><div></div></div>	Public
Intervention	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large



30. Backstage exterior



31. Backstage area



32. Backstage changing room

4. Staff building

A small wooden building with a handful of rooms intended for park management, the janitor etc.

Building year  
Built in 1987

- Qualities
- It is insulated
  - It has many small rooms
  - It has good daylight qualities

- Challenges
- Does not have a bathroom



33. Staff building north-east facade



34. Staff building south-east facade

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large

5. WC building

A brick building with toilets, one room for women and one for men.

Building year  
Built in 1964

- Qualities
- There are many toilets
  - One side for women, one side for men

- Challenges
- The building is far from the other buildings and functions
  - Not adapted for people with reduced mobility



35. WC building exterior south-east



36. WC building exterior south-west

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large

6. Kiosk

A wooden building with two front rooms that have flaps you can serve food and drinks from.

Building year  
Built in 1977

- Qualities
- It has a basement that can be used for storage
  - It is multipurpose and has lots of equipment like a shower, a kitchen, etc
  - It spatially frames the courtyard
  - It is in working condition as a kiosk
  - It has some original details that are still intact

- Challenges
- Adapting it for the winter (probably not well insulated and cold at the moment)
  - Reorganizing it and it’s surroundings to create a spatially interesting place
  - The staircase to the entrance is crumbling

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



37. Kiosk and rotunda



38. Kiosk west facade



39. Kiosk south facade

7. Tombola

A wooden building with three front rooms to host the lottery and a back room for storage, currently only reachable through a side door.

Building year  
Date unknown

- Qualities
- It has unique qualities that gives a festive air
  - It has a big storage in the back

- Challenges
- It is not well insulated
  - It is quite function specific
  - There are no windows
  - There is quite a high step up to get inside

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



40. Tombola from north-east



41. The old front of the tombola



42. Tombola today

8. Main entrance buildings

Two small wooden ticket booths on either side of the main entrance gates.

Building year  
Date unknown

- Qualities
- The white part of the gates are more suited to a Folkets Park than the metal colored ones
  - It is a landmark for the entrance
  - The original gates give a retro vibe

- Challenges
- Not welcoming gate with barbed wire
  - These buildings are very function specific and not very flexible in use
  - The spaces are very small

Physical accessibility	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Condition	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Size	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large
Function	Private	<div><div></div></div>	Public
Intervention	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large



43. Main gates from the side



44. Old main gates



45. Main gates front view

9. Restaurant building

A building fitted with a kitchen, bathrooms, and two serving areas in slightly split levels.

Building year  
Built between 1929–1939, and renovated in 1970, 1973 and 1987.

- Qualities
- The inside is in good working condition
  - It can be closed off to be two separate spaces inside, with an entrance each
  - The rooms are quite bright, it has good daylight qualities
  - It has a basement that can be used for storage
  - It is a big multipurpose indoor space
  - It has a fully equipped kitchen

- Challenges
- It has been renovated to loose some original qualities and now looks messy
  - The condition of certain windows is bad

Physical accessibility	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Condition	Bad	<div><div></div></div>	Good
Size	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large
Function	Private	<div><div></div></div>	Public
Intervention	Small	<div><div></div></div>	Large



46. Original door details



47. Restaurant west facade



48. Restaurant seen from court yard



49. Interior restaurant building

10. Small dance floor and small stage

An outdoor dance floor with a wooden floor and a small stage with a roof next to it. A classic and simple set up.

Building year  
Date unknown

- Qualities
- A fenced in area could be used for many things
  - This dance floor provides an historical air even though it is not the original one or the same placement as the one seen in the black and white photo
  - It has a grill or fireplace nearby

- Challenges
- The floor boards are rotten and cannot be used
  - Incoherent facade coloring

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



50. Small dance floor from west



51. Small dance floor from east



52. Old dance floor and barn

11. Two small sheds

Two small buildings that probably used to host some animals back when the park had a small zoo.

Building year  
Date unknown

- Qualities
- The structures are made with old traditional techniques that give them character so they are a source of historical value
  - The structures’ placement can be used as a landmark for an entrance point
  - The structures have a solid stone foundation

- Challenges
- The roof is very broken on both the buildings and cannot be renovated but needs to be replaced to work

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Does not have a clear function currently		
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



53. Two sheds



54. Shed one



55. Shed two

## 12. Parking entrance buildings

Two small wooden ticket booths on either side of the entrance gates by the parking lot.

### Building year

Built in 1986

### Qualities

- The structures are marking an entry point, they are a type of landmark

### Challenges

- These structures are quite function specific as they are



56. Entrance buildings from outside the park



57. Entrance building from inside the park

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large

## 13. Ice cream shed

A small building with a sign that has the ice cream company GB's old logo on it.

### Building year

Date unknown

### Qualities

- It has solid concrete poles in the foundations

### Challenges

- It has been nailed shut
- The walls are not of good quality
- It seems to be too damaged to be repurposed

This building is demolished in our design proposal

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Private	<input type="range"/>	Public
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large



58. Back of ice cream shed



59. Front of ice cream shed

# 14. Lone shed

One shed situated close to the old dance floor.  
Might also have been used for animals in the past.

**Building year**  
Date unknown

- Qualities**
- The structures are made with old traditional techniques that give them character so they are a source of historical value

- Challenges**
- We do not have enough information to state any specific challenges



60. Lone shed

Physical accessibility	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Condition	Bad	<input type="range"/>	Good
Size	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large
Function	Does not have a clear function currently		
Intervention	Small	<input type="range"/>	Large

# Inventory conclusions

All of the buildings are in need of some renovation and freshening up. However, that need is very different for each building.

The evaluations of the state of the buildings has only been done by looking at photos and a video, due to the Covid-19 pandemic. Therefore this evaluation might not be fully accurate. It is, nonetheless, an important base for the design proposal, determining what buildings are possible to develop and what structures cannot be repurposed or saved because they are too decrepit.

Most of the buildings are in such a state that they can keep functioning as they are. All buildings are kept, except for number 13: The Ice cream shed, which is deemed to be in a too bad state to be used for anything.

# Survey

## METHOD AND AIM

This survey aims to map out what people think of the Valhall park and what motivation there is for different activities and themes to be included in our design proposal.

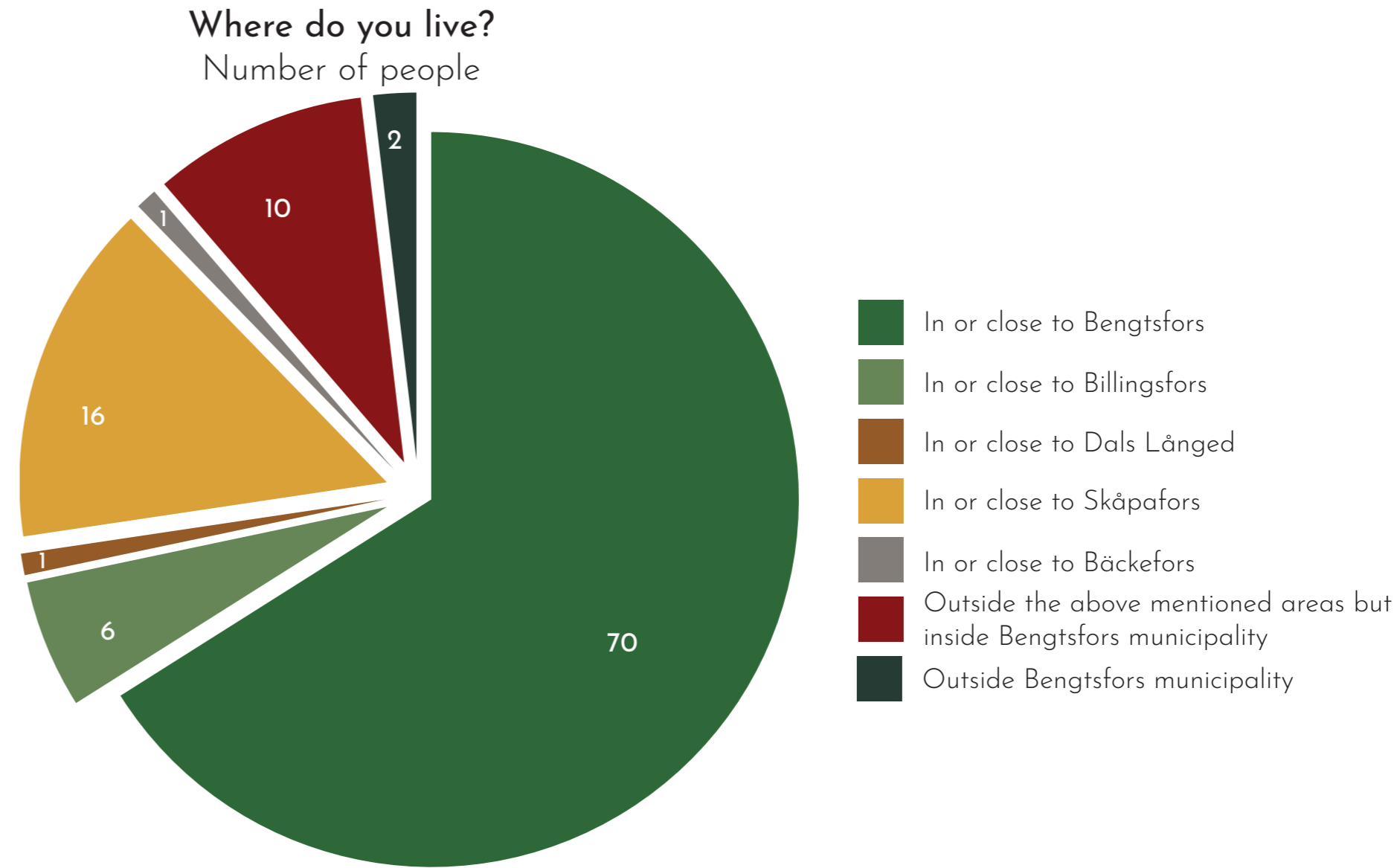
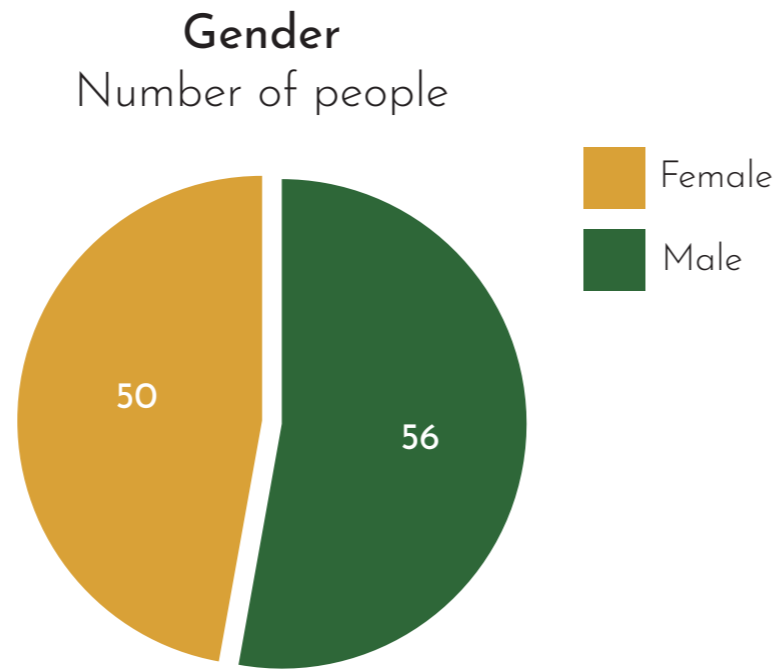
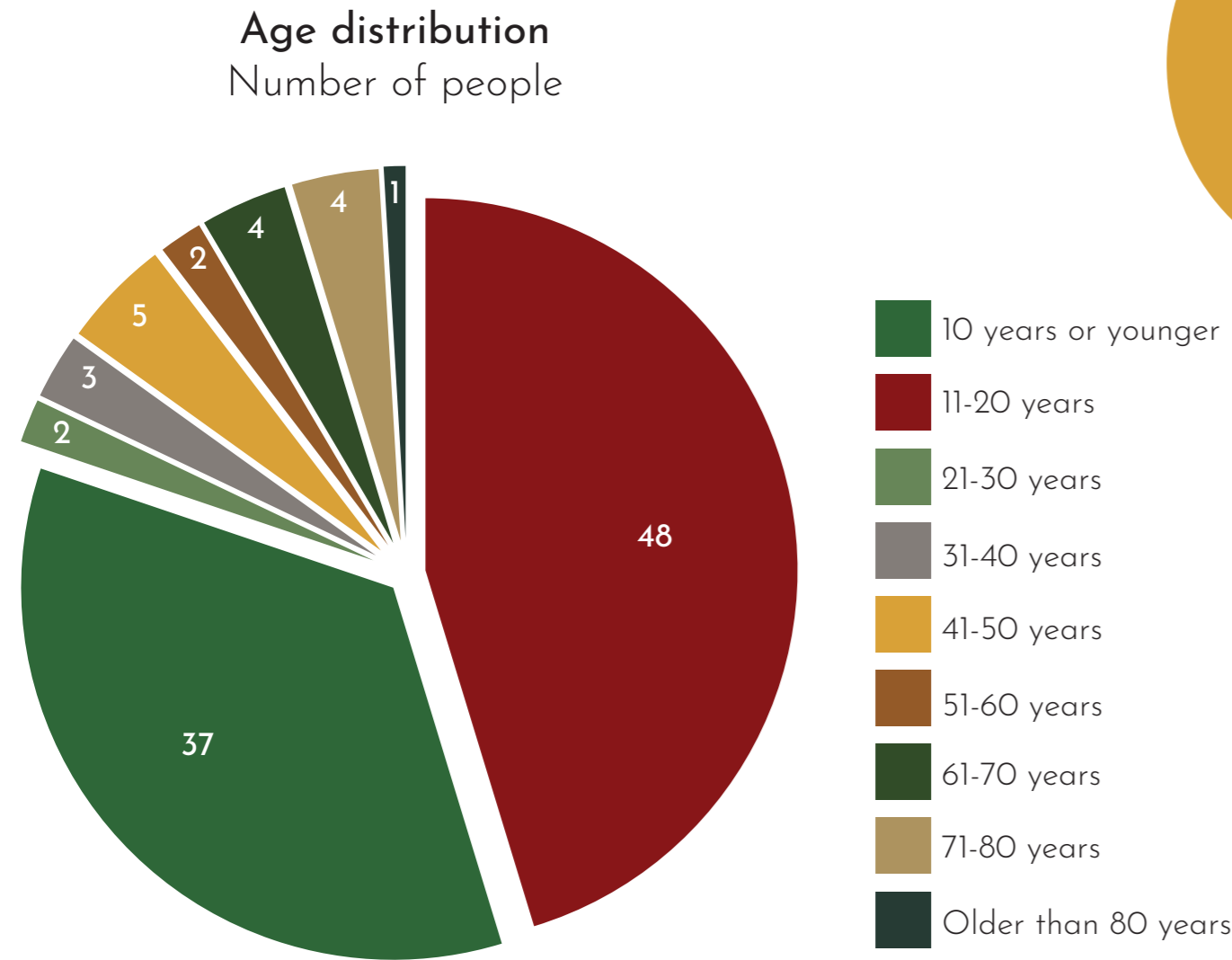
The survey was made available to the locals through:

1. The municipality's social media platforms
2. Local principals who distributed the link to their schools
3. Emails sent to local cultural associations listed on the web page "Kulturnätet i Bengtsfors"

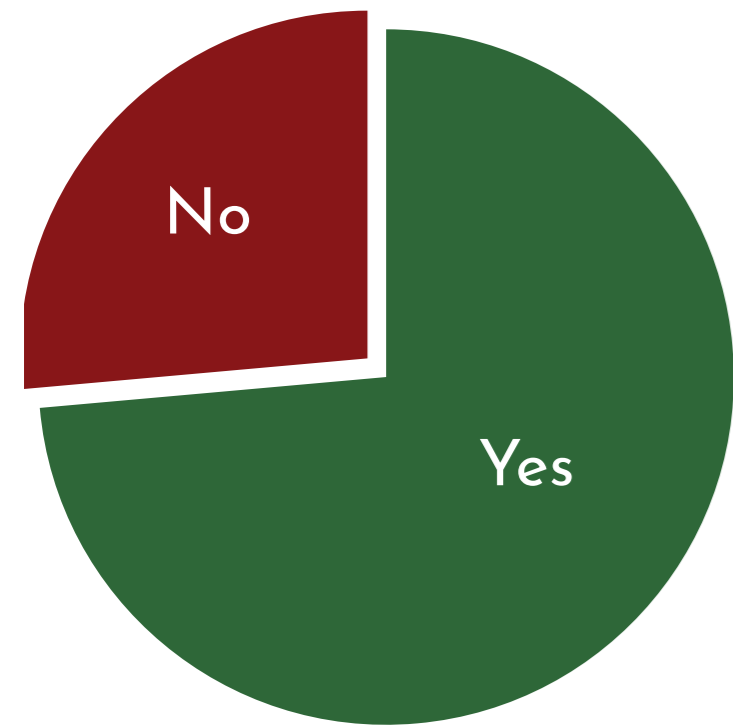
All diagrams where the total number of answers is marked were not mandatory questions in the survey, and therefore do not have the same response rate. All other diagrams are from mandatory questions and have 106 answers.

# Survey results

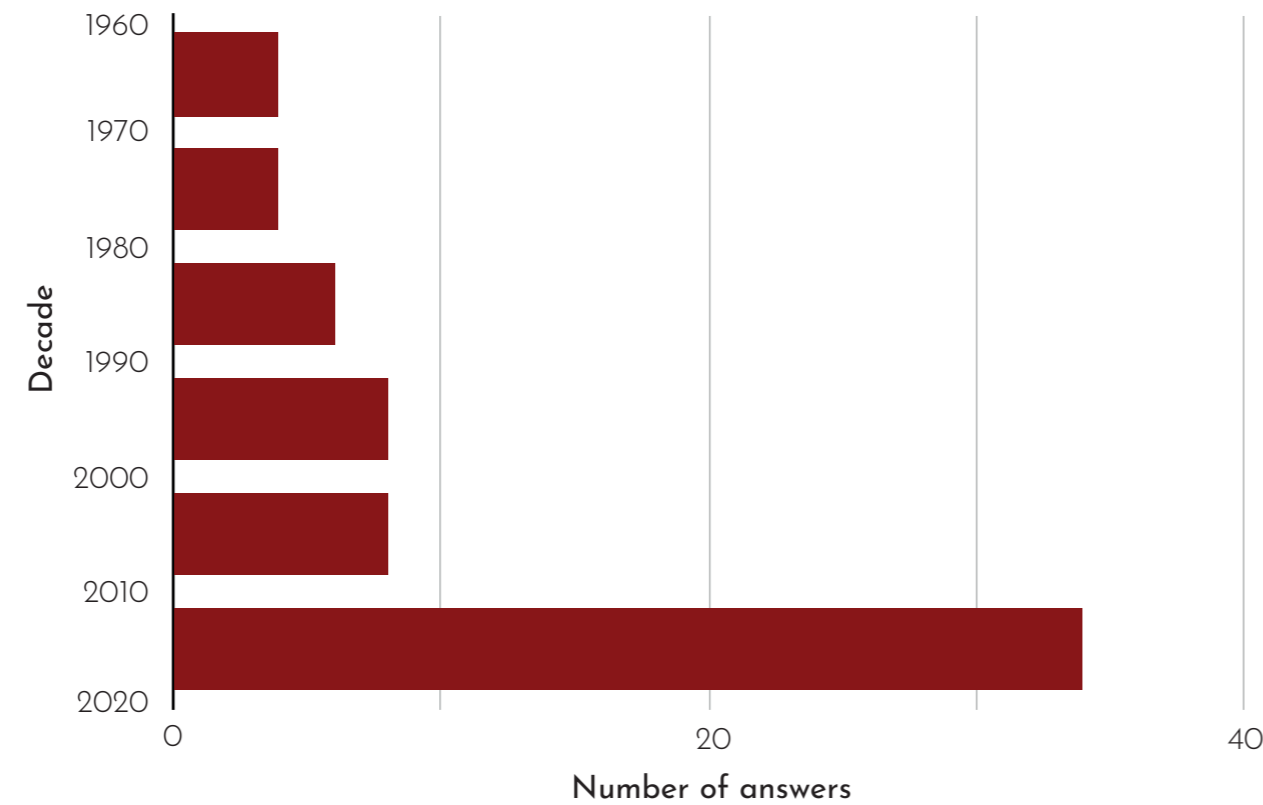
Total number of respondents: 106



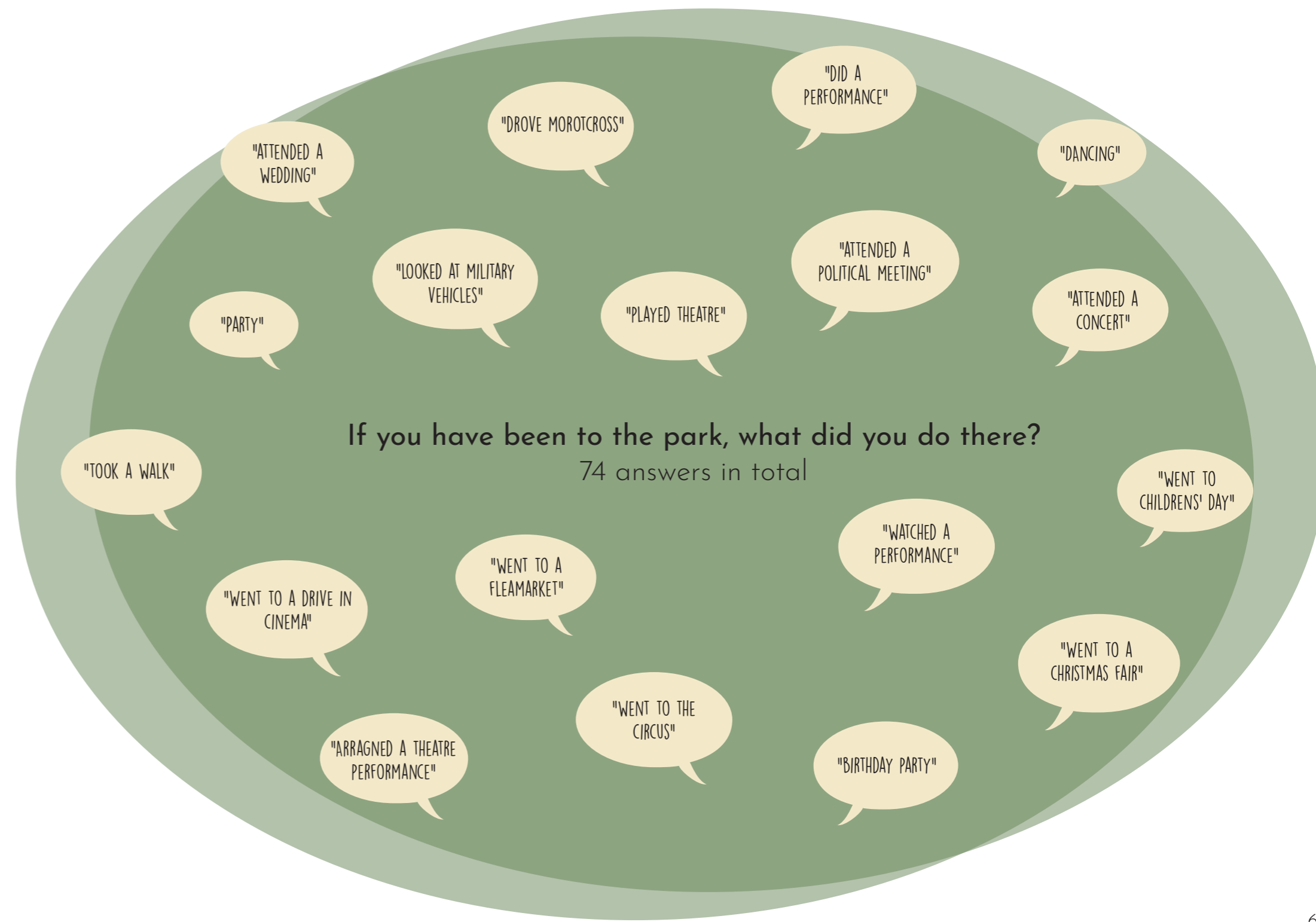
Have you visited the Folkets park in Bengtsfors?

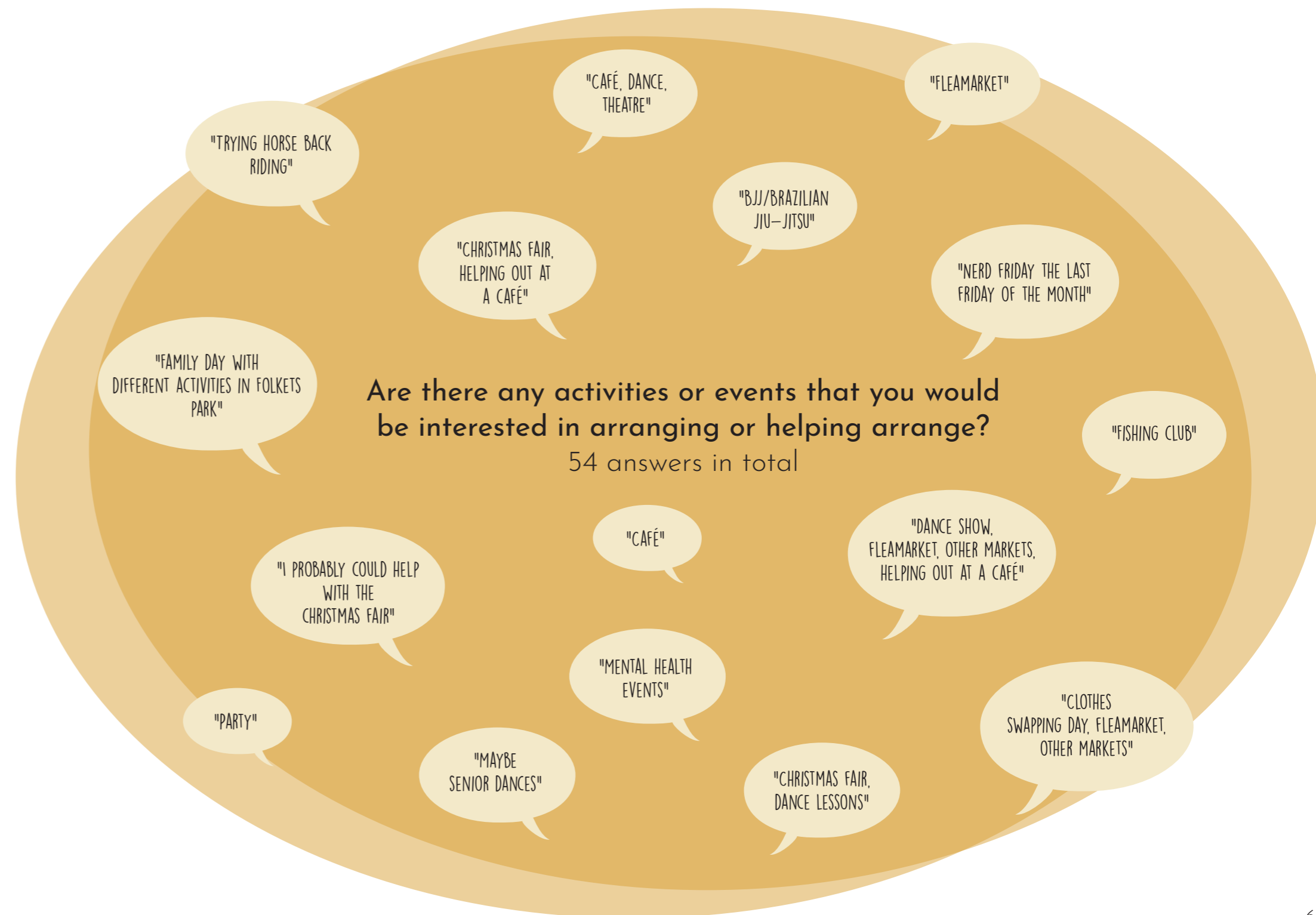
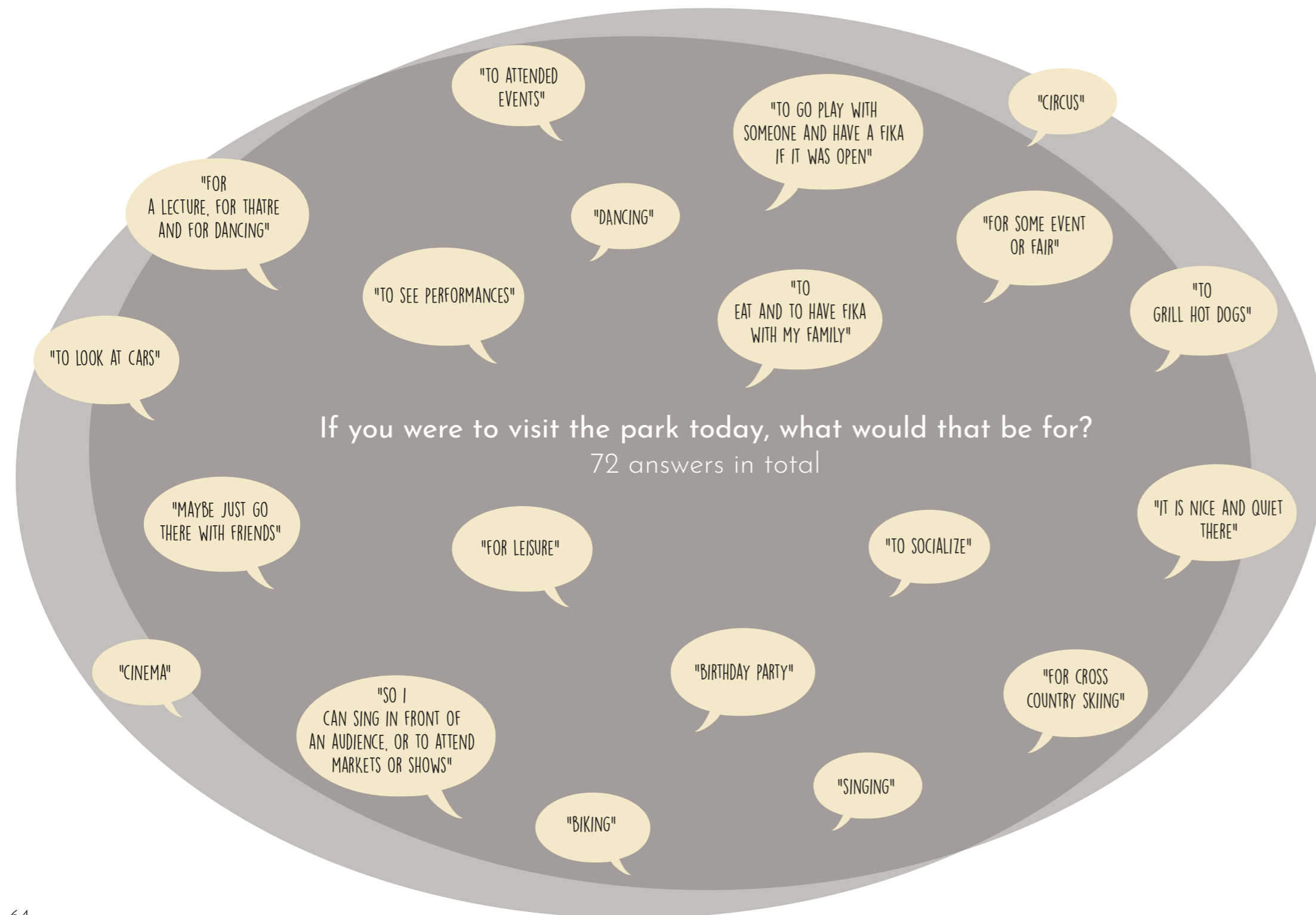


In what decade did you go there?

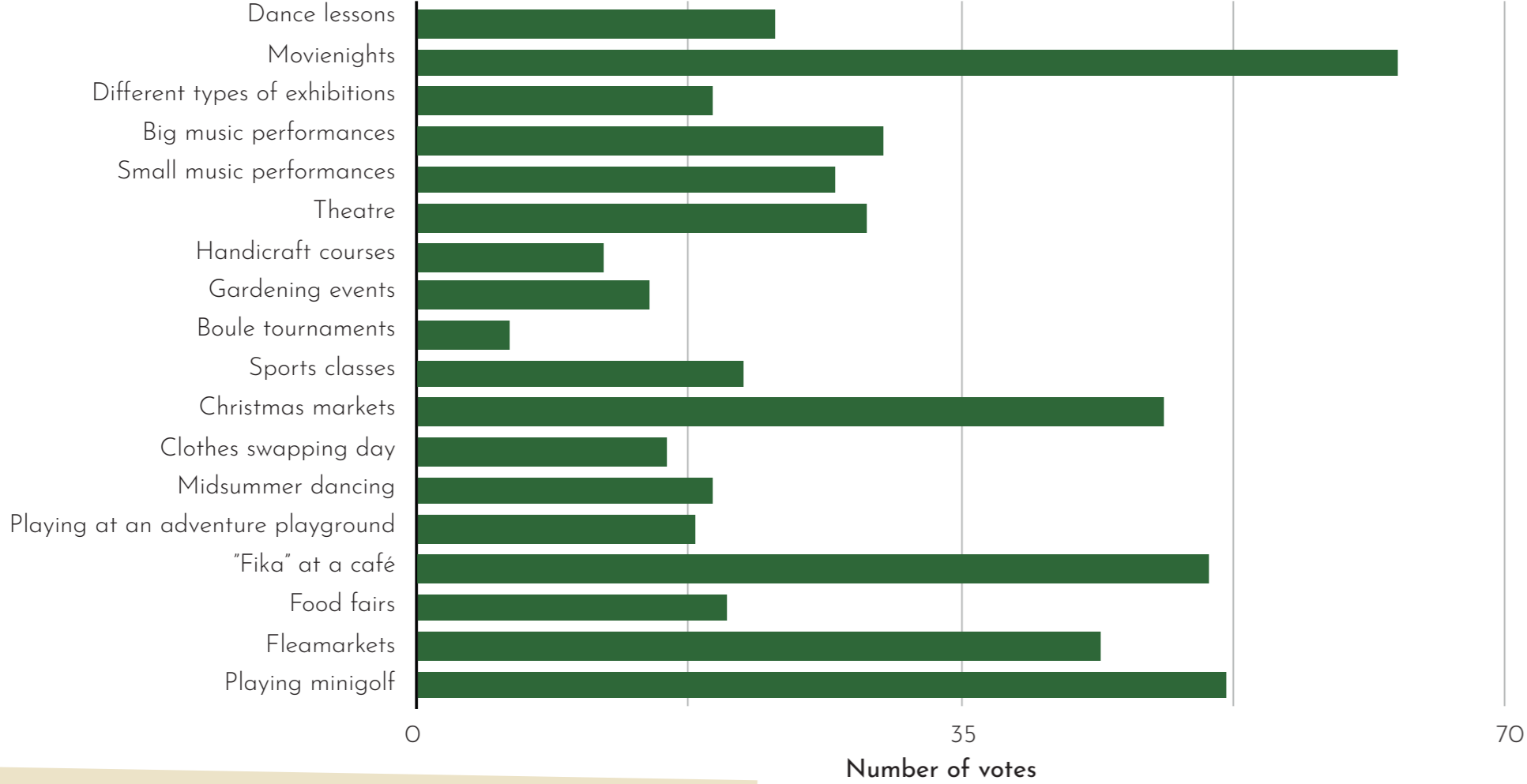


If you have been to the park, what did you do there?  
74 answers in total





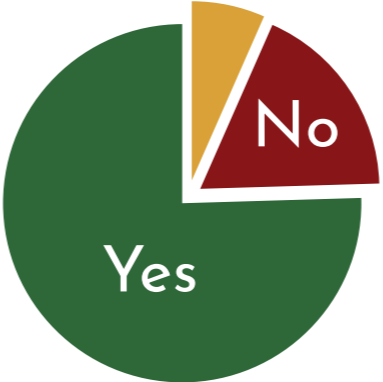
If it was arranged in Bengtsfors, which of these activities would you like to participate in?



Other activities mentioned by the respondents were:

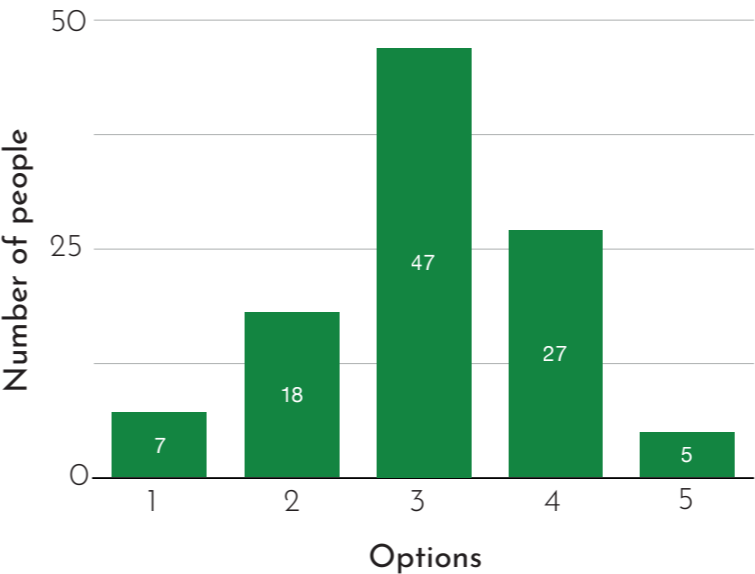
Dog shows and dog training events, fishing courses, gymnastics events, rifle shooting events, motor cross lessons, camping, nature photography events, fashion shows, animal competitions, mental health events, family days, workshops, playing board games and running competitions.

Are there good spaces for you to do what you want to do in your spare time?

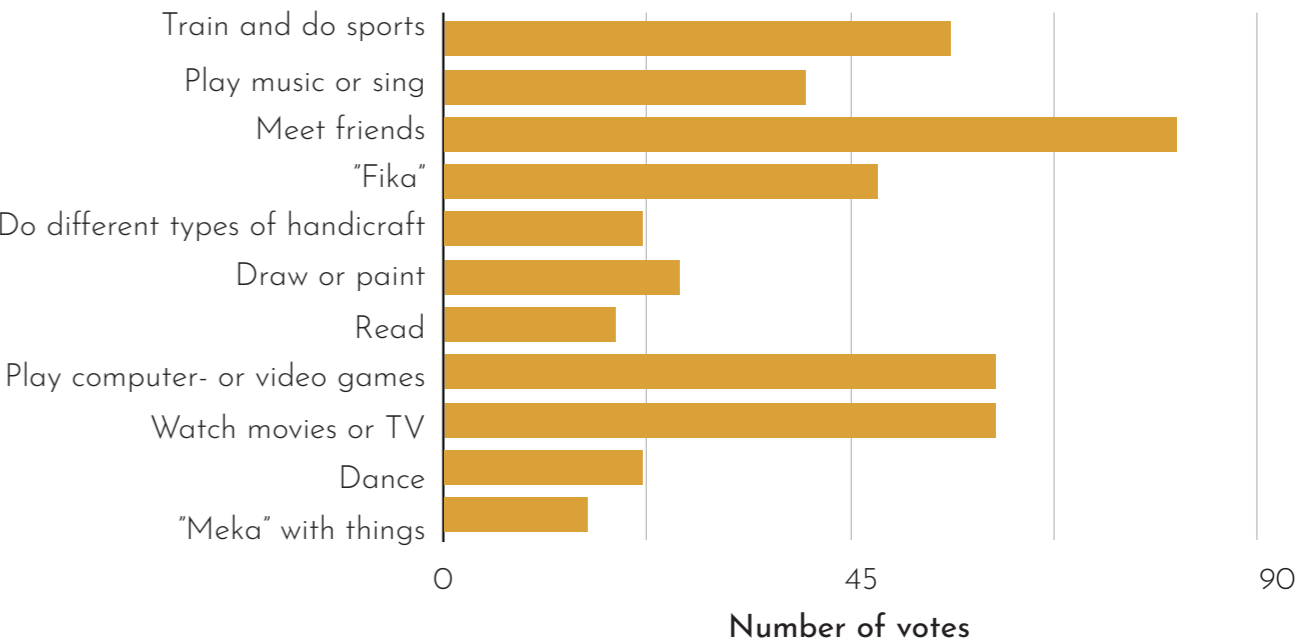


Do you like Folkets park as it is today?

1 = No, not at all, 5 = Yes, a lot

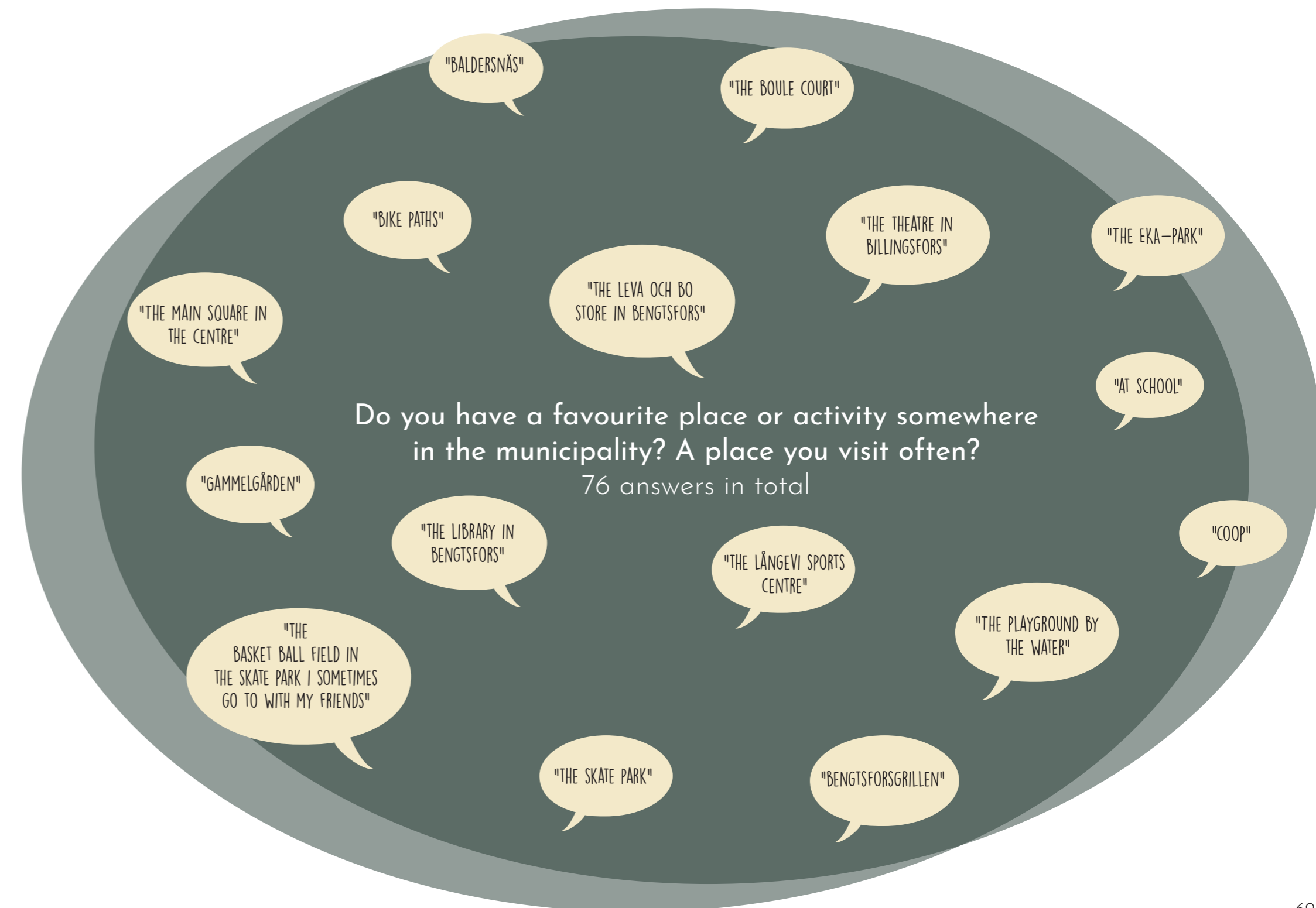
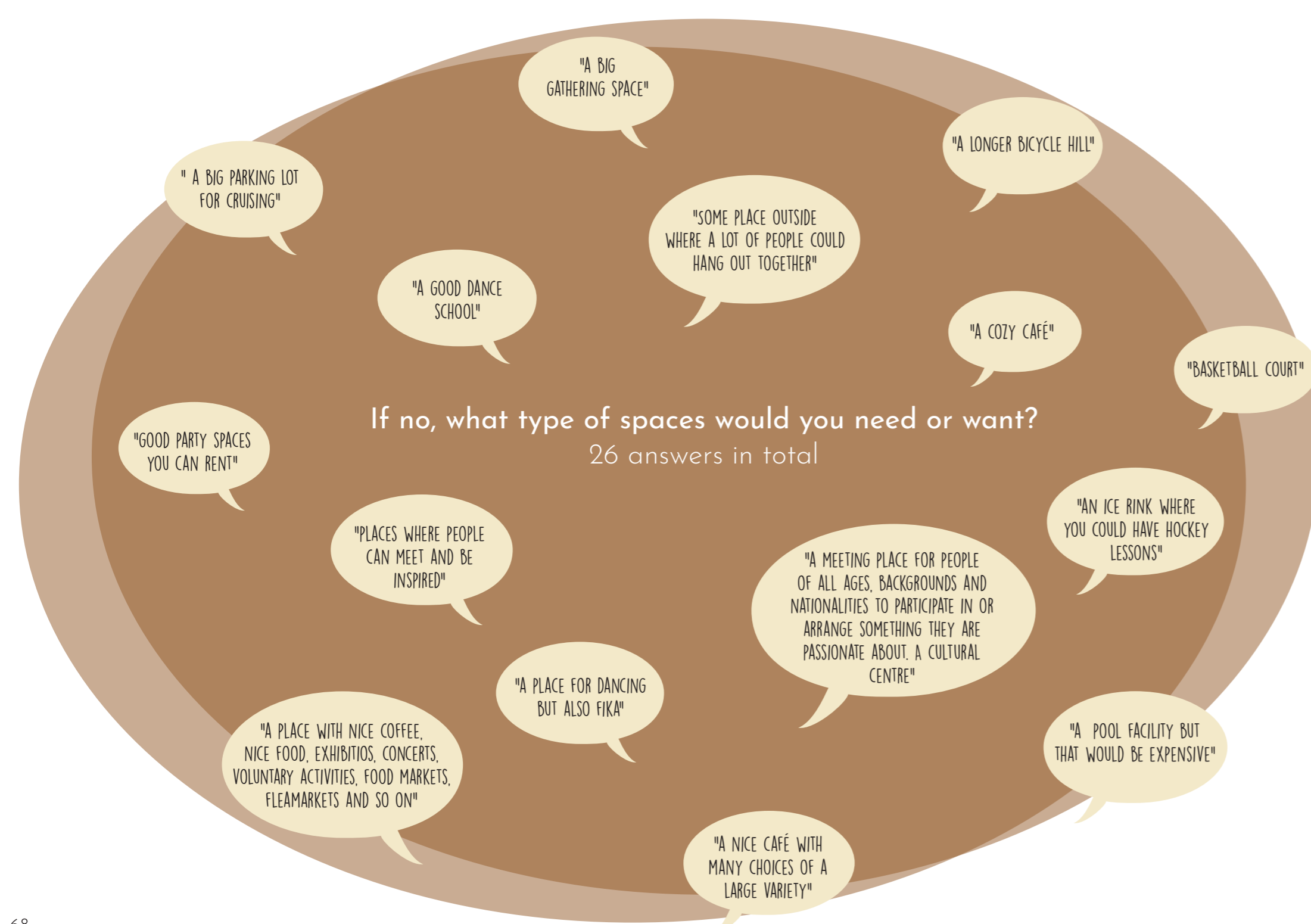


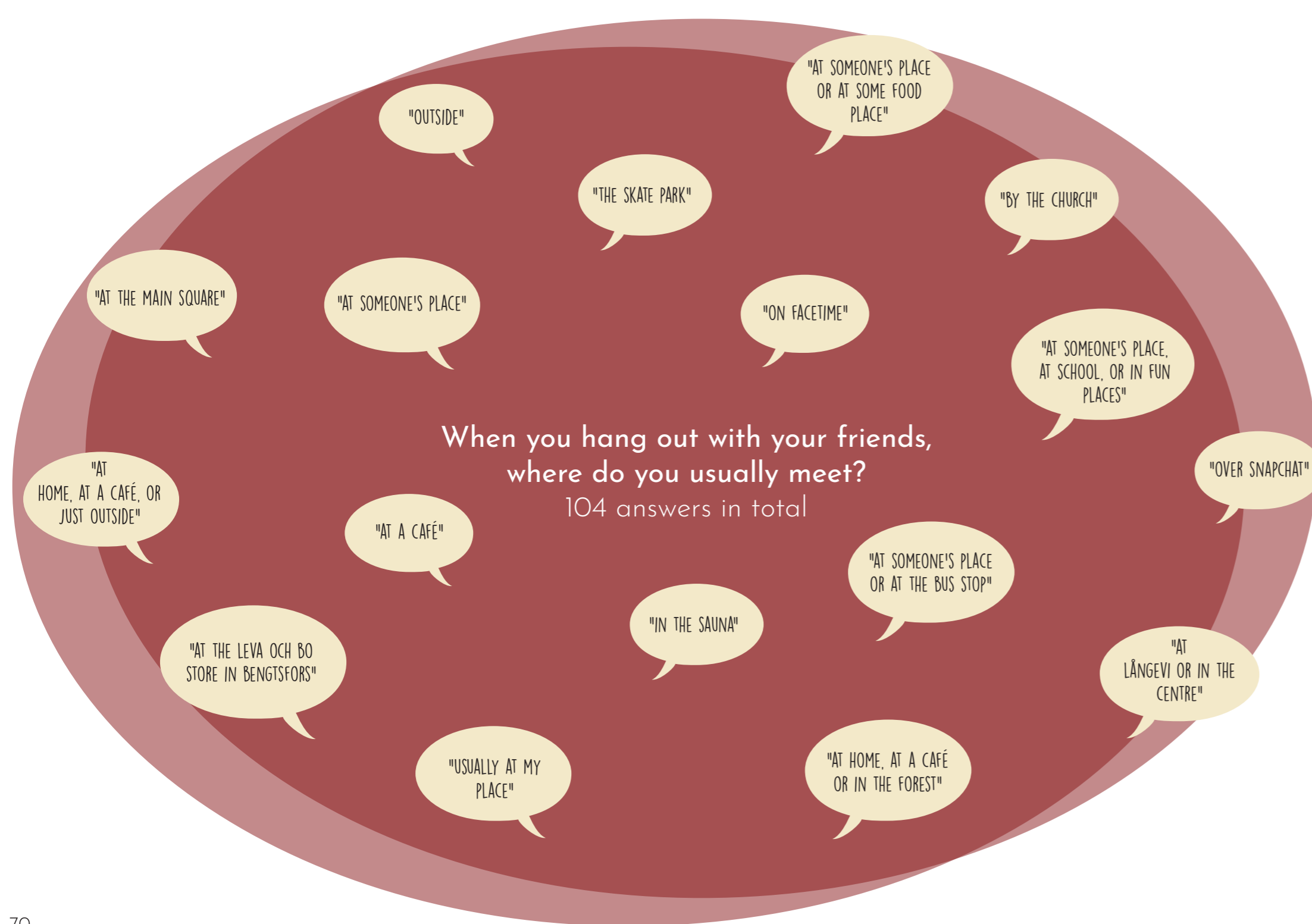
What do you like to do in your spare time?



Other spare time activities mentioned by the respondents were:

Dogwalking and animal care, orientation, biking, horsebackriding, motorcross, skiing, gardening, gymnastics, volunteering for associations, party, cuddling and playing with pets, shooting with airguns, baking, writing stories, arranging cultural events, bird-watching, grow vegetables, playing with Lego, stretching, driving tractor, hunting related activities, general family life things, travel, outdoor lifestyle and playing games on the phone.





## Other comments

"I think there should be a place where both young and old can meet, a place that gives a feeling of harmony (soft tones and natural materials), timeless simple design (clean), both inside and out (we live in Sweden). There will be a range of activities such as a playground for children (where children can think, create, explore, learn, etc.), an exhibition hall where young artists can exhibit their art, a reading area with books, magazines and crafts, some room where you can hold different types of courses (sewing, knitting, painting, writing, etc.), restaurant and café etc .... everything must be characterized by sustainable development and diversity."

"A french café, please"

"As a neighbor of the Park, it's very sad that it's so dead there, at the same time as it's nice that there is not as much traffic/party music (dunkadunka)/wasted people in the garden as there was before ... Overall, I would like to see the Park flourish again - maybe in a more old-fashioned Folkets Park entertainment perspective for the whole family from 11-23 than the drunkenness in the 80s and 90s from 20-02."

"I like this park that we have now so I don't want to change it but still I somehow want to change it, hm."

"Several of our public places would need a facelift"

"There are many good places, activities, associations etc. in the municipality but not so many inhabitants so COOPERATION between all associations and places is NECESSARY"

"The distance to Bengtsfors, 35 km, means that I am not there that often."

# Survey conclusions

## Who responded

Our method of distributing the survey was designed with the single goal of getting as many answers as possible using only digital distribution channels, due to the Covid-19 situation. The bulk of the responses was gained via emailing local principals who distributed the survey to their schools. The survey was therefore mostly answered by children and teenagers, thus it mainly reflects the views of these age groups. However their opinion is very important because the youths are the ones who in the future need to be invested in the park in order for it to survive and thrive.

## Distance to the park

The majority of the people answering the survey lives in Bengtsfors town. Some comments from people from other parts of the municipality talked about how far it was for them to go to the park which results in not going there so often.

## Different generations attitude towards the park

Before the bulk of children and teenagers had answered during the first week the survey was open, the opinions about the park as it is today were highly skewed towards dislike, whereas now the result follows a normal distribution curve, slightly skewed towards liking of the park. This might be because the older generations have seen the park as it was during its glory days and thus naturally compare the state today to this, whereas the

younger generations only have experiences of the park as it is today and thus have a more positive attitude towards it.

## Diverse interests

The survey answers tell a tale of a population with a lot of varying interests. Many of the people who said they did not have spaces that catered to their needs and wants for spare time activities were interested in cafés, meeting places and flexible spaces for local engagement and events. These types of spaces seem to be more rare in the municipality than for example sports facilities. Thus the Valhall park can play a very central role in creating a good environment for people with interests outside of sports and typical outdoor activities that is a big interest for many in the municipality.

## The survey as a support for the design proposal

The survey responses serve as an inspirational support in the program of our proposal. It helps distinguish what activities might be more relevant to have in the park because many people are interested in it.

The survey also helps prove that there is a large number of people who are willing to engage in voluntary work in order to have a nice place to go and fun things to do in their spare time.

# Stakeholders

## WHY STAKEHOLDERS ARE IMPORTANT

Through the interviews and historical research the importance of having stakeholders involved in the park has become even more clear.

Historically the park had a purpose to gain money for the local organisations that came together to run it. The park was for individuals, and for associations and organisations to enjoy. It is the people involved who “make the park”. Without the engagement and involvement there is no park.

Through the historical analysis we identified having many stakeholders involved as a concept for success. Thus inviting as many stakeholders as possible to use the park facilities will be the first and most important step to take. Hopefully, some of these stakeholders will take a liking to it, and in collaboration with Folkparken Valhalls Framtid focus their activities there and start building and strengthening the park’s image as the cultural hub in Bengtsfors.

Much like the municipality is trying to do at the Långevi sports center where they gather a large part of their sports activities in one place, our vision for the park involves gathering the cultural actors in the area in the park facilities to strengthen the daily usage and the synergies they can provide each other.

Renovating the derelict park is a good thing to do but it is to no point, and certainly not sustainable, if it does not get used more by the people.

Gathering cultural stakeholders through the park can strengthen the community locally. Also, it will help strengthen the regional and national connections when people gather around a common purpose in culture and share experiences with each other.

Not only will the park be strengthened through involving stakeholders there, but the stakeholders themselves will be strengthened through the community around the park that is a central part of this proposal.

## MAPPING STAKEHOLDERS IN DIFFERENT SCALES

In the following pages there are four maps presenting potential stakeholders. These are all stakeholders we think could be relevant to the project. We have found them through different types of research and have not been in contact with all. These are just a compilation of associations and actors who’s activities could take place at the Valhall park in different ways.

The first map shows a part of Bengtsfors town and focuses on very local stakeholders.

The second map displays stakeholders throughout Bengtsfors municipality. This map shows the variety of stakeholders found in the municipality.

The third map shows the Västra Götaland region and Värmland region. This scale of mapping the stakeholders is important in order to show Bengtsfors municipality in a geographically centered stakeholder context.

The fourth map presents stakeholders in a national and regional context. These stakeholders are more administrative than cultural. However, they are still very relevant to the park in different ways.

# Bengtsfors Town

- 1 Folkparken Valhalls Framtid  
The association that runs the park today
- 2 Kulturskolan  
Culture school
- 3 Odéon Bio & Teater  
Cinema
- 4 Franserudskolan, Bengtsgården skola, Strömkullegymnasiet  
Schools
- 5 Power Gliders  
Car association
- 6 Granåsgården  
Elderly home
- 7 Bengtsforstraktens Hembygdsförening  
Gammelgården  
An open-air museum
- 8 Bengtsfors Scoutkår  
Scout association

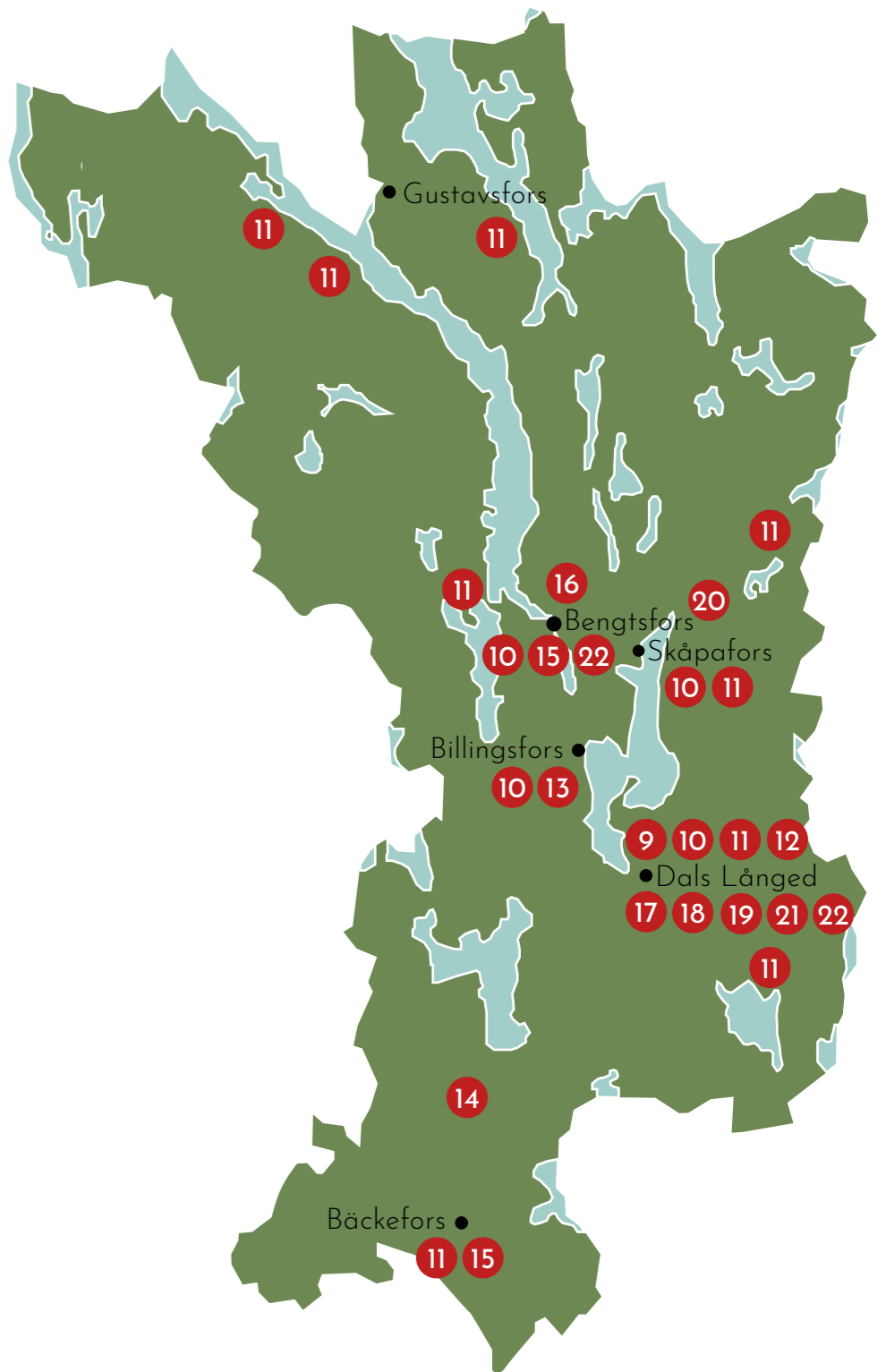


Other Stakeholders with "unknown" location:

- Local inhabitants (renting for private use or other initiatives)
- Bengtsfors Bilsätesveteraner (car association)
- Dalslands skivareförening (writers that have a local Bengtsfors group and meetings a few times/year)

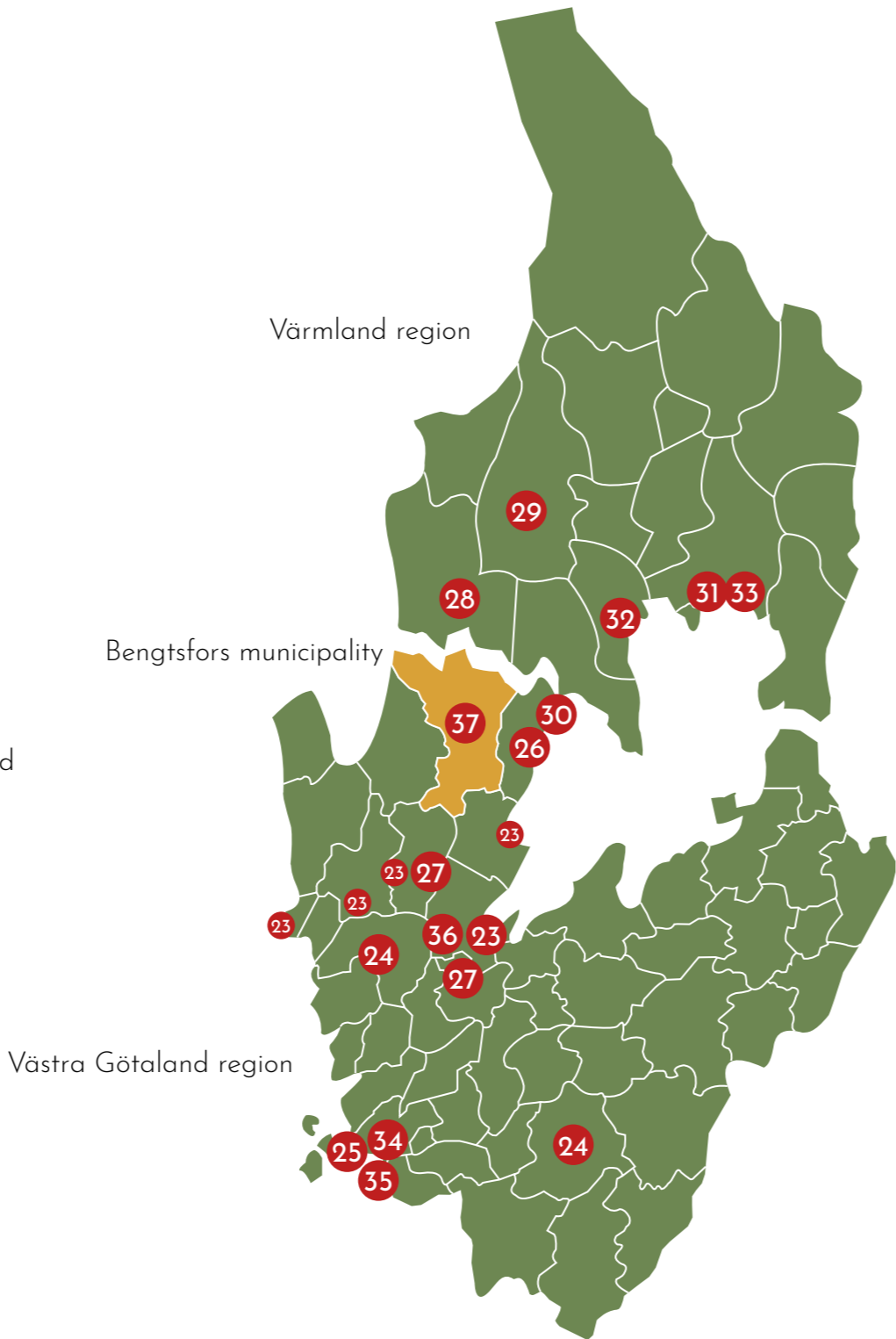
# Bengtsfors Municipality

- 9 Stenebyskolan  
Art and Culture school
- 10 Local PRO associations  
Organization for retired people
- 11 Local Byalag:s  
Local associations
- 12 Bengtsfors Brukshundsklubb  
Dog club
- 13 Billingsfors teatersällskap  
Theater company
- 14 Alltorps tingshus  
Christmas fair
- 15 SPF Bäckefors-Ödskölt, SPF Lelången  
Organization for seniors
- 16 Skåpafors servetthistoria  
Napkin history
- 17 Musikkföreningen Decibel  
Music association
- 18 Steneby Kulturförening  
Culture association
- 19 Galleri Olika  
Art gallery
- 20 Strömmar i Dalsland  
Culture and health
- 21 Föreningen Norden  
Culture, language history and collaborations in the Nordic countries
- 22 Forum för poesi och prosa  
Literature and performances



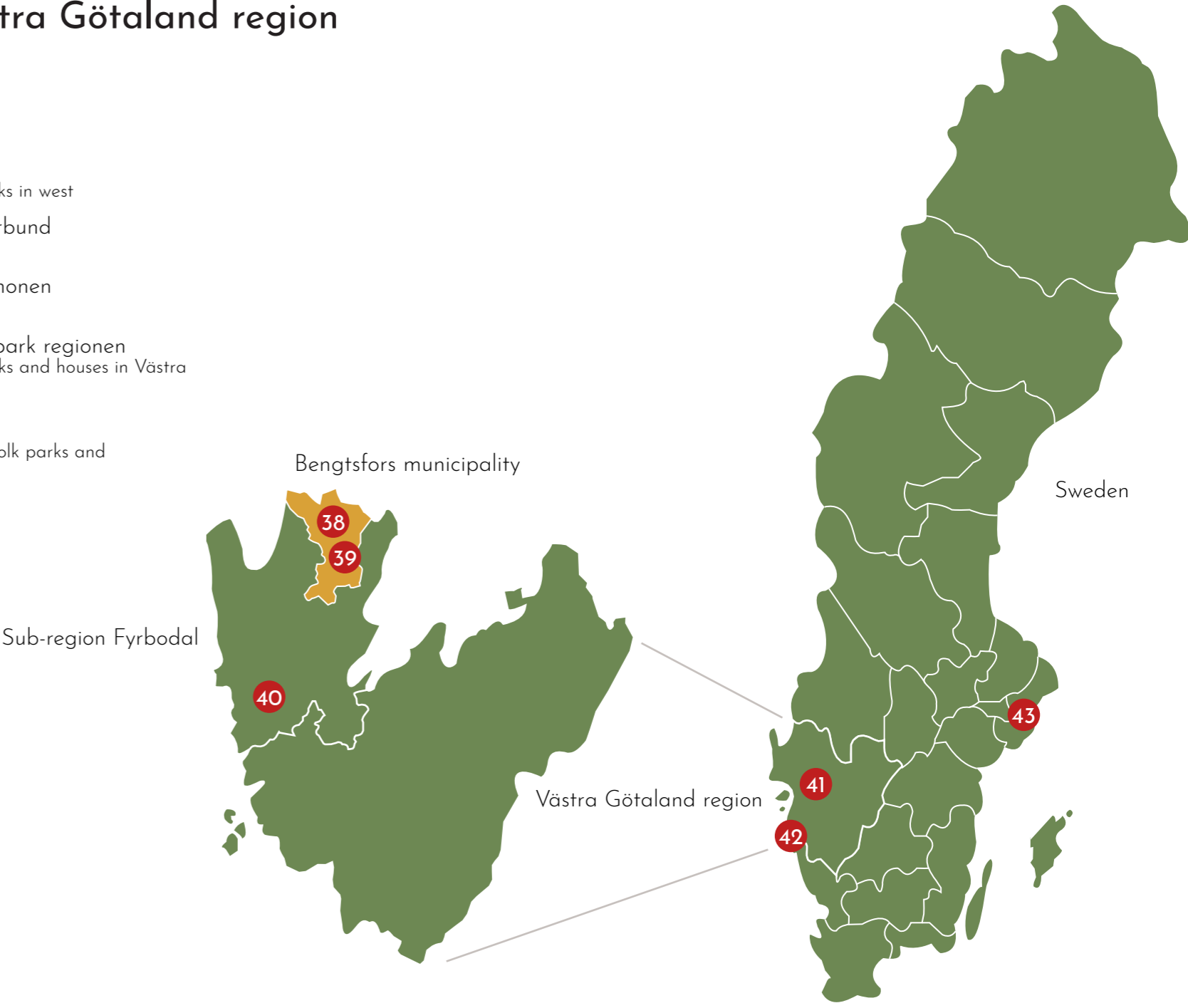
# Värmland and Västra Götaland regions

- 23** Danspoolen, Vänersborg  
Dance organization (aims to spread dance activities to municipalities in Fyrbodals)
- 24** Regionteater Väst, Uddevalla and Borås  
Dance and theater institution in the Västra Götaland region
- 25** Förvaltningen för kulturutveckling (former Kultur i väst), Göteborg  
The administration for cultural development (Västra Götaland region)
- 26** Studieförbundet Vuxenskolan Dalsland, Åmål  
School for adults
- 27** Dalslands folkhögskola, Färgelanda och Trollhättan  
Folk High school
- 28** Kyrkeruds folkhögskola, Årjäng  
Folk High school
- 29** Ingesunds folkhögskola, Arvika  
Folk High school
- 30** Dalslands litteraturförening, Åmål  
Literature association
- 31** RUM Värmland/Fyrbodals (Riksförbundet för unga musikanter), Karlstad  
Association for young musicians
- 32** TRAKT – Dansföreningen Dagvatten, Grums  
Dance association (aims to produce dance and performing arts in rural areas)
- 33** Patricias Danscenter, Karlstad  
Dance association (Workshops can be arranged in different locations)
- 34** KulturUngdom, Göteborg  
Association that develops cultural projects for and with young people
- 35** Aktiv Ungdom Väst, Göteborg  
Activities and courses for young people in Västra Götaland and Halland
- 36** Studieförbundet Fyrbodals, Vänersborg  
Study association (study circles, educations, cultural events and lectures)
- 37** Sensus studieförbund, Bengtsfors  
Study association (study circles, cultural events, democracy and rights)



# Sweden and Västra Götaland region

- 38** Bengtsfors kommun  
Bengtsfors municipality
- 39** Folkparkerna i väst  
Association for the Folk parks in west
- 40** Fyrbodals kommunalförbund  
Sub-region
- 41** Västra Götalandsregionen  
Västra Götaland region
- 42** Västra folkets hus och park regionen  
Association for the Folk parks and houses in Västra Götaland and Halland
- 43** Folkets hus och parker  
National organization for Folk parks and houses



# Stakeholders mapping conclusions

There is a large number of stakeholders that could be relevant to the park. These stakeholders are relevant in different ways and interested in different things, creating opportunities for a great diversity of activities in the park.

By mapping the stakeholders on different scales it becomes clear that the Valhall park not only could be important in a local context, but in a larger context as well.

When later on working with the stakeholders, this perspective of multiple scales could be applied. By working on different scales and not only focusing on one, you gain a wider range of available stakeholders, and thus a wider variety opportunities for future collaborations and synergies.

# Analysis conclusions

The most important results of each method of analysis are presented below. This information provides the base upon which the project proposal is created.

## Lynch analysis

We concluded that the proposal needed to include an alteration of the fence around the park to make the place more accessible and welcoming. The proposal should embrace the peripheral location of the site because it is important to the identity of the park. Furthermore, including the park into the context of the forest trails will create opportunities for hiking, dog walking, cross country skiing and broaden the usage of the park.

## Interviews

From the interviews we gained historical knowledge about the Valhall park. The current struggles and initiatives of the park and the Folkparken Valhalls Framtid association also became clear through the interviews.

## Historical research and analysis

This research gave us a clear view of what the Folkets parks in Sweden have meant historically, on how they came to be and what purposes they served. It enabled us to draw conclusions on what worked historically and how that stands in the current situation, what tools and strategies would be good to use to guarantee success for the parks today.

## DIVE analysis

This analysis gave us an overview of what structures there actually are on the plot. It studied the state and character of the buildings, helping us comprehend the renovations they might need and their suitability for hosting certain types of activities. It presented the architectural characteristics of the site and what atmosphere these create.

## Survey

The survey provided information about what people think of the park, if they have been to the park, their interests, what activities they would be willing to arrange, and other valuable thoughts about the park and its importance to the community.

## Mapping of stakeholders

Through the mapping of stakeholders we found many potential stakeholders in different scales, making it clear that the park is not only relevant in a local context, but also in a larger context, such as on a regional level. Collaborations between stakeholders are important for the development and maintenance of the park.

Part Three

Project proposal

# Fence

Currently, the entire site is closed-off by a fence with barbed wire, which makes it very unwelcoming. We realised that this element was of great importance for the

development of the project. We then tried different suggestions that could be beneficial to the Folkpark, presented here on the right.



## TOP OF MIND EXERCISE



Suggestion of using hedges instead of the barbed wire fence



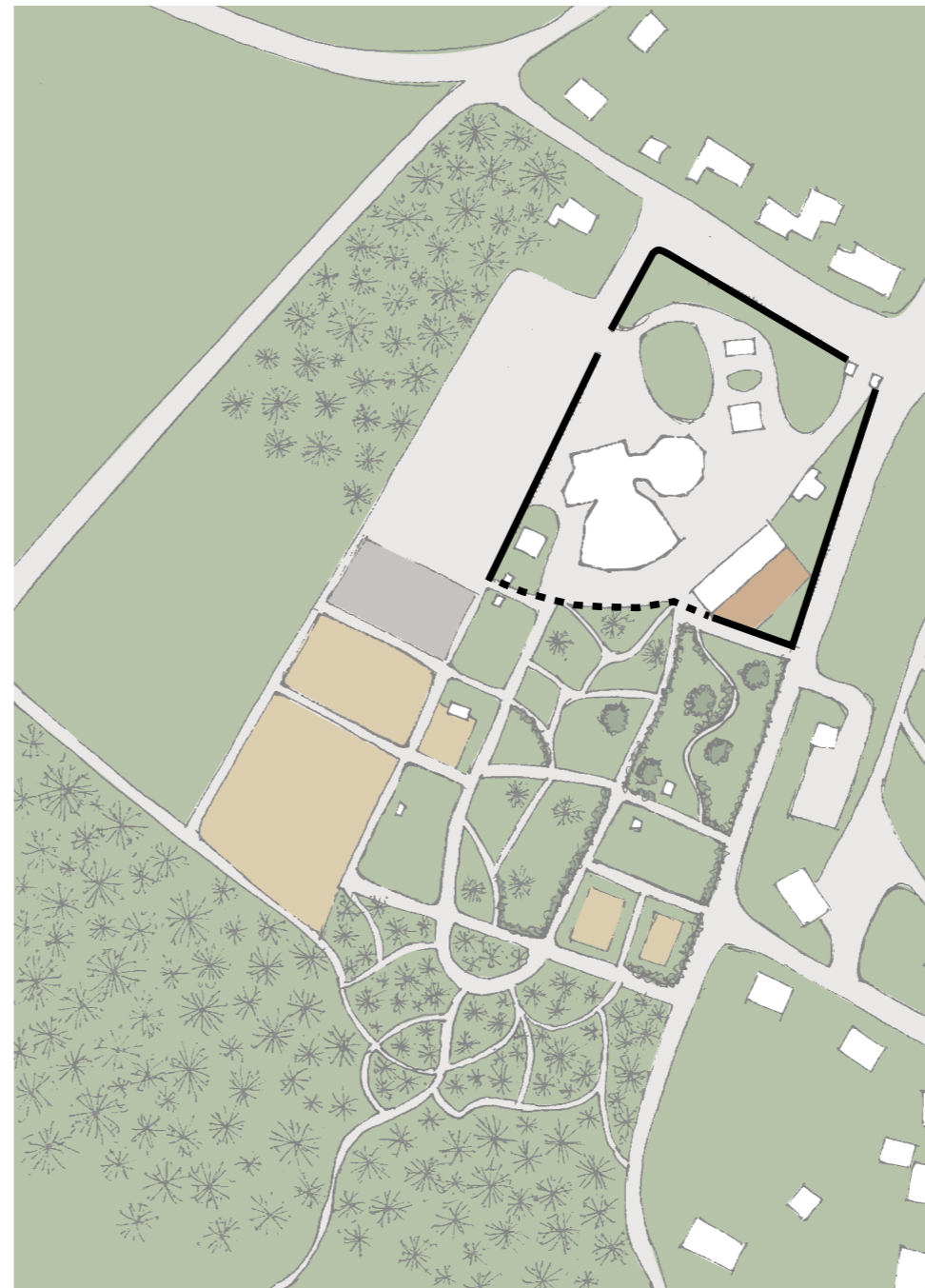
Suggestion of keeping some parts of the fence and having more openings



Suggestion of keeping only the northern part fenced



Suggestion of having the smallest fenced area possible



Here is the proposal we agreed on.

We received some input from our tutors from the municipality, saying that having a temporary fence around the whole park would be too expensive, thus keeping some parts of it would be economically beneficial.

Our proposal consists of keeping the northern part of the Valhall park fenced, but removing the barbed wire and replacing it with for example a wooden fence.

The fenced area has also been extended in order to create a small green area along the street. The entrances are open most of the time to enable a continuous access to the site. The dashed line represents the place where a temporary fence could be installed when specific events require it.

As for the southern part, it is completely open to firstly transform it into an everyday public space for the inhabitants, secondly because the new activities put in place do not require being closed off, and finally, to strengthen the connection with the forest by opening the side of the park facing it.

# Map of new connections

## WHY NEW CONNECTIONS?

Due to the park's peripheral location in the town, it is not necessarily a natural meeting point. To change this, we evaluated its centrality in the town and came to the conclusion that to the surrounding forest areas with paths, the park is quite central. Therefore connecting it onto these existing paths can make the park part of both the forest and town contexts, thus making it more central in a larger context.

## WHAT NEW CONNECTIONS?

Three main paths have been added. One longer connecting the park to the trails near the Långevi sports centre, and two shorter going in an east-west direction. The first is connected onto an existing road, Furunäsvägen, from which you have access back onto the paths in the forest. The second is connecting Furunäsvägen with other existing roads, through the forest. This enables visitors to the park to combine their visit with a stroll through the forest, easily choosing the length of the walk.



Map of Bengtsfors town  
1:10 000



# Master plan

The master plan on the right represents what the park would look like if our ideas were applied.

Here we are presenting a proposal that we think is relevant in relation to the information we got from the survey answers and the interviews, but other activities or facilities could be put there instead.

Our main purpose is to keep as many existing structures as possible, and make minor changes by renovating or improving them. We adapt their functions to, in our opinion, more pertinent and suited ones.

Only local and natural materials would be used in the renovations and the help of local labour force and volunteers would be required to guarantee the sustainability and low cost of this project.

The largest transformation of the site is the southern part of the park area. Greenery is added, new paths appear and a variety of activities are taking place in different zones. The intention is to enable an everyday usage of the park and let the inhabitants be part of developing and taking care of it. It is time for the park to once again be a people’s park.

The location and description of each part of the park are presented on the following pages.

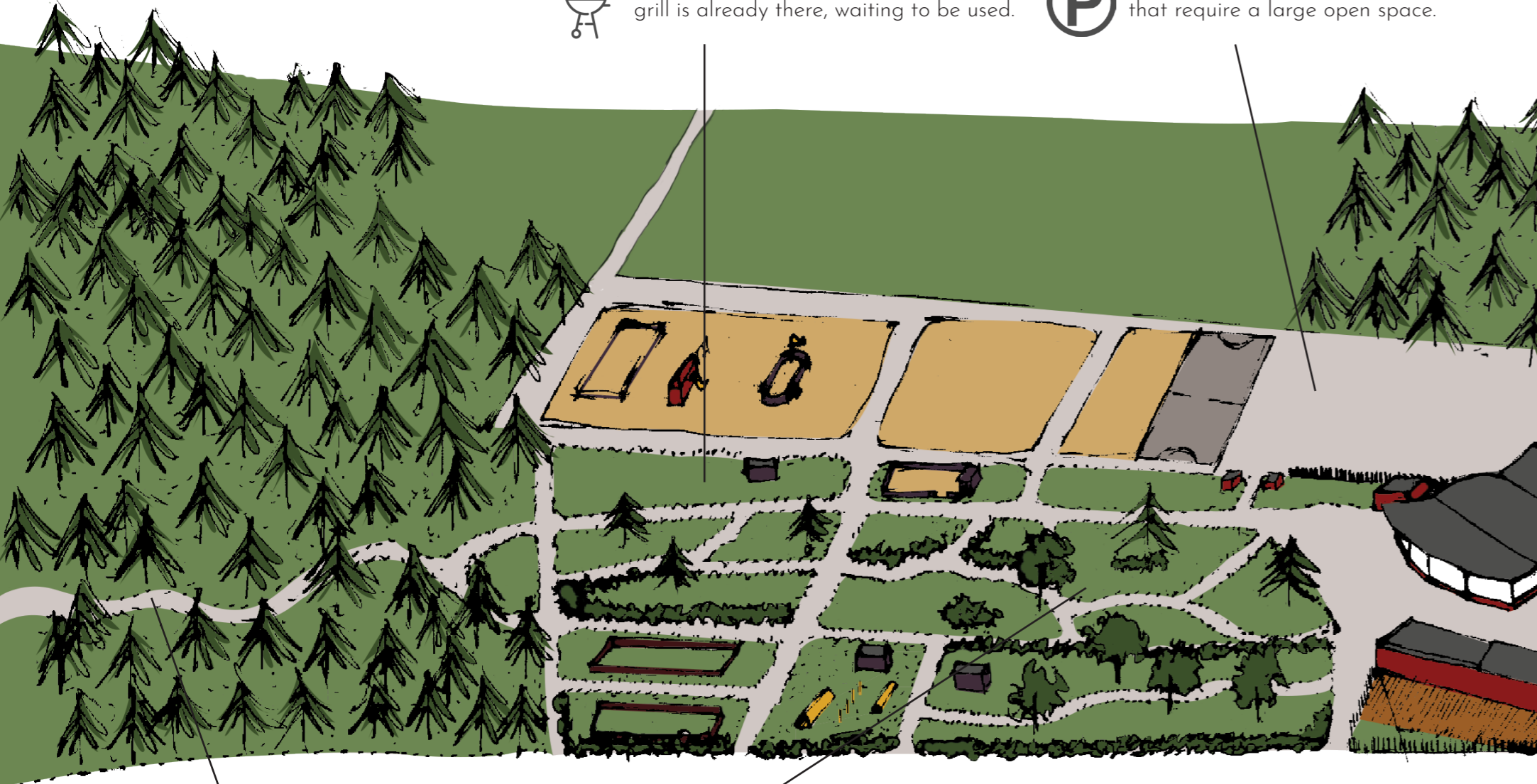


# Zones overview

- 1. PICNIC AREA
- 2. PARKING LOT
- 3. CULTURAL HUB
- 4. CAR ENTRANCE
- 5. FRONT PARK
- 6. MUSIC & HANG-OUT BUILDING
- 7. CAFÉ & RENTABLE SPACE
- 8. BOTANICAL GARDEN
- 9. FOREST TRAILS
- 10. RECREATION AREA
- 11. ADMINISTRATIVE BUILDING
- 12. BIKE PARKING
- 13. WC
- 14. ENTRANCE
- 15. COURTYARD
- 16. FRUIT GARDEN
- 17. DOG AREA
- 18. HIDDEN GARDEN



# Axonometric view



**1 PICNIC AREA:** This area is designed for people to sit on the grass, share a meal or just relax and enjoy the sun. A grill is already there, waiting to be used.



**2 PARKING LOT:** Apart from its obvious use, this area can also host a drive-in cinema or other similar events that require a large open space.



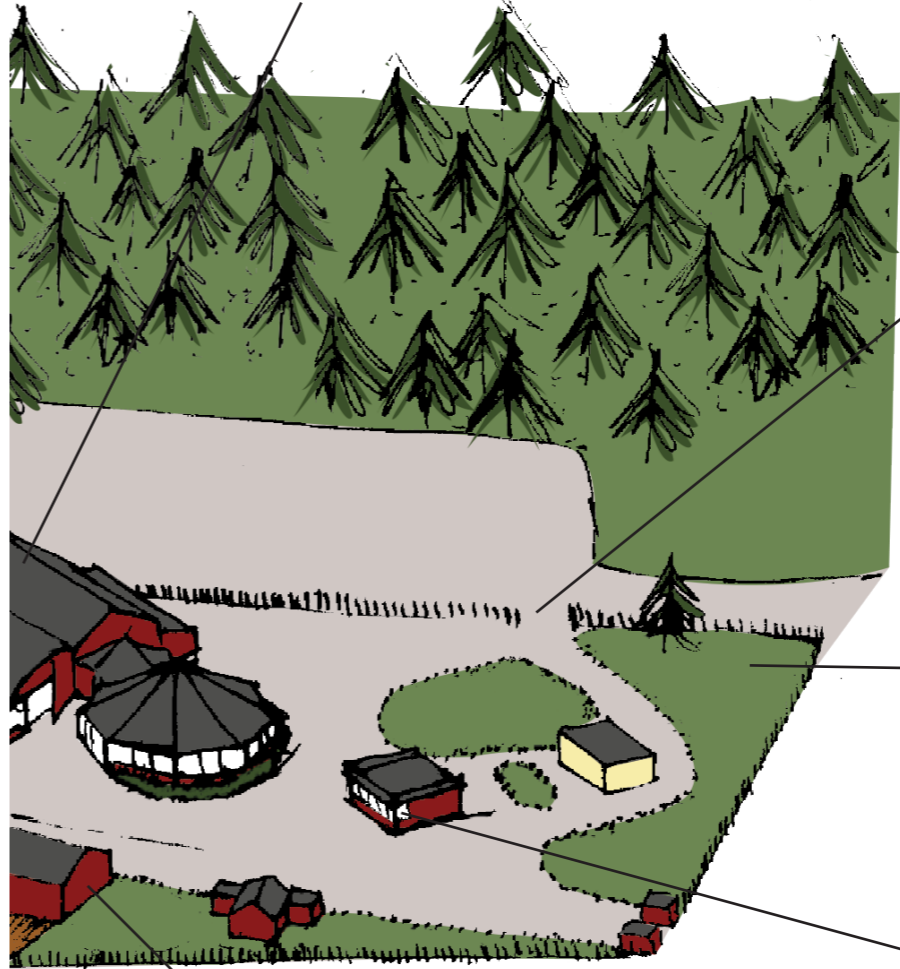
**8 BOTANICAL GARDEN:** This is a space for walking along beautiful plantings. The plant species can either be local or more exotic. This space enables promoting biodiversity in the area, by for example planting a summer meadow with various flower species to attract insects.



**9 FOREST TRAILS:** New paths are added to connect the park to the existing trails in the South.



**3 CULTURAL HUB:** Those buildings were designed to host cultural events such as plays, concerts, dance performances and so on. They keep exactly the same purpose in this case but might be used to host an even wider variety of activities.



**4 CAR ENTRANCE:** Here is the large gates through which cars or trucks can go. This is important to enable the fire brigade to access the site, for instance.



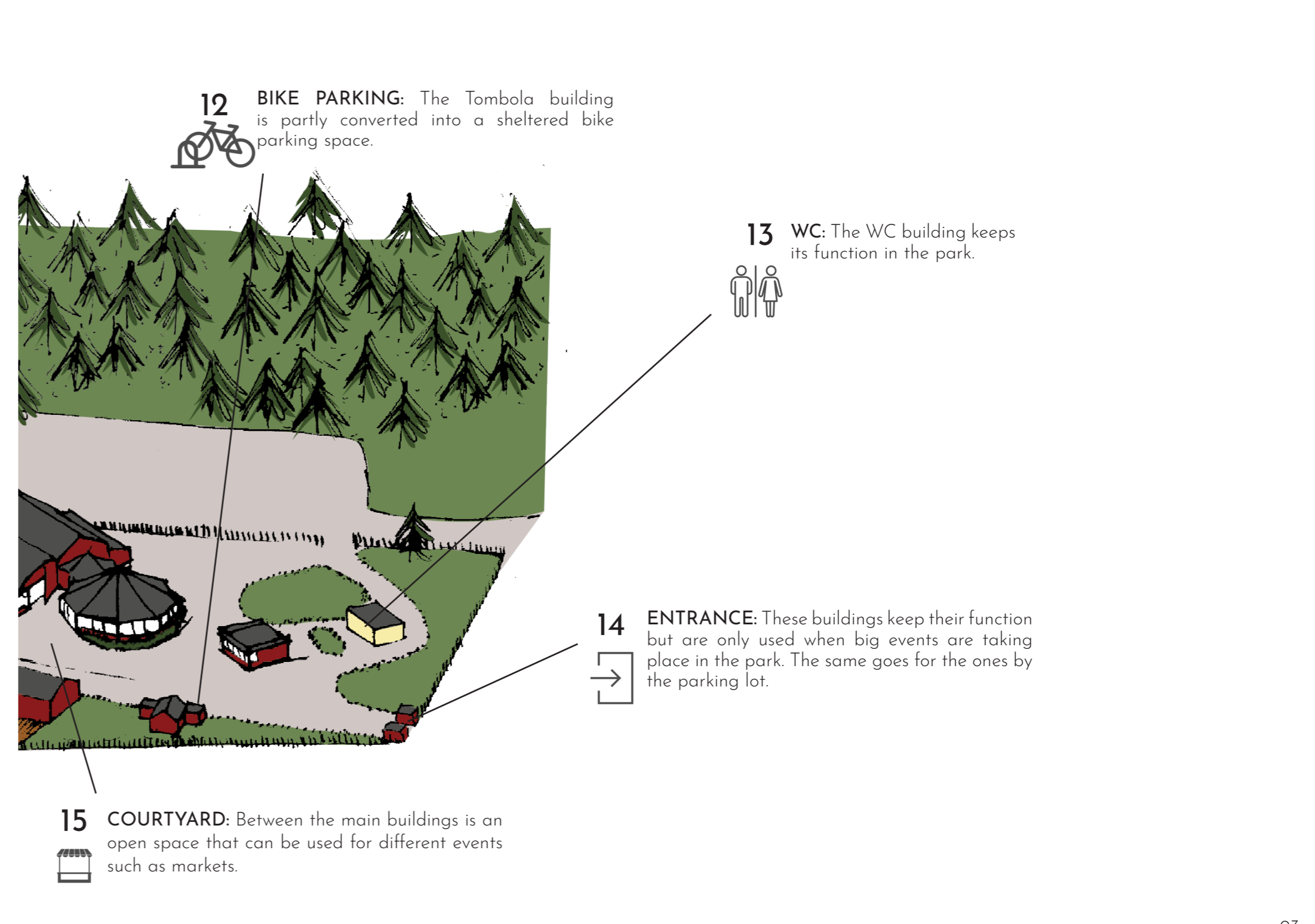
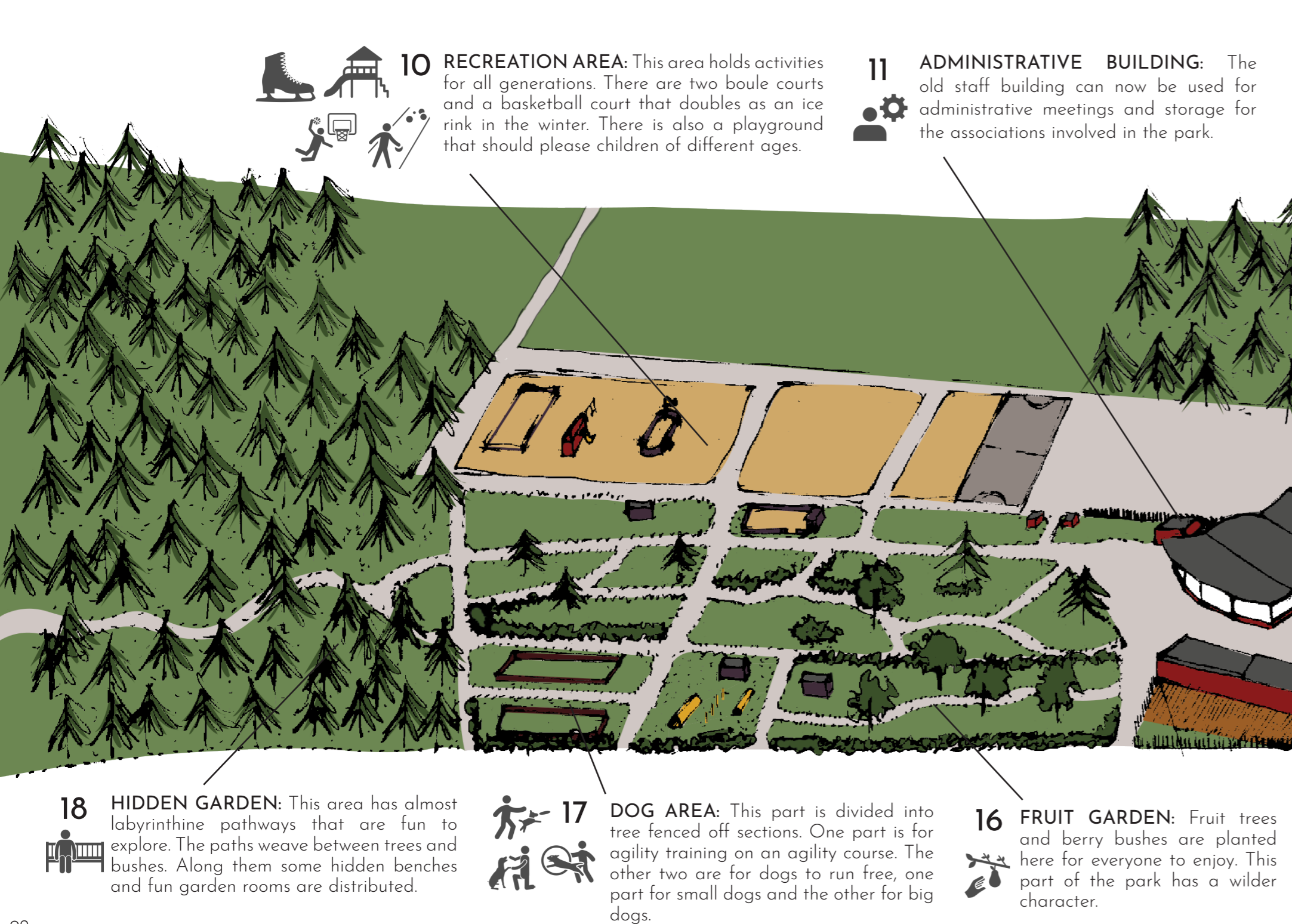
**5 FRONT PARK:** A cozy park with winding paths and beautiful plantings.



**6 MUSIC & HANG-OUT BUILDING:** The previous kiosk can now be used to host music lessons, jamming sessions or just friends wanting to hang-out together.



**7 CAFÉ & RENTABLE SPACE:** The old restaurant building is now used as a café and the serving room can be rented for private or public events.



# Stakeholder engagement

## HOW TO ENGAGE STAKEHOLDERS

Building on the mapping of stakeholders, these associations should be contacted and approached with the idea of participating in the Valhall park facilities. The benefits of gathering stakeholders around a cultural hub should be pitched to these associations. Hopefully some of them will move some activities to the park, such as meetings and events.

Creating an overview of the different interests of the potential stakeholders is important to do at an early stage. This will showcase the width of the possible activities that could take place there. In pages 97-99 there are three calendars that present an example of this width, built on the stakeholders found through the mapping.

It is important to not only engage associations, but also look for individual-based initiatives. Working with the inhabitants, as well as other stakeholders, through participatory design methods will be a key strategy. This could be done in many different ways, such as workshops, surveys, meetings and discussions.

## HOW TO WORK WITH STAKEHOLDERS

To support and encourage the collaboration between stakeholders in the park, the Folkparken Valhalls Framtid (the association running the park today) might host some workshops that help grow the bonds between the stakeholders and their bond to the park.

Some stakeholders might be more engaged in the park, on a weekly basis, whereas others might only be there for special events. It is important to support both types of stakeholder engagement in the park. The stakeholders that frequently use the park might have a bigger influence in the decision-making processes, because they will largely form the backbone of the Valhall park in this proposal.

This work with engaging stakeholders in the park facilities might be supported financially and organisationally by the stakeholders of more administrative character, such as Västra folkets hus och parker and Folkets hus och parker.

## HOW THE STAKEHOLDERS SHAPE THE PARK

The stakeholders will be what makes the park successful. They will be the ones using the park on a regular basis, as well as the ones sharing a large part of the responsibility for the park's upkeep, as a collective. In return, they will be able to shape the park according to their needs.

The park not only needs to be developed according to the needs of the stakeholders, but also in regard to those of the general public. Both of these aspects are important in order to maintain the park's democratic functions, as well as to make the spaces relevant and resilient to change. All of this needs to be coordinated by the Folkparken Valhalls Framtid association that will be the key actor in making all of this happen.

The outcome of the work will depend entirely on what stakeholders are involved in the park. Therefore, the specifics of this design proposal might be completely different than an actual outcome. In the proposal, the park has been divided into zones. This approach can

be utilized in the same way, only changing the content of the zones to suit the relevant stakeholders' interests and needs. Dividing the large spaces in the park makes it possible to engage more stakeholders, thus creating the strength and resilience needed for the concept to be successful.

## LONG-TERM PERSPECTIVE

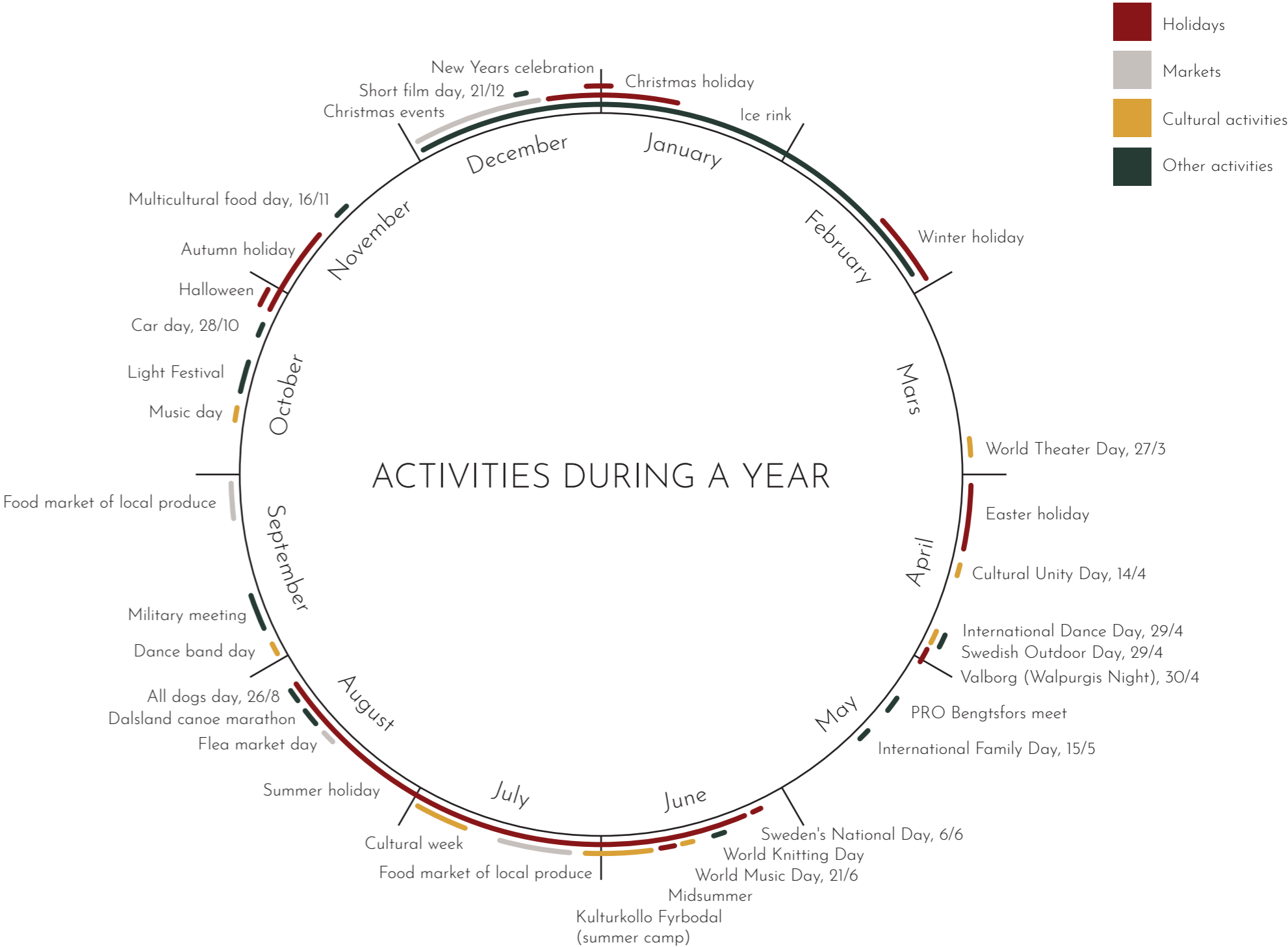
The work with stakeholders will be important to maintain, in order to ensure that the park and the concept thrive. The work with stakeholders should never stop or be neglected. The interests and needs will be forever changing and the park should function as a shell that can contain many different things. Stakeholders and initiatives will come and go, but as long as there are people in Bengtsfors municipality there will be a need for a public and flexible space such as the Valhall park.

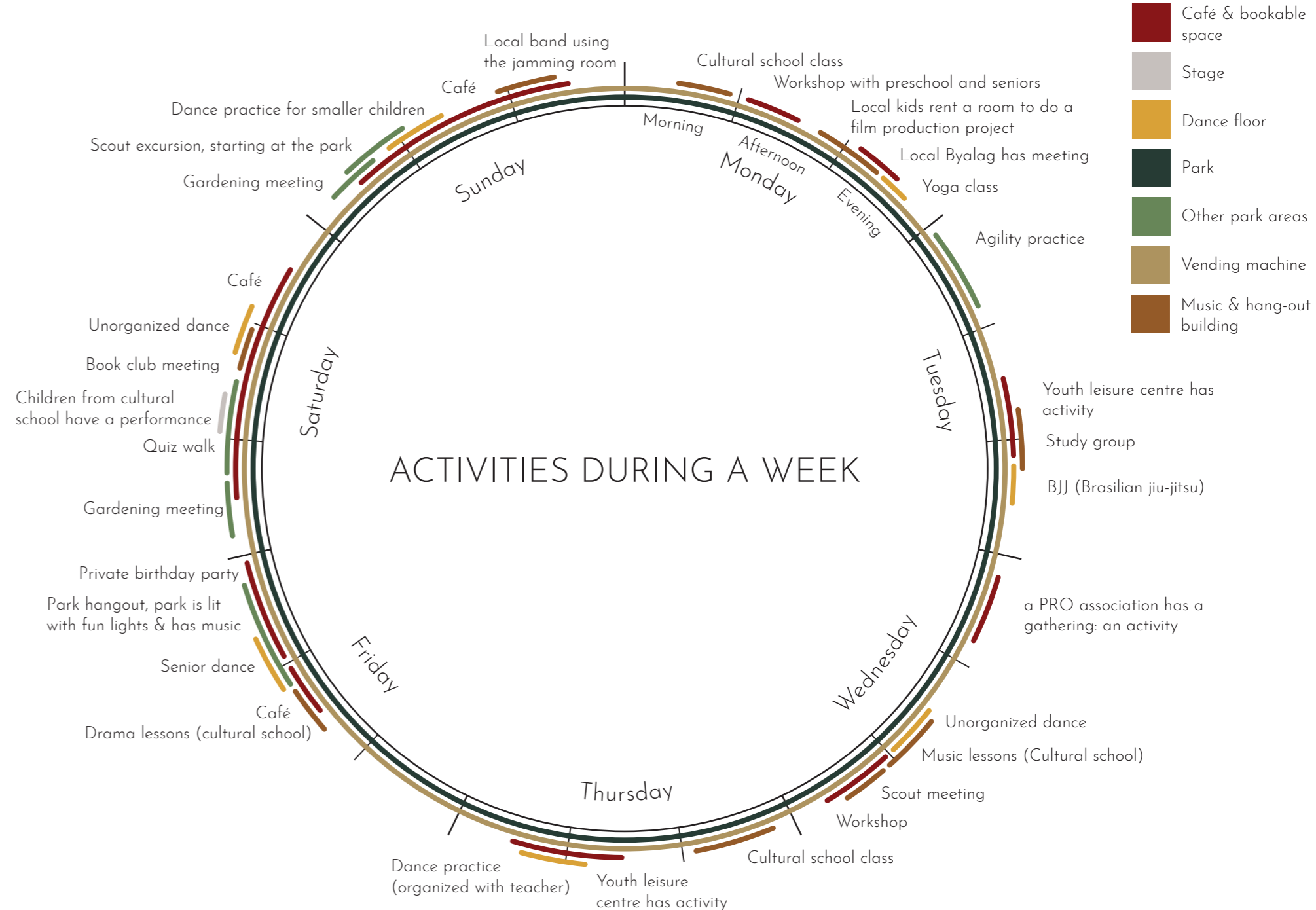
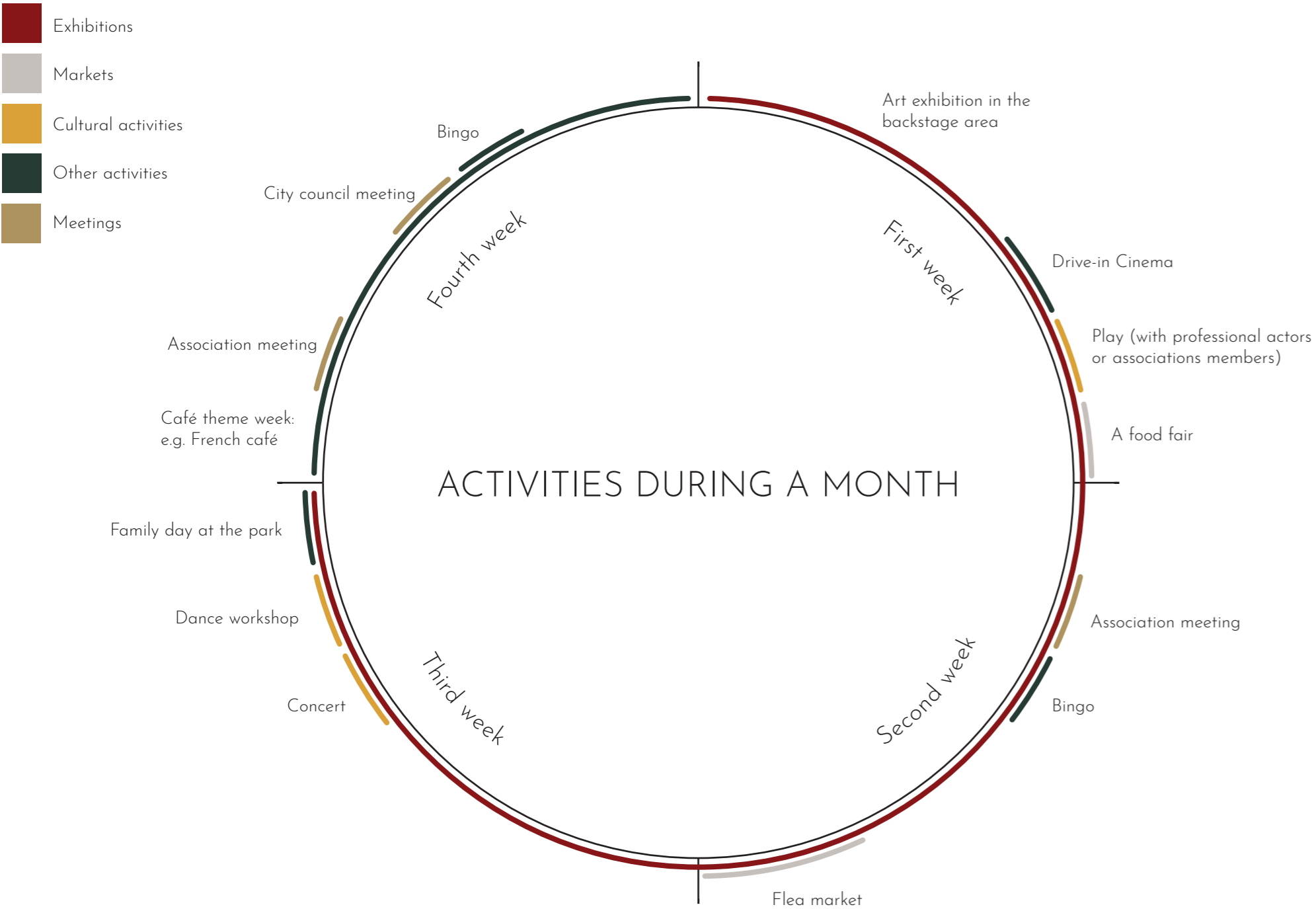
# Calendars

## WHAT THEY SHOW AND WHY

In the following pages there are three calendars describing a variety of activities and events that can take place in the Valhall park. The first one depicts the park over a year and focuses on seasonal events and occasional activities. The second one spans over a month and displays things that could take place a few times a year. This calendar is an in-between scale of the first and third one. The third one depicts the weekly activities and exemplifies how the park can be used on a daily basis.

The main purposes of the calendars are to give inspiration for, and to exemplify how the park can be reprogrammed through a concrete schedule, but also to emphasize that there is great potential for the park to be used all year round and not just in the summer season.





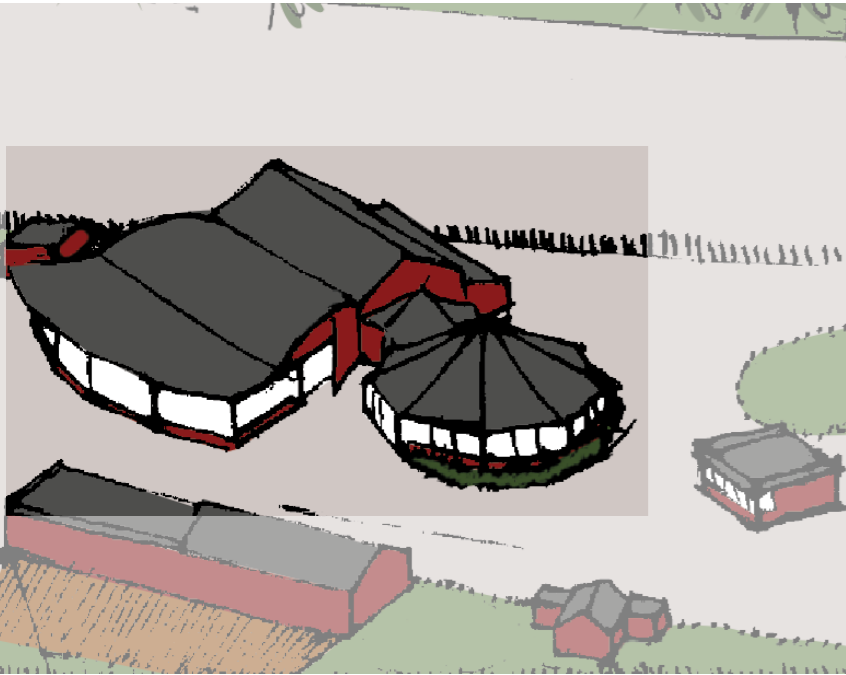
# Programme needs

GENERAL NEEDS (needed for mostly all activities): Wifi, Storage, access to water outside, access to electricity outside, bookable/rentable spaces, both outdoor and indoor pieces of furniture (tables, chairs, benches, parasols, etc), public bathrooms, shelter for bad weather, trashcans.

[illegible][illegible]

# Detailed proposal

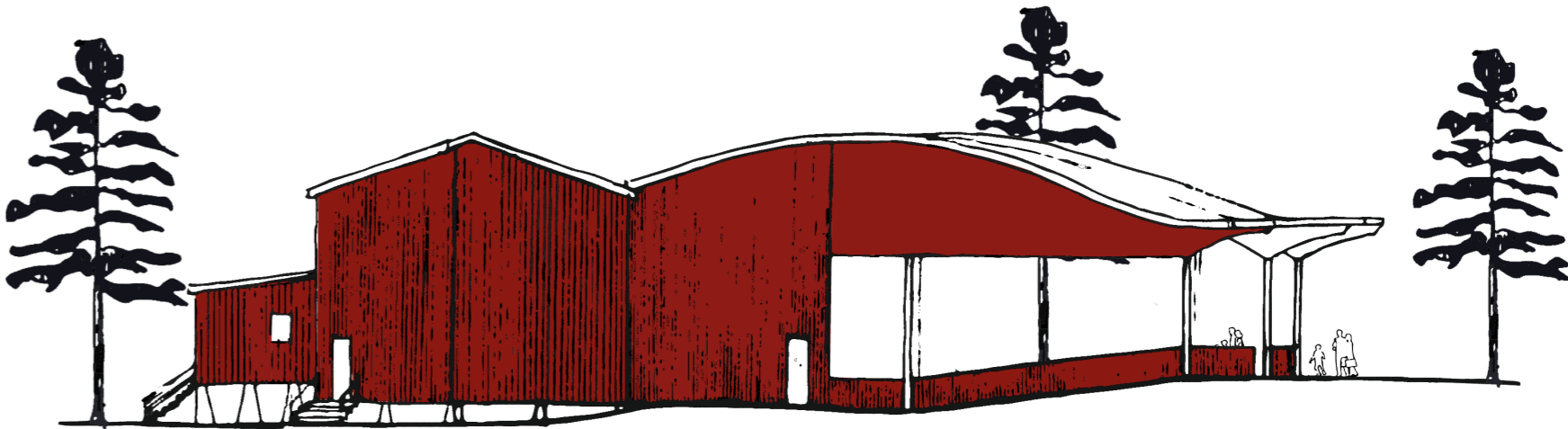
## Stage & dance floor



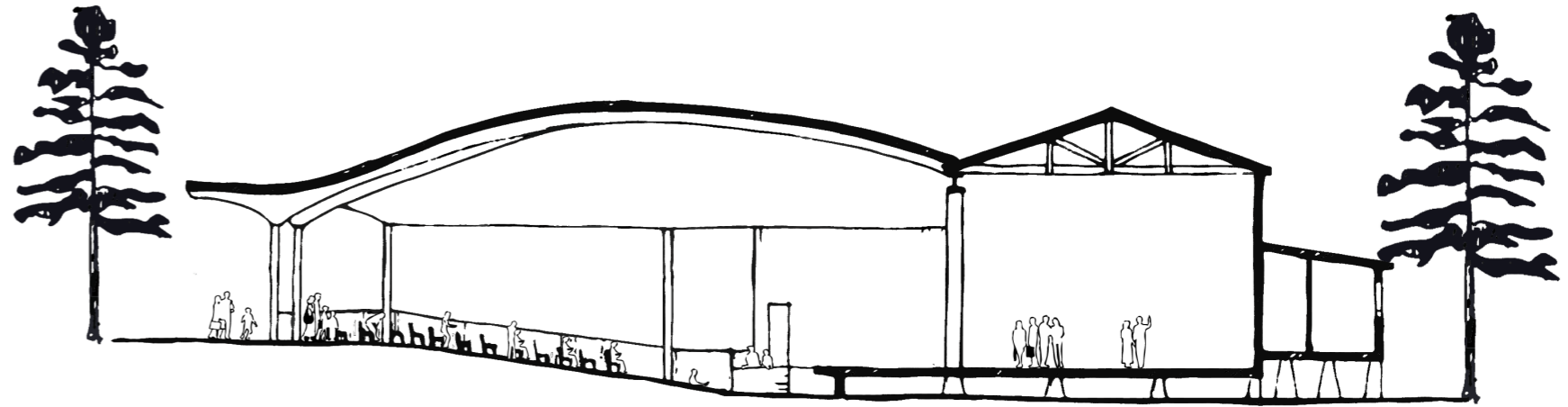
The original purpose of these buildings was to host cultural events such as concerts, plays and dance performances. In our proposal, we keep this main function but suggest that the buildings might be used for other activities as well, such as exhibitions, film projections, yoga classes, etc. By doing this, we aim to increase and broaden their usage.



Dance lesson



WEST ELEVATION



SECTION A-A

Before



61. Stage and dance floor then

Now

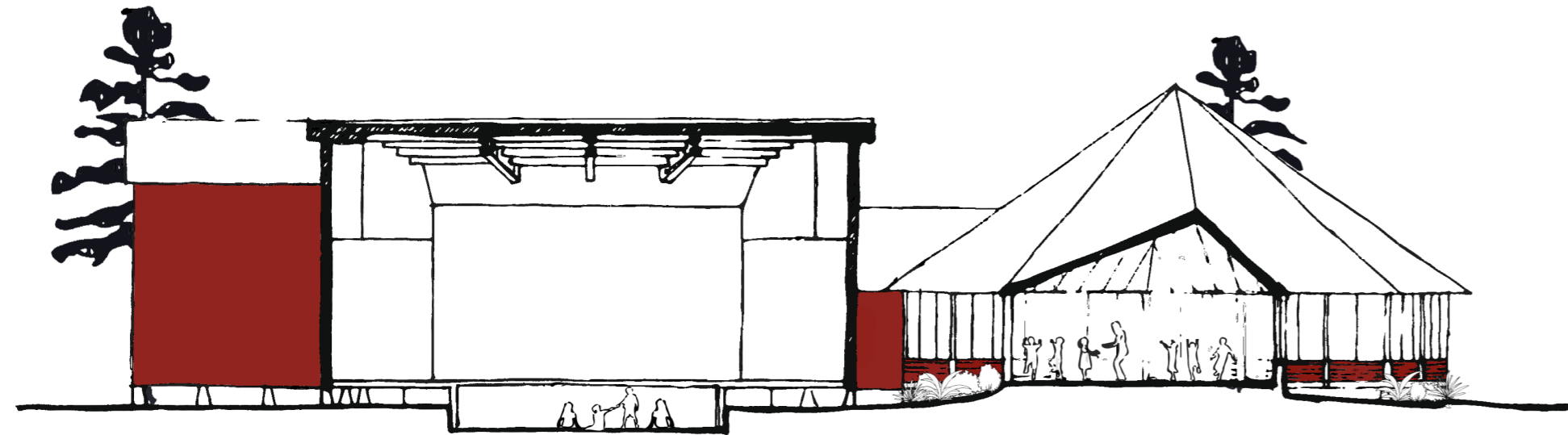


62. Stage and dance floor today



63. Interior of dance floor today





SECTION B-B



The renovations needed can be divided in several stages, starting with replacing what needs to be replaced, polishing what needs to be polished and doing some paint work. This step could be done with the help of volunteers interested in participating to the relaunching of the park.

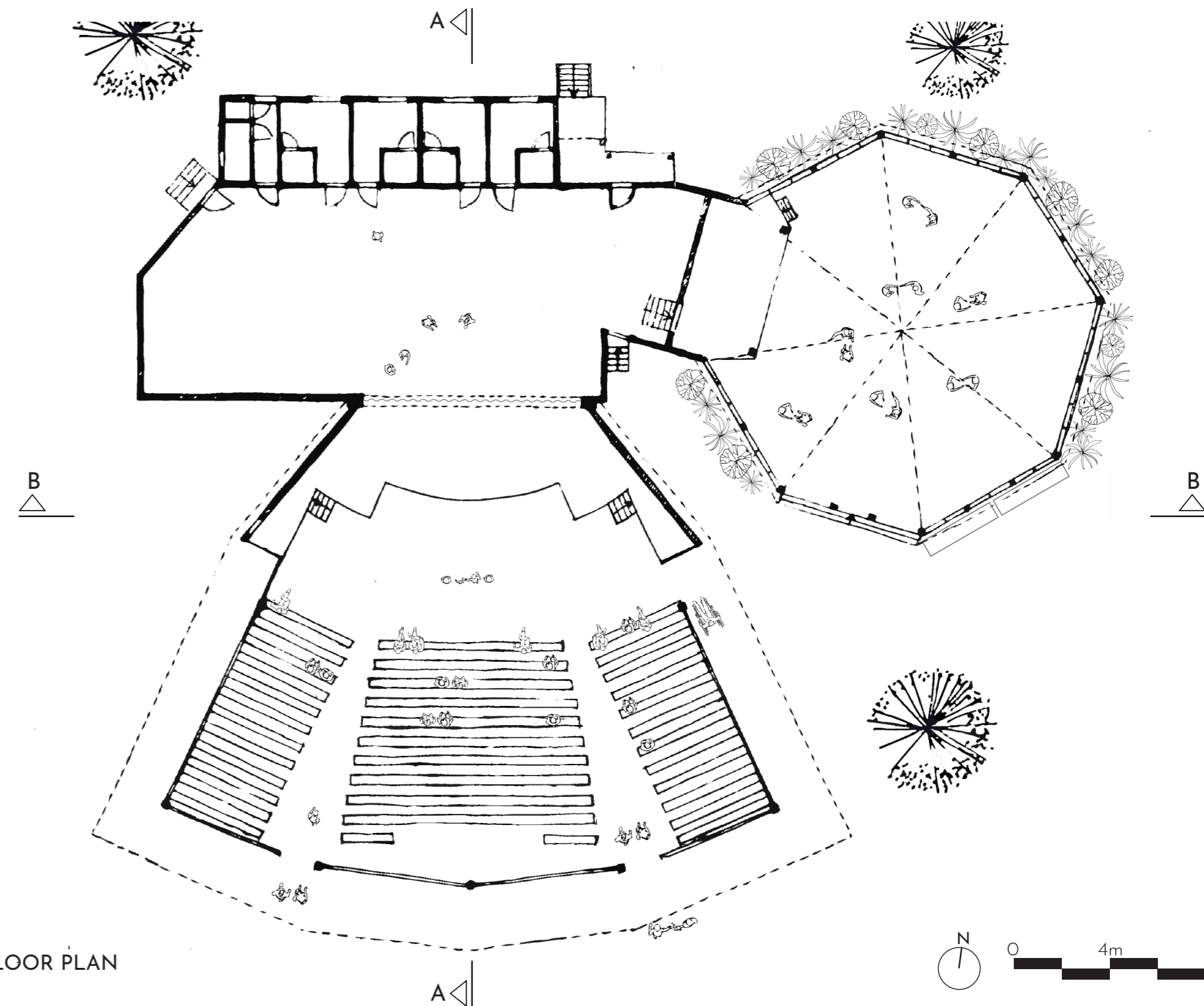
Then, some windows of the dance floor could be replaced. Currently some of them are just plastic slabs, and doors could be placed in order to be able to close the building.

Finally, the biggest change can be done by installing a removable structure that would

close the stage and make it usable even during cold seasons.

No major changes would be done in the backstage area, other than insulating it someday if it seems necessary. We have not developed this idea here but it might be an aim to go even further in the process of making the park usable all year round.

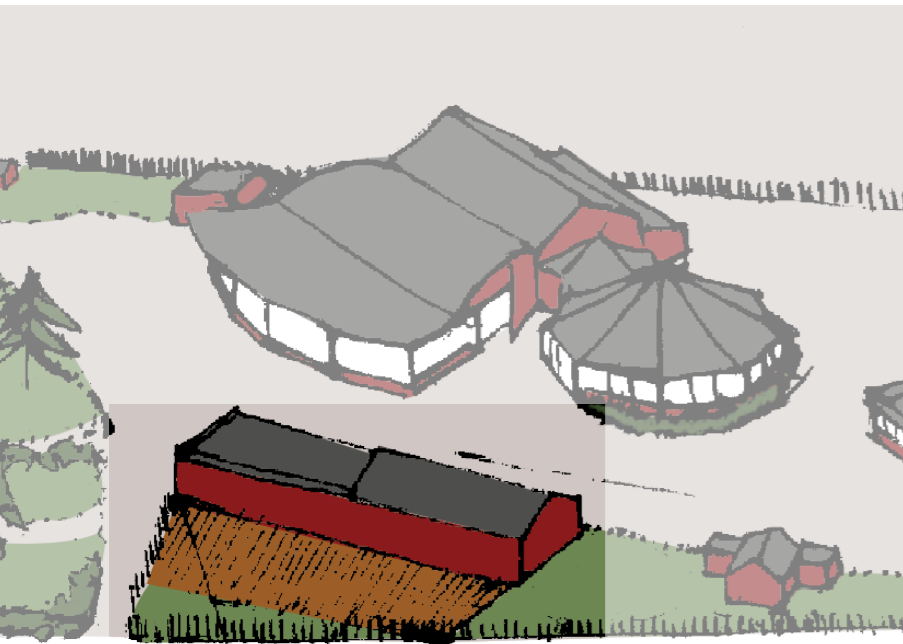
These renovations would be done in a sustainable way by using local and natural resources and calling on local labour force and volunteers in order to keep the costs as low as possible.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN



Café & bookable space



The restaurant building was formerly used for serving food and hosting private events. In our proposal, it becomes a multifunctional place, including a café staffed on the weekends but with a vending machine accessible everyday. The old serving room is bookable for hosting different types of events, such as workshops, private parties, seminars, lectures and so on. The aim of this room is mainly to give people an obvious place to gather and share experiences together. The entire building can also be booked in case people need to have private access to the kitchen and the bathrooms during events.

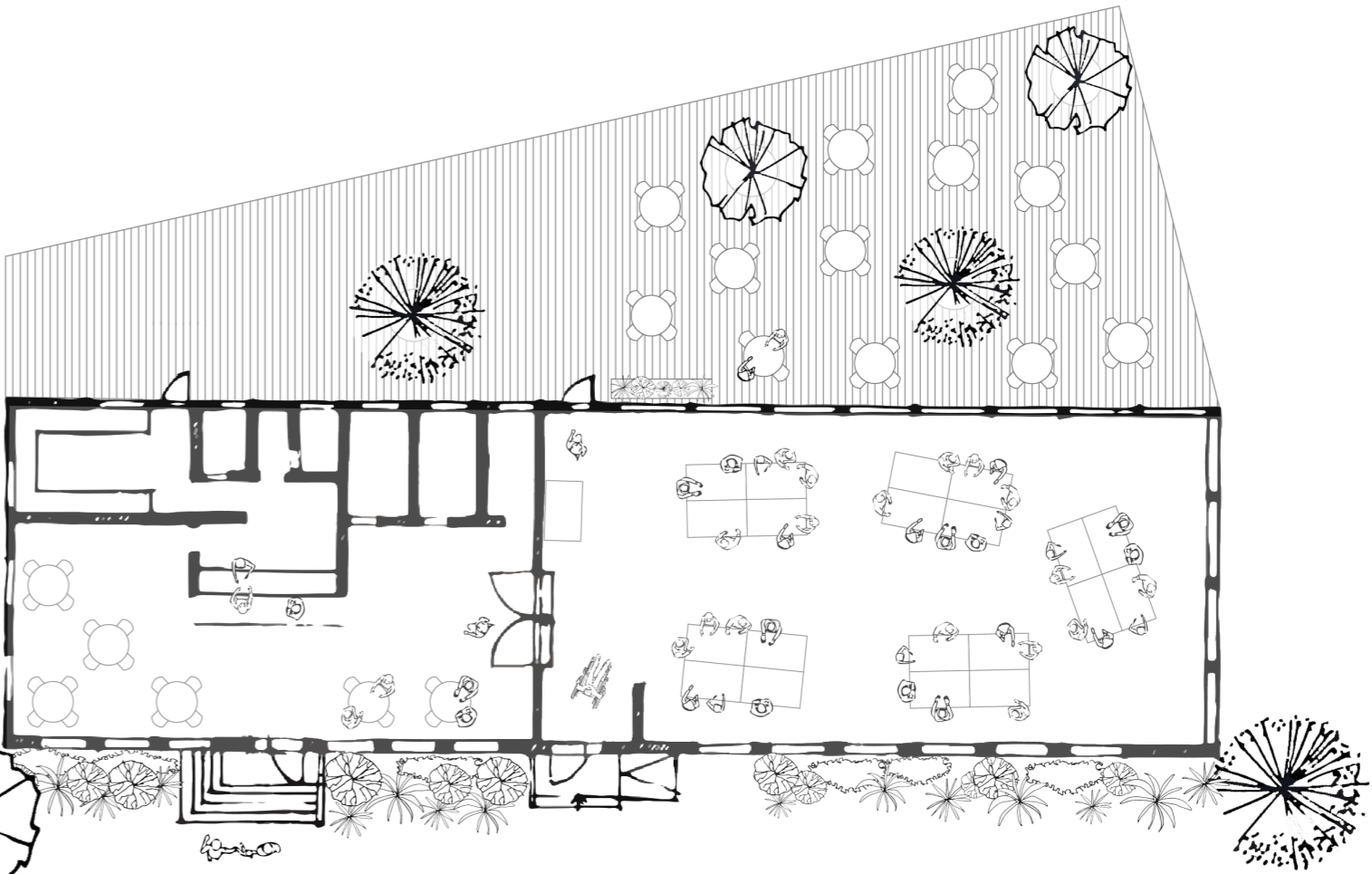


Intergenerational workshop



NORTH ELEVATION

Greenery is kept and added, not only to give a more pleasant look to the exteriors of the building but also to increase the diversity of plantings present on the site.



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

The main renovations needed in the building are some paint work, the replacement of the exterior stairs and of several windows. Except for that, the interior of the building is in very good condition.

Therefore, the only changes we make are those mentioned above and the installation of a deck that extends the sitting space.

Before

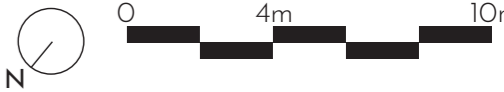


64. Restaurant building and courtyard then

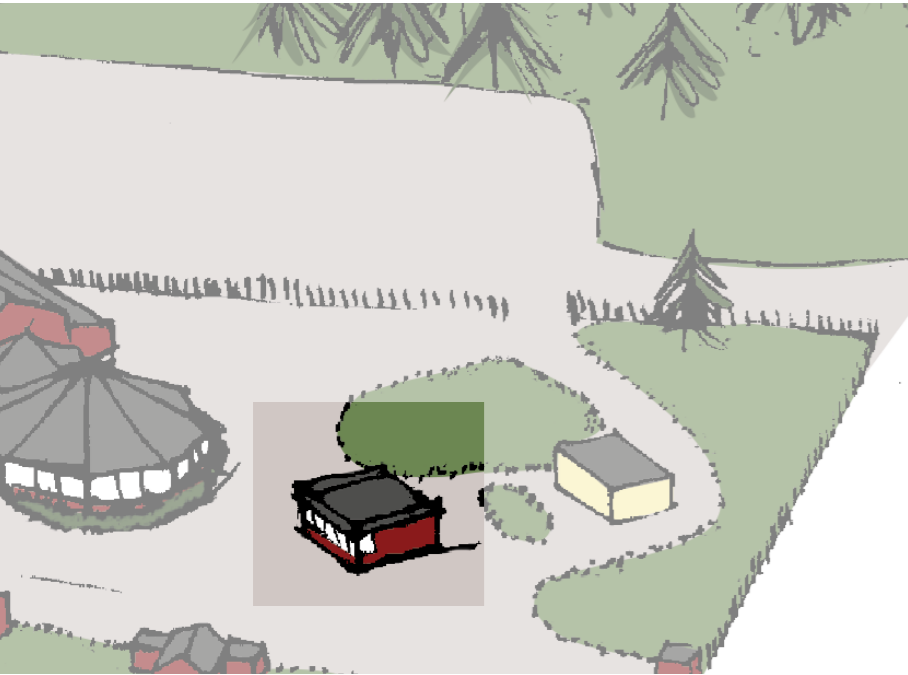
Now



65. Restaurant building and courtyard today



Music & hang-out building



Before, the kiosk building was used to sell drinks and food during events and then mainly for storage. We suggest to completely change its function and use it to receive the youth of Bengtsfors when they want to hang-out with their friends or play with their band. This building is also bookable if people want to use it at a specific time: associations like the cultural school can use it to give music lessons for instance.

The building has three main rooms where activities can be held. There are two toilets and a shower as well. There is a stair case leading to a basement that can be used for storage. A kitchenette, with coffee machines and kettles, is already installed.



Band rehearsal

Before



66. Kiosk building then

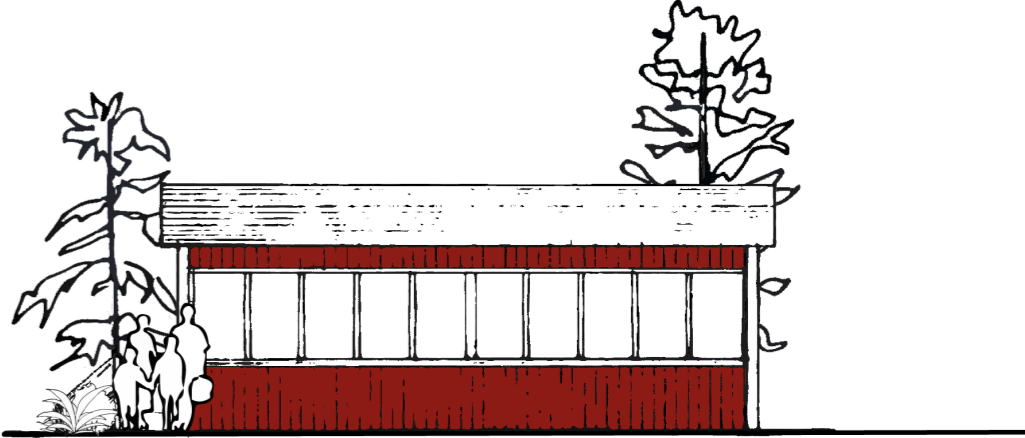
Now



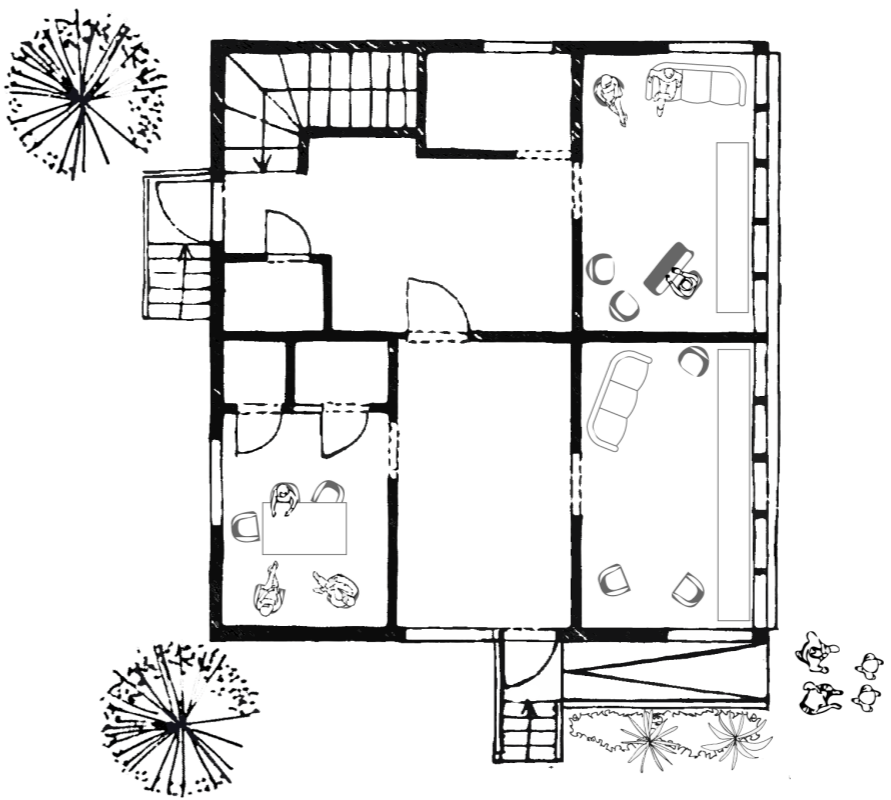
67. Kiosk building today



SOUTH ELEVATION



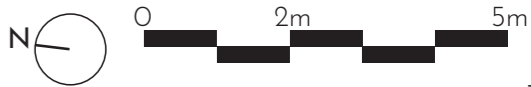
WEST ELEVATION



GROUND FLOOR PLAN

The renovations needed for this building are mostly some paint work, the installation of an access ramp, and the improvement or the replacement of the exterior stairs.

At some point, soundproofing the rooms, insulating the building and changing the sash windows would probably be necessary.



# Administrative building



This building was previously used by the park's staff and for storage.

We suggest claiming it for the associations interested in participating in the park, for their administrative meetings and storage of documents and material related to the activities they organise in the park.

The changes required on the outside are the installation of an access ramp for people with reduced mobility and the improvement of the now derelict stairs.

On the inside, the floor and wallpapers need to be freshened up or replaced.



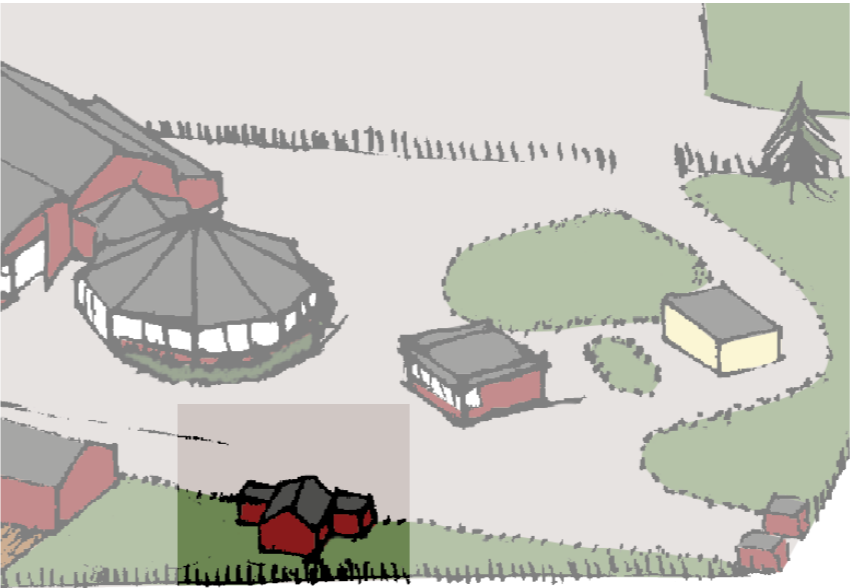
Administrative meeting

Now



68. Staff building now

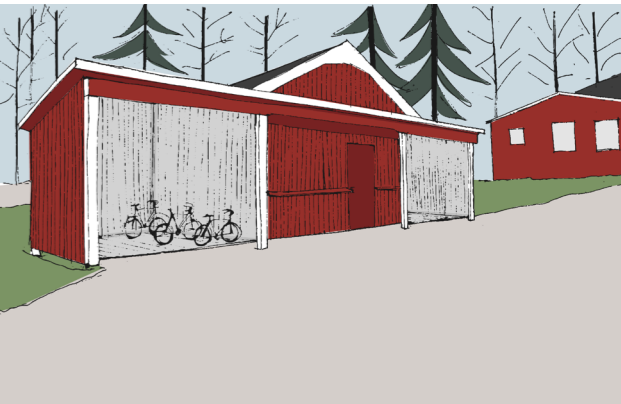
# Bike parking



The tombola building is now quite empty and is not used for anything but its obvious function.

Our suggestion is to use it for storage of exterior pieces of furniture, structures or party tents, and for bike parking.

In order to do so, we would remove the walls at both ends of the main facade, like shown in the drawing on the right, to open these rooms and make them into shelters for bike users. Since this building is facing the main courtyard and is located close to one entrance point, these new functions seem relevant.



Bike parking

Before



69. Tombola building then

Now



70. Tombola building today

Outdoor area



The biggest changes are applied to the exterior area of the park. With most of the fence removed, making the park more accessible, our aim is to offer more outdoor activities to the users.

The park would be divided in several zones, each with a specific function. Therefore, there would be a playground for the children, a basketball and a boule court, a botanical garden, an area for dogs and a fruit garden.

The connection with the forest and the trails nearby would be reinforced by a hidden garden with paths weaving between the trees.

The several sheds and booths scattered in the park, that we thought had an historical or functional value, are kept and renovated to showcase the traditional techniques formerly used and to serve as storage in the zones they are connected to.

Paths are added to facilitate the circulation on the site and greenery is planted to increase the biodiversity and help pollinating insects.

We hope that these changes and additions would attract a broader range of users and help the park thrive.

Stages of development

WHY HAVE STAGES OF DEVELOPMENT

We divided the development of the Valhall park in three stages presented on the following pages. This was done due to several reasons:

Firstly, dividing the workload into stages facilitates having an overview of the work needed to be done. It makes the task feel less daunting if it is divided into manageable parts.

Secondly, spreading the workload will also spread the costs and therefore help the stakeholders realize the project in the most efficient and economical way.

Thirdly, in this type of project, with a lot of interventions needed, prioritising them is necessary so the most important changes are done first.

Finally, it is important to start with things that engage the right type of stakeholders at the right time. The stakeholder work is an important part of the development process for the park in our proposal. Some steps in the development needs to be built upon previous steps, to make the process of including more stakeholders in the park successful.

# Stages of development

## 1st stage

### Engage local stakeholders and inhabitants to volunteer to develop the park

Having a wide net of people and organisations interested in the park is an essential part of the future success of the park. The inhabitants should have a sense of responsibility and ownership of the park to reclaim it as a park for the people. This could be done by inviting local associations and inhabitants to workshops, discussions, and other similar events.

### Start doing smaller renovations

This could be things like painting, replacing damaged elements like stairs connected to the larger and most important buildings: the stage, the rotunda and the restaurant building. These efforts should rely on local volunteers gained by the first step in this stage.



71. Paint chipping off of the stage

### Tear down the fence in the southern part in the park

The parts that are going to become a public park need to become accessible.



72. Fence at the south end of the park

### Replace the first round of windows

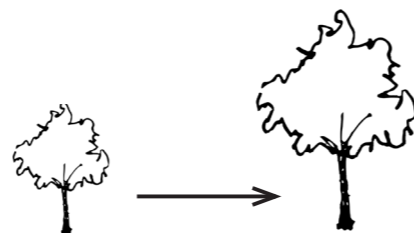
Some of the windows have been removed and replaced with insulation. This looks very unattractive from the outside and needs to be fixed.



73. Windows on the restaurant

### Begin the park development

- » Start building the dog park area to draw locals there on a daily basis.
- » Start developing the fruit garden because this will take a few years to grow.



- » Start developing the botanical garden areas. This could be done in stages through hosting gardening workshop.
- » Build the boule courts. This means removing the old rotten floor and replacing it with smooth gravel. Also adding some benches to sit on is needed.
- » Prepare the basketball court/ice rink area by making the ground level and asphaltting it.
- » Start developing the first parts of the playground area. This area can be constructed by using local materials like some of the trees on the plot. The playground can have an adventurous woodland character that suits the site.

## 2nd stage

### Continue the work with local stakeholders

At this point maybe tailoring some spaces or equipment to prevalent stakeholders, frequenting the park facilities.

### Closing off the rotunda and making it usable throughout the year

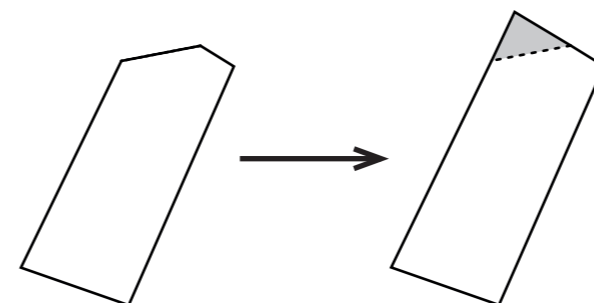
New doors and some walls need to be added along the south side of the rotunda. Some insulation might also be required to utilize the space during the colder seasons.

### Renovate the smaller buildings and sheds

The smaller buildings that have less priority should be refurbished at this point.

### Extend the north west corner of the park

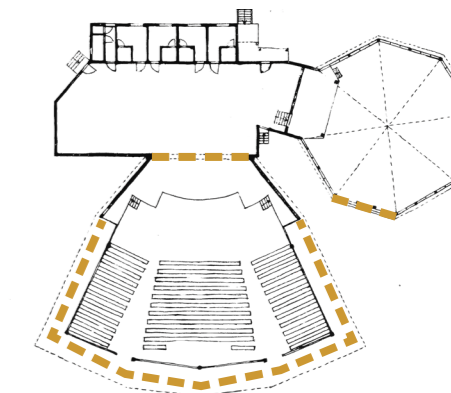
This part of the park will be extended into the current parking lot to make better use of that space.



## 3rd stage

### Redevelop the stage and backstage to be usable all year around

Insulating the space might be possible. The backstage area is a beautiful barn-character space that could be used for many different things if heated.



### Add the hidden garden in the south end

This part of the garden is the extension of the park along one of the connections onto the electric light trails. This area is not an essential part for the park concept to work but is a nice and exciting feature.

### Connect the park area onto the existing electric light trails

The park then becomes an accessible part of walking, running and going cross country skiing in the forest. It opens up the possibility to combine a nice walk in the forest with a fika at the café for example. This type of development needs to be negotiated and developed in collaboration with the municipality.

### Continue the park development

Add basketball hoops to the basketball court.

Finish the development of the playground. Hopefully at this point the Valhall park usage and development has taken off and some money can be spared to add new things like some more playground equipment.

### Replace the second round of windows

Windows can be expensive and require some professional expertise and therefore would be good to divide over two stages.

Part Four  
Conclusion

# Reflection

## Studio context

The course has been focused on understanding what sustainability looks like in a rural context compared to the normative urban context. Bengtsfors is suffering from trends like urbanization and centralization of services, job opportunities, etc. The aim of the whole studio is finding solutions and ways of life that help solve the issues the municipality is facing. The norm of doing things in urban contexts is not fully applicable and thus solutions need to be tailor made to the local context.

## Project focus

Our project focuses on the cultural and communal contexts that will be important driving forces going forward in the municipality. Working with these aspects will of course not have an effect on some of the larger problems in the municipality like the economic struggles, lack of healthcare accessibility and infrastructure. However, our project can be a part of strengthening the community and creating places to meet and hang out, creating local and regional collaborations around culture. This can strengthen the connections between different geographical contexts, making the municipality more attractive for families with children to counteract the decreasing population, and creating a diverse and inclusive environment that can support the wellbeing of all the municipality's inhabitants.

## Architect's role

Architects are usually only seen as designers of physical and concrete projects. However, that is not the only possible outcome of an architect's work.

In this project, we use our competence as architects to highlight the potential of the site. We designed a proposal and suggested a programme in order to start a discussion and increase the interest in the park. We do not state that we have the best solution, we simply present one possibility among many others. Further, we can not stress enough that the involvement of stakeholders is essential for shaping the future of the park. Without them, their engagement and financial support, there is very little chance for the park to survive.

## Stronger together

Our project is meant to fill a gap that exists in the community of Bengtsfors and to strengthen the cultural engagements in the municipality around a common site. The concept of "stronger together" is very present in a small municipality like Bengtsfors where individual initiatives can be more difficult to sustain.

## Democracy

We build upon already existing spatial resources that are on the verge of being lost if no intervention is done. Democracy is in part dependent on being able to gather large numbers of people, this has become clear to us through the historical research on Folkets parks and houses. The Valhall park is a unique site in Bengtsfors and if it is demolished, an important democratical function would be lost for the community.

## Our perspectives

Our own backgrounds and interest in culture have

strengthened our determination and faith in the concept. Gathering many cultural stakeholders in one place will strengthen it and make it more resilient than if it was mainly dependent on only one stakeholder or user. However, our own interest in these types of activities might also lead to a skewed perspective where we might value it higher than others. Although, in the municipality the main focus of resources seems to be on sports related spare time activities, thus boosting the cultural activities could lead to a more equal situation in and around Bengtsfors town.

## Delimitations

The Covid-19 pandemic has greatly affected our way of working with the project. When it became more and more clear that we would not be able to visit the site again our project shifted in character to being more of a visionary suggestion or concept of what could happen in the park and how that could be achieved rather than being able to thoroughly link our suggestions to more specific parts of the site.

Our inability to go on site and measure the buildings ourselves, as well as the lack of detailed and recent blueprints, prevented us from being able to look carefully into the buildings' structures, materials and construction techniques. We then could not design changes within the buildings themselves because they would not have been plausible.

The situation also made it a lot harder to contact the stakeholders as we initially wanted. We have some but

initially we envisioned more and maybe also to be able to specifically shape the site to accommodate some specific stakeholders rather than as it is now, a general suggestion. The underlying formulation shifts from "this should happen here" to "this could happen here".

## What we would have liked to develop further

One of our initial ideas was to adapt the open buildings to be able to use them all year round, regardless of the season. Unfortunately, we did not have the opportunity to develop this idea further, first because of the time, and second, because we did not have access to documents with enough details on the structure of these buildings.

## Target group

Along the course of the work, as we had contact with more and more people, our target group became very clear. We at one point had an email from the management of another Folkets park in Hunnebostrand asking if we knew other Chalmers students interested in working with their park. Also after the interview with Roger Axelsson where he had asked to receive a copy of our material to take with him to a meeting with one of the organisations he is part of, we realised that these types of people should be our main target group. Our purpose is perhaps not to suggest exactly how the Valhall park should be but rather to provide inspirational material and add to the ongoing discussion on the development of Folkets parks in Sweden in general. Our material has to be accessible, inspiring and readable for people like Roger, who fights for the survival of the Folkets parks.

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