

LINNEA RINGQVIST

## NATURALLY CONNECTED

- Investigating how cohousing can support sustainable living and social belonging in an urban context



We all agree that we need a shift towards a more sustainable way of living. We are confronted with societal challenges due to the overuse of earth's resources and at the same time, we need to face the growing urbanization. The majority of all people worldwide live in cities and the number is constantly increasing. The norm of a sustainable home in relation to the urban context should therefore be questioned.

During the last decades, the living space per person has been decreasing in the city of Gothenburg. We live closer together, but many people lack a sense of community and collaboration in their everyday life. We have to find an approach to support a more sustainable urban lifestyle, a development that must occur on environmental terms. When connecting the city dwellers to each other, by sharing space and resources, an urban lifestyle can support both social health, the connection to place and environmental sustainability. A sustainable change is consequently beneficial for both the environment and the city dwellers.

In the context of an urban home, this thesis investigates the spatial significance of architecture in relation to our daily life

and what role the attributes of a home can have on how we live. The focus will be on the community of a cohousing unit and thus the apartment building as a whole. The question is how the architectural design of a cohousing unit can contribute to strengthening the sense of community and a sustainable lifestyle. This will be investigated with a human-centred approach to understand how the home can be designed with attention to both people and nature.

Results show that social and ecological factors can interact to contribute to a more sustainable lifestyle. By using socio-ecological methods together with biophilic design methods, residents' connectedness and social belonging can be further strengthened. The research made on these topics results in strategies used to design a cohousing unit in Gothenburg that aims to adapt to local conditions and increase the feeling of being involved in a context.

Keywords :  
Cohousing, Sustainable living, Social belonging, Urban context, Connectedness

### HOUSING

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