H+ Urban District Development Project Helsingborg

Good practice example for participatory energy planning

Helsingborg, Sweden

Helsingborg City Council, NSVA (water and sewage company), Öresundskraft (energy utility), Property Developers and Construction Companies

Since 2009

Background

In responding to the steady growth of inhabitants in Helsingborg, the city has increased the density of existing housing areas and transformed underused areas into modern mixed-use urban districts. By 2035, the old harbour and industrial areas of the city will evolve into a mixed-use residential precinct. H+ is currently the largest of the renewal projects in Helsingborg.

Key Challenge

In the project initiation phase, the City Council adopted a resolution that the renewal of the formal harbour area should become a front-runner example of resource efficient urban development. The project should support the city's climate targets by reducing the ecological footprint per inhabitant while attracting innovative property investments. Although, without legislative enforcement, how can utility companies and property developers be engaged to meet the set climate targets?

Initiative

In the first years of the H+ development process, a joint energy and resource efficiency strategy for the area was adopted. The strategy aims to reduce the area's total energy use and energy losses, to maximise the use of residuals and recovered energy with a renewable supplement ensuring fossil free energy. The strategy adopted a two-step approach. Firstly, the energy and resource efficiency requirements for the new buildings in the area were stipulated in writing in the land transfer contracts. H+ is the first Swedish development project with contractual resource requirements. Secondly, establishment of a dialogue and local cooperation with property developers to ensure their fulfilment of the project's objectives.

The establishment of the cooperation process was led by the energy utility Öresundskraft, which was appointed by the City as an energy system architect.

AREA 21

Interreg Baltic Sea Region

EUROPEAN UNION

EUROPEAN REGIONAL DEVELOPMENT FUND

H+ Cityscape Visualisation

The system architect oversees the realisation of the high energy standards in the area. Approximately 15 thematic workshops and seminars with property developers, construction companies, investors and energy utilities have been carried out with the aim to develop new solutions for energy and resource efficiency, e.g. ideas for energy recovery from the sewage system or instalment of DC-grids within buildings.

Success Factors

The project succeeded in establishing an open and collaborative dialogue between the energy system architect, the city administrators and property developers. The collaboration process was facilitated by the energy system architect; a role, which was introduced for the first time in a Swedish urban development project. The various workshops and talks resulted in defining a common resource efficiency goal for the district's development. The combination of push and pull factors proved to ensure balance between economic profitability and environmental concerns.

Further Information

H+ Helsingborg project description