

# Inhabiting the Network





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**Abstract:**

This Master's thesis investigates how dark design and social exclusion affects mobility patterns of the homeless population of Aalborg as well as what home means when you are homeless. With the nation's highest percentage of rough sleepers, Aalborg presents an interesting case. By interviewing people experiencing homelessness and experts in the field in addition to performing observations, the mobility patterns of the homeless have been identified. The theoretical framework covers the mobilities and materialities of social exclusion and dark design as well as the notion of home. Although Aalborg has very few artefacts of dark design we have found that removal of benches has altered the mobility patterns of the socially vulnerable, affecting where they stay during the day. Furthermore, the meaning of home was highly subjective, relating to both materialities and emotional relations.



# Preface

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This Master's thesis has been conducted in the spring semester of 2022 of the Master's program Mobilities and Urban Studies and is inspired by the ongoing Dark Design research project at Aalborg University. This thesis uses the Harvard method regarding sources and the in-text references are indicated as [surname/institution, year of publication]. If the year of publication is not available, it will be indicated as N/A. Figures and tables will be labelled as "Figure/Table X.X" and if no source is referenced, it is made by the group.

In addition to this report, the audio files for the nine interviews are added as external appendices. 6 of these files have been edited in order to ensure anonymity. The interviews have not been transcribed but when a quote is used, the time stamp will be added.

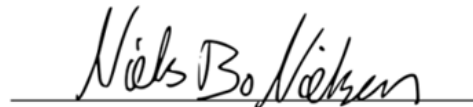
We would like to thank our supervisor, Professor Ole B. Jensen and the rest of the dark design team at Aalborg University, Pia Justesen and Carsten Hvid Nielsen for the many meetings and inputs for our project. We would also like to thank all our interviewees Adam, Brian, Chris, David, Simon Hjort Jacobsen, Maria Sjøblom, Søren Dahl Nielsen, Lise Maltha and Lasse Olsen.

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*Aalborg University, 25/05-2022*



Laura Søgaard Sørensen



Niels Bo Nielsen

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This chapter will set the stage for our project about dark design in Aalborg. Dark design is a term used to describe the changes made to law, policy and design in the urban fabric meant to exclude the homeless or socially vulnerable groups. The term is closely related to unpleasant design and hostile architecture among others. In the following, we start off by presenting a detailed definition of dark design and provide a few examples of dark design from the literature as well as give examples of how social media is used by the public to shame instances of dark design and effect change. At the end of this chapter, we will present some of the recent changes to the law that specifically target the homeless population along with a description of the homeless situation in Denmark focusing on Aalborg.

## 1.1 A Definition of Dark Design

Dark design is a term coined by Professor Ole B. Jensen of Aalborg University to describe the exclusion of primarily homeless people in the urban environment through policy, law and design.

*"The key focus is exploring examples of design where power (primarily manifested as social exclusion) resides in complex (and sometimes subtle) relationships to the materialization of artifacts, systems and design. The notion of dark design enables us to question taken-for-granted assumptions about spaces and materials as 'simply there'. Instead, I show how social exclusion and questions of justice are embedded in design choices and solutions. There are many socially inclusive forms of design; however, here light is thrown on exclusionary design practices and the darkness of design."*

[Jensen, 2019, p. 116.]

It is also interesting to note that it is the design itself that performs the social exclusion, not a group of people as would be the case with racism or other forms of social exclusion. However, as we will explore in this Master's thesis, the design choices are made to solve a problem and are therefore a manifestation of power relations. Dark design in many cases remains hidden from the non-targeted citizen. It simply goes unnoticed or might be seen as a minor nuisance in everyday life. However, the design interventions have a profound effect on the homeless they target. As one person experiencing homelessness puts it:

*"From ubiquitous protrusions on window ledges to bus-shelter seats that pivot forward, from water sprinklers and loud muzak to hard tubular rests, from metal*

*park benches with solid dividers to forests of pointed cement bollards under bridges, urban spaces are aggressively rejecting soft, human bodies. We see these measures all the time within our urban environments, whether in London or Tokyo, but we fail to process their true intent. I hardly noticed them before I became homeless in 2009. An economic crisis, a death in the family, a sudden breakup, and an even more sudden breakdown were all it took to go from a six-figure income to sleeping rough in the space of a year. It was only then that I started scanning my surroundings with the distinct purpose of finding shelter and the city's barbed cruelty became clear."*

[Andreau, 2015]

As Jensen [2020] remarks on the quote above:

*"What is striking in this first-person account is the language of 'urban spaces rejecting soft bodies' and further the 'city's barbed cruelty'. The vulnerability of the human body and the fragility of human flesh is coming across quite forcefully here. This is indeed what it is about: the fact the body might be cut, hurt, and damaged by some of these interventions."*

[Jensen, 2020, p. 317.]

Dark design is indeed about justice/injustice of design interventions that at best are a nuisance or at worst hurt the people they are targeting. Ole B. Jensen has received funding for a 4-year research project to study this phenomenon in a Danish context. Similar research has previously been done, most noticeably in the US by Rosenberger [2017, 2020] and in a few European cities by Savičić and Savić [2012] under the heading of Hostile Architecture and Unpleasant Design respectively.

## 1.2 Examples of Dark Design

Here we present a few examples of dark design, the list is not exhaustive but aims at providing a starting point for the understanding of how artefacts can be made to exclude by preventing people from prolonged stays. Some of these examples have already been presented and discussed in work done by Nielsen [2022a].

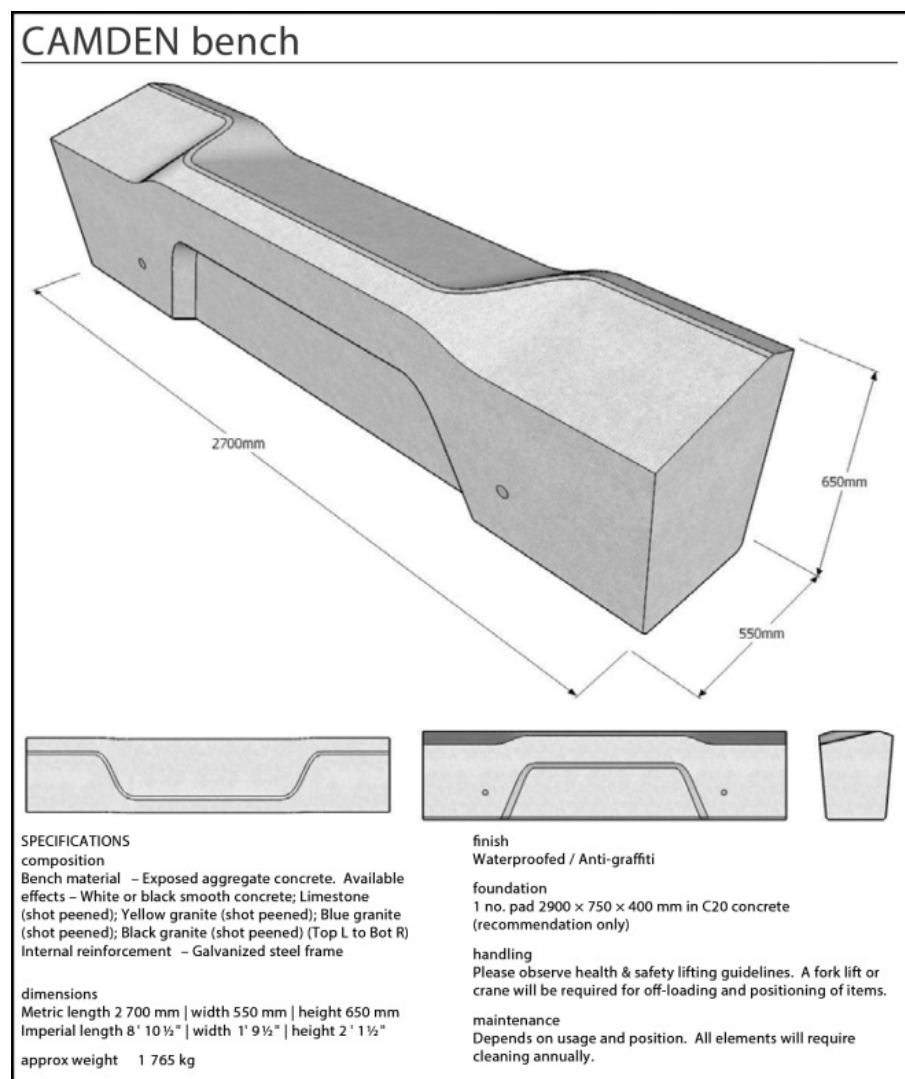
### Spikes and Bollards

One of the most severe forms of rejection is placing spikes on the ground or on ledges and window sills as discussed by Rosenberger [2017]. These types of designs can only perform as a device for rejection and serve no other purpose and will hurt anyone who tries to sit. A milder version of this type of design is bollards or jagged-edged stones place on the ground or on seating arrangements. While not as sharp as the spikes they do not prevent people from sitting or lying but soon become too uncomfortable, forcing people to move on. Savičić and Savić [2012] argues that spikes for a long time have been used to deter pigeons from nesting or sitting in trees or on buildings but alludes that similar tactics are now being used against other humans.



### The Camden Bench

The Camden bench is an extreme type of design almost defined by what type of behavior it seeks to exclude more than allow [Nielsen, 2022a]. The manufacturer of the Camden bench, Factory Furniture states that the bench is made to address: *"anti-social and criminal behavior that typically plague city centre benches, with issues often resulting in complaints from residents and, in some areas, leading to the removal of much of the street seating."* [Factory Furniture, 2022]. The bench is a type of disciplining design that seeks to remove the possibility to commit a crime very much in line with the principles of CPTED (Crime Prevention Through Environmental Design) [Cozens and Love, 2015] and defensible space [Newman, 1996]. For instance, litter and drugs cannot be stashed as there are no gaps in the bench. The surface is coated to prevent graffiti and the build-up of dirt. The most remarkable feature of this design, however, is the way the seating is designed with curved top surfaces with the curves at the two ends facing the opposite directions to the double seat in the middle. A feature which Factory Furniture touts as encouraging bench sharing [Factory Furniture, 2022].



**Figure 1.1.** Illustration of the Camden bench [Deutinger, 2017].

Although Factory Furniture claims that this is a social feature to allow more people to share the bench, for the homeless person this type of design prevents lying on the bench. For the skateboarders it is impossible to grind on the concrete edges. Another important detail is the height of the bench which is 65 cm as seen in figure 1.1. According to the Neufert [2012] a good seat height for a dining chair is between 40-45 cm. The Camden bench therefore, is 20 cm higher than the recommended sitting height. For the man sitting on the edge, as seen in figure 1.2, only the toes reach the ground while for the teenage girls sitting in the middle, the bench is simply too high.



**Figure 1.2.** The Camden Bench - notice how the girls' feet are not touching the ground and the awkward sitting position [Factory Furniture, 2022].

The recess under the seating area is there to provide a space for bags as it makes it impossible to snatch a bag from behind. The Camden Bench is made entirely out of concrete weighing more than 1700 kg, roughly as much as a car, therefore the bench is also certified to act as a counter-terrorism vehicle barrier [Factory Furniture, 2022]. Many of the design features of the Camden Bench are also found on other dark design artefacts. A curved seating area is a common feature mentioned in the book *Unpleasant Design* [Savičić and Savić, 2012] as it prevents lying on the benches whereas anti-skate design often features organic shapes that curve in the horizontal plane. The slanted seats are also a common design element as the body's muscles still have to fight gravity when seated hence, a relaxed sleeping body would fall off the bench. This is the case in the Copenhagen Metro where the "benches" are nothing more than two slanted boards to lean against [Jensen, 2014a]. Furthermore, benches can also be retrofitted with an armrest in the middle to prevent sleeping.

The Camden bench is also designed with ease of mobility in mind so it can be moved away from troubled areas. This is an important point when discussing dark design as it is not always an artefact performing an exclusion but a lack of any amenities in the urban space altogether. By simply removing a bench from a troubled area the users would have to find somewhere else to sit and while an inconvenience for the pedestrian looking for a place to have a short rest, for a homeless person the effect is much more severe.

### Public Toilets in a Cashless Society

There are only a few public toilets in most city spaces as many are located inside a private building with public access, for more on this see chapter 3.3 on page 26. Truly public toilets often face problems of misuse and neglect and to avoid these problems various strategies have been employed such as putting pay locks on the doors or light installations to prevent intravenous drug use.

"Public toilets are a contested topic, often rendered dysfunctional by inappropriate use and maintenance. Because they provide basic privacy, they are a known target to drug addicts who use them as a hideout. Different city authorities deal with it differently; some provide a trash bin for syringes nearby, some install particularly coloured lights to render veins invisible. Blue neon lights were successfully used in public bathrooms and publicly accessible toilets (BBC News, 2003). Because veins are harder to see, it is expected that drug users will stop using these bathrooms for the aforementioned purpose."

[Savicic and Savic, 2014].

Many public toilets are not free to use as many will require some form of payment either as a tip to the cleaning staff (less common in Denmark) or to a machine in order for the door to open. As fewer people in Denmark now carry cash [Heisel, 2022], the coin-operated locks have been replaced with machines that only accept credit cards or MobilePay [Høilund et al., 2021] as pointed out by Nielsen [2022b]. Recently, the public bathrooms at Copenhagen Central Station, which are located in the basement, have transitioned from being free to costing 5 DKK to use and only accepting cashless payment [Høilund et al., 2021]. This has been done in a coordinated effort to reduce the number of homeless people loitering. Daniel Høybye, a homeless who has been using these facilities in the past, explains:

*"They have closed the free toilet down in the basement, where we also had the opportunity to have a shower in the old days. At the new toilet you have to pay 5 DKK to get in and you cannot pay with cash."*

Daniel Høybye in [Høilund et al., 2021], own translation.

He further elaborates that most homeless do not have MobilePay or a credit card. However, the problem is not isolated to hygiene but many aspects of life in the city as Kjartan, another homeless, puts it:

*"When I don't have a debit card I can't use the ATMs - I can't get Mobile Pay because a debit card is required. I can't buy things online because a debit card is required. I can't even buy a train ticket or use the public bathrooms at Copenhagen Central Station because they only accept card payments."*

Kjartan "junior" Emhjellen in [Bentow, 2021], own translation.

For the homeless person the cashless society also presents a new barrier to be overcome as access to many services now require a smartphone which in turn means keeping it



charged and because there only a few power outlets in public places the problem is further aggravated [Nielsen, 2022b].

### Light and Sound Prevent Loitering

Sound and light installations are increasingly being used in an effort to prevent people from loitering. Although, much less forceful than the examples of dark design discussed above they nonetheless are a form of dark design. Newman [1996] uses lighting in his defensible space to prevent loitering, vandalism and anti-social behavior as well as drug dealing. Increased lighting incurs self-policing but also increases surveillance from adjacent buildings. Newman [1996] even goes as far as recommending a minimum lighting intensity that increases in proximity to entrances. As briefly mentioned above, blue and yellow lighting in public bathrooms have also been used to prevent intravenous drug use. However, pink lighting can also be used to prevent teen loitering as the pink light increases the visibility of pimples and other skin imperfections. The intention is that teens will go somewhere else out of vanity [Savičić and Savić, 2012]. Savičić and Savić [2012] investigate how high-frequency sound devices are used to prevent teens from loitering as only young people are able to hear the sound. One such device is the mosquito:

*"Mosquito device was patented in 2005 by Howard Stapleton in South Wales. A high frequency buzz (17,4KHz) is designed to keep teenagers from gathering in publicly accessible spaces where they might disturb other users (shopping malls, courtyards, street corners). Mosquito device aims primarily to prevent loitering and anti-social behaviour. Given the fact that hearing ability decreases with age, it is supposed to target the population under the age of 25. Unlike their older cohabitants, they should be annoyed by the sound of buzzing at 17.8KHz and 5 dB above background noise levels."*

[Savičić and Savić, 2012].

These devices are somewhat controversial as they may violate human rights [Savičić and Savić, 2012]. To deter vagrants, Copenhagen central station has reduced the number of benches and put in arm-rest dividers in the middle of the remaining ones [Høilund et al., 2021]. Furthermore, they are also playing loud music. This is not the only train station in Denmark to do so. A train station in Vejle has recently been playing loud march music in an attempt to prevent people from loitering at the station. This was an effort to not only target the homeless but also loitering teens as well meant to prevent vandalism [Jensen, 2014b].

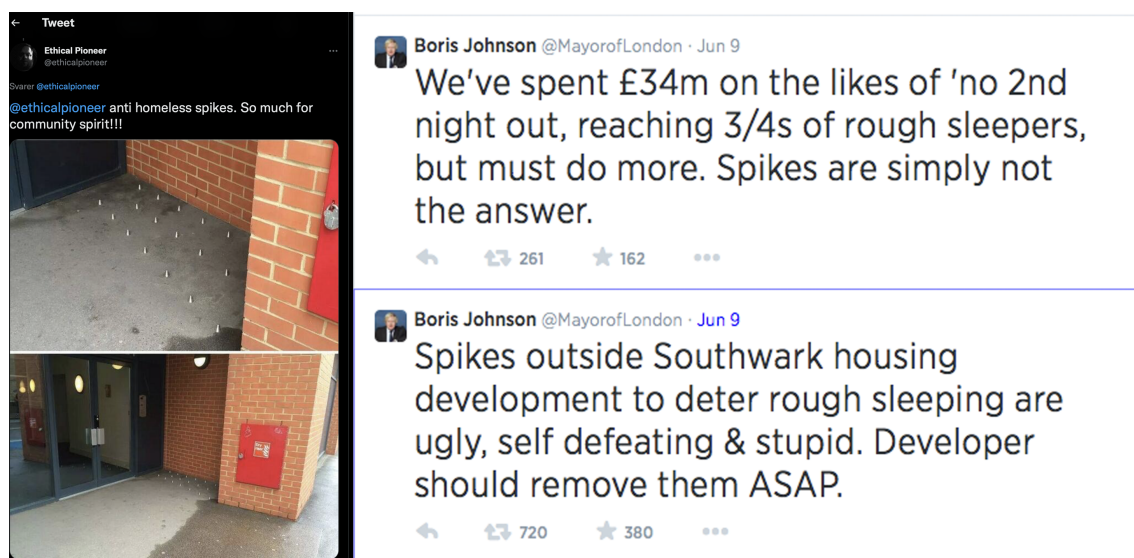
These interventions vary in severity with which they reject the "soft human bodies", some are only meant to hurt while others simply prevent a long stay such as a slatted bench. Yet others merely provide an unpleasant auditory input as is the case in Vejle. The field of design interventions is rather large and the few examples mentioned above are not meant to be an exhaustive list.

## 1.3 Twitter and the Public Debate About Anti-homeless Design

Dark design and its brethren have on numerous occasions been called out on social media by citizens who come across design interventions that seem to be aimed at removing the homeless from the area. This has led to public outrage as the injustice of kicking someone who is already down simply becomes too much. We have picked three such cases to illustrate this point starting with one of the more infamous examples "the London spikes controversy" so dubbed by Petty [2016].

### The London Spike Controversy

On June 6th 2014, a man known as the Ethical Pioneer on twitter walked past a row of spikes placed inside an alcove next to a door of an apartment building - realising the spikes were meant to deter the homeless from seeking shelter in the alcove he snapped a picture and tweeted; " Anti homeless spikes. So much for community spirit". The tweet went viral and the then mayor of London, Boris Johnson got involved in the debate and stated in a tweet: "Spikes outside Southwark housing development to deter rough sleeping are ugly, self-defeating & stupid. Developer should remove them ASAP" After the tweet went viral news outlets started reporting on the issue.



**Figure 1.3.** The tweet from June 6th 2014 that started the London spikes controversy and the reply from then mayor of London, Boris Johnson

A petition on Change.org to remove the spikes was started after the tweet went viral and quickly reached 131.099 signatures. By June 14th, victory was declared as the spikes outside Southwark were removed. The update also mentioned activists pouring concrete over spikes at a Tesco supermarket which promptly resulted in the removal of the spikes [Wells, 2014]. What is remarkable about this case is the swiftness of change affected by social media and how quickly the story was picked up by news outlets across the world [Petty, 2016]. While the spikes and their purpose is easily spotted, most dark design seeks

to go under the radar precisely because of the fear of public backlash. However, such attempts are not always successful.

### The Anti-homeless Bike Racks

This was the case in Seattle where the city placed bike racks and fences under a bridge after clearing the homeless camp underneath to deter the homeless from reclaiming the area [Cohen, 2018]. Since homeless shelters sometimes have a hard time accommodating people with children or pets, the bridge was one of the few places where these people found shelter. The bike racks which are usually placed to increase green mobility acted as camouflage but since the bike racks seemed to serve no other purpose in this case, there was a public outcry which did not abate as documents from the Seattle Department of Transportation showed that, the bike racks were installed in close coordination with the police. Further aggravating the issue was the fact that the bridge was scheduled to be torn down the following year.



**Figure 1.4.** Photograph: Josh Cohen, photograph of the bike installations under the bridge of Highway 99 [Cohen, 2018].

### Wheel Chair friendly or Anti-homeless Design?

While the bike racks above were meant to be hidden as a green cycling initiative, a proposal by councilwoman Clodagh Higgins [Begley, 2021] to install wheelchair inclusive benches in Galway city in Ireland was met with similar public outcry as the proposed design was seen as a way to deter homeless from sleeping on the bench rather than facilitating wheelchair users. The benches were designed with the middle seat removed and the backrest intact. This design prevented the possibility of laying down and the public perceived this as a way to deter the homeless from sleeping in the park. The councilwoman claimed to be unaware of the negative effect of the proposed design and stated she had been approached



by parents of a disabled child to install more handicapped-friendly designs. However, as a spokesperson for a handicapped association pointed out, a person in a wheelchair is already seated and when placed between the seats of the bench they would be in a forward position in relation to the people on either side. Thus acting as a barrier rather than being part of the conversation. Furthermore, a person in a wheelchair is already seated therefore they could just position themselves across from or adjacent to the people sitting on the bench. The backrest has no function and the whole bench could just be replaced by two chairs.



*Wheelchair users have criticised a proposal to introduce wheelchair-friendly benches in Galway City saying they would be of 'absolutely no benefit' to anyone. Pic: Cllr Clodagh Higgins/Twitter*

**Figure 1.5.** Wheelchair-friendly bench or dark design meant to deter homeless people? [Begley, 2021].

Social media has played a big role in calling out councilwoman Higgins and her suggestion was met with severe backlash as the benches were seen as a malicious attempt at removing the homeless and disguising it as wheelchair-friendly. This could perhaps also be due to her being a right-wing politician and therefore seen as not caring for the less fortunate. Higgins claims that she was approached by a parent of a handicapped child with the suggestion and that there was no malice on her part.

### **Find it, Fix it; An Anti-homeless App?**

As the three examples above show, social media play a big role in exposing instances of dark design and is an effective way to incur change as well as point out the consequences for people experiencing homeless. In the first two examples from London 2014 and Seattle 2018, social media provided a platform for activism and while successful in affecting change in London this is not the case in Seattle where homeless camps can be reported anonymously on the Find It, Fix It app. The app was meant to be used to notify the authorities about potholes, signal issues, etc. but is now being used by the city as a way to

discover new homeless camps. Given that more than 6000 out of roughly 12,000 homeless people are rough sleepers this has a devastating effect when the police clear a camp.

*"The authorities' removal notices were posted on nearby trees, and five days later a dozen Seattle North Precinct bike cops surrounded the Ravenna Woods encampment and began an aggressive interrogation. Officers arrived and began to run names, checking for outstanding warrants while the residents that remained were packing their belongings. Jamaal, a black youth living in Ravenna Woods, sat on a log, head down, as officers continuously questioned his reason for being there. "I bet you have a warrant for something. Either DV [domestic violence] or burglary," an officer repeated. Jamaal's story is an unfortunate reflection of the fact that over half of all residents that are currently living unsheltered in King County have reported that they've had some kind of confrontation with law enforcement."*

[Hawkins, 2018].

The aggressive policing tactics used on homeless camps are not an isolated incident as similar tactics are used in other states as well as in Europe. Anti-homeless laws provide a framework for the removal of the camps and recently, similar changes have been made to the laws in Denmark as well.

## 1.4 Anti-homeless laws

According to the international human rights law, everyone has a right to an adequate standard of living which includes adequate housing. The right to adequate housing covers many aspects of having a place to live and should be seen as "the right to live somewhere in security, peace and dignity" [Office of the United Nations High Commissioner for Human Rights, 2009]. Despite this law, it is estimated that 150 million people are homeless worldwide and that 1.6 billion people are living in inadequate housing conditions and for many countries, the numbers seem to be going up. On a global scale, the homeless problem is nearly impossible to govern. However the UN has set the but measures can be taken to insure data collection, targeting and funding. One of these mechanisms is the United Nations'

Sustainable Development Goals with their 17 overall goals target both social, economic and environmental sustainability. Even though homelessness is not explicitly mentioned in the goals, the homeless are facing a lot of the issues that the goals cover, such as hunger, poverty and overall lack of well-being [Casey and Stazen, 2021].

Despite the fact that the UN's SDGs promote a safe and just development even for the poorest,

Danish national laws have recently been changed in an attempt to prevent homeless camps in the Copenhagen area consisting of primarily eastern Europeans. They were seen as a disruptive element that made people feel unsafe. After much public debate, the mendicancy law [Folketinget, 2017] was changed to include a prison sentence and the law known as "Ordenbekendtgørelsen" was changed to prevent homeless camps:

*§ 7. Unauthorized persons may not dwell on stairs, in gates, in entrances or entrances to houses, in basements or attics, in uninhabited houses or apartments, in farms, gardens or outbuildings, on construction sites, in vehicles, train cars or the like.*

[Retinformation, 2005], own translation.

This law makes it illegal to occupy a space that would generally fall under either a private space or a private-public space. In 2017, the Danish government passed an additional law, making it illegal to establish and occupy camps as the homeless camps were seen as creating a feeling of insecurity. While not going as far as outlawing sleeping in the city environment these laws however had a similar effect since the law did not make an explicit distinction between what constitutes a camp and what is simply sleeping rough. The anti-camp law was also targeting people sleeping in groups. For the homeless, sleeping together in groups can increase their feeling of safety. The vague description of what constitutes a camp has hit many homeless people. One of these people was a 36-year-old man who was woken up at 7:00 AM by the police and charged for having established a camp that created a feeling of insecurity. The description of the camp is as follows: a sleeping bag on top of some cardboard, a couple of blankets and duvets. Placed next to him were a sandwich, a bowl of yoghurt and a shopping cart with the few belongings that he owns [Shakir, 2018]. Even though he was sleeping alone, the police still charged him for establishing a camp. Because of cases such as these, an elaboration was added to the law in 2020 stating that only camps of permanent nature should be charged:

*§3, stk. 4: In places with public access, it is forbidden to establish and occupy camps of a permanent character which are able to create a feeling of insecurity in the surrounding areas.*

[Retsinformation, 2020a], own translation.

This change was done in order to target the foreign travellers who were setting up camps in parks and staying there for prolonged periods of time. In the same addition, the government specified what is meant by a camp of a more permanent nature, emphasizing the physical conditions. It is now up to the police to assess if the camp seems permanent or if it can easily be packed up and removed [Projekt Udenfor, 2020]. If a homeless person is in violation of this law, they can be charged with a fine, deported from the country if they are foreign citizens or may incur a zonal ban barring them from staying in the area again. The zonal ban has a duration of up to 3 months and can either be within a 500 or 1000 meters radius of the area where the offense took place [Retsinformation, 2020b].



**Figure 1.6.** Poster made by the Danish police stating the rules for sleeping on the street [Danish Police, N/A].

Shown above in figure 1.6 is an infographic created by the Danish Police, stating the rules for sleeping on the street. This poster is available in Danish, English, Romanian, Albanian and Bulgarian.

In 2017, the government also passed an anti-mendicancy law that tightened the penalty for begging on the streets, especially if done on pedestrianised streets, by stations, supermarkets or in public transport. A preliminary remark by then Minister of Justice Søren Pape Poulsen states:

*"The government wants to take action against foreign travelers who camp in public places, e.g. in parks and on public streets, and which during their stay create insecurity and inconvenience for both residents and passers-by. It is crucial that citizens can move safely in public space, and what we are currently witnessing in e.g. Copenhagen, in no way belongs in our society."*

[Retinformation, 2017], own translation.

The penalty for begging in these areas was upped to 14 days of incarceration. In the same manner, as the previously described law, the emphasis is on whether the actions of begging

are seen as creating a feeling of insecurity or not. According to Projekt Udenfor, these laws are criminalising poverty and homelessness and making an already difficult way of living illegal [Projekt Udenfor, 2020]. The mendicancy law did include an expiration date on mandatory prison sentence, set to expire on the 1st of June 2020; however, the expiration date was removed in 2020 [Retinformation, 2020].

## 1.5 The Call to Investigate Dark Design in Aalborg

The number of people experiencing homelessness in Aalborg Municipality is around 253 from the newest data available [Benjaminsen, 2019, p. 41]. This number has increased 16% since 2009. However, the biggest increase happened from 2009 to 2013 and since then the number of homeless has remained more or less constant with less than a 10% variation.


Aalborg, however, has the highest percentage of homeless sleeping rough in Denmark. With around 23% this is more than twice the national average of 11% compared to 14% in Copenhagen and 9% in Aarhus. The national survey of homelessness found that the situation in Aalborg has shifted between categories

*"...as the number of rough sleepers has increased significantly from 22 in 2017 to 57 people in 2019, while conversely, the number of sofa sleepers has decreased significantly from 82 people in 2017 to 31 people in 2019."*

[Benjaminsen, 2019], own translation.

Even though the overall number of homeless people in Aalborg has not increased, the number of people sleeping rough has. This is despite the fact that Aalborg Municipality is pursuing a housing first strategy, which means the homeless will be provided with a place to live first before being met with demands of job, sobriety or behavioral changes.

The debate about dark design reached Aalborg when on the 28th of January 2022, Lasse Olsen from the political party Enhedslisten, a left-wing party, raised the issue on Facebook, calling for people to send in examples of dark design in the urban environment of Aalborg as seen in figure 1.7. At the time, Lasse Olsen was alderman on the committee of environment and energy in Aalborg Municipality. After a few articles in the local paper, the discussion seems to have died out as media coverage has focused its attention on the war in Ukraine. Lasse Olsen has since stepped down as alderman leaving his seat to Per Clausen, a city council and Danish Parliament veteran, but has remained as a member of the town council.



**Lasse Olsen**  
January 28 · 🌐

'Dark Design' i Aalborg. Har du lagt mærke til, hvordan der bliver mindre plads til udsatte borgere i byrummet?

Bænken for enden af Jomfru Ane Gade, hvor der tidligere sad Hus Forbi-sælgere, blev fjernet efter pres for restauratører. Bænken foran Hovedbiblioteket er fjernet, og der er i stedet musik døgnet rundt. AKKC's "syngende træer" har jaget en stor del af de udsatte grønlændere væk, som ellers havde et hæng-ud sted i den ende af Kildeparken, hvor det gamle vandtårn står.

Gennem små, gradvise ændringer gøres byen mindre tilgængelig for udsatte borgere. Seneste skud på stammen er dette gelænder omkring elevatoren foran Banegården, som gør det umuligt at sidde på betonen.

Det er simpelthen så usselt, at udsatte mennesker på den måde jages væk!

Lad os da for pokker skabe nogle områder, hvor de kan få lov at være i fred.

Det er mit indtryk, at ordningen fungerede godt i Kildeparken, indtil Shakira, Cliff Richard og Pavarotti blev brugt som midler til at jage dem over på Kennedy Plads, hvor de har siddet til offentligt skue, indtil arbejdet med PlusBus-terminalen gik i gang. Derefter søgte de hen omkring elevatoren foran Banegården, og nu skal de finde sig et nyt sted.

På dagens møde i Job- og Velfærdsudvalget rejste jeg problemstillingen om 'Dark Design' i byrummet, og det blev taget utrolig godt imod af resten af udvalget. Vi har ikke truffet nogen beslutning, men vi har aftalt, at vi skal dykke yderligere ned i problemet. Jeg håber, at det bliver en del af den næste udsattestrategi, at der skal sikres plads til vores udsatte borgere.

Problemstillingen skal også løftes i By- og Landskabsudvalget, og jeg ved (for det har vi aftalt), at Anna Aaen også vil rejse problemstillingen der.

Over de kommende uger har jeg tænkt mig at lave en kortlægning af 'Dark Design' i vores by, så hvis du har eksempler, er du meget velkommen til at skrive til mig.

#aalpol #darkdesign

**Own translation:**

Dark Design' in Aalborg. Have you noticed how there is less space for vulnerable citizens in the urban space?

The bench at the end of Jomfru Ane Gade, where Hus Forbi salesmen used to sit, was removed after pressure from restaurateurs. The bench in front of the Main Library has been removed and music is played around the clock. AKKC's "singing trees" have chased away a large part of the vulnerable Greenlanders, who otherwise had a hang-out place at the end of Kildeparken, where the old water tower stands.

Through small, gradual changes, the city is made less accessible to vulnerable citizens. The latest addition is this railing around the lift in front of the train station, which makes it impossible to sit on the concrete.

It's simply so lousy that vulnerable people are being chased away like that!

Instead let's create some areas where they are allowed to be at peace.

It is my impression that the scheme worked well in Kildeparken until Shakira, Cliff Richard and Pavarotti were used as deterrents to chase them over to Kennedy Square, where they have been in public until the work on the PlusBus terminal began. Then they were pushed to elevator in front of the train station, and now they have to find a new place.

At today's meeting of the Job and Welfare Committee, I raised the issue of 'Dark Design' in the urban space, and it was received incredibly well by the rest of the committee. We have not made any decision, but we have agreed that we will dive further into the problem. I hope that it will be part of the next vulnerable strategy that space is secured for our vulnerable citizens.

The issue must also be raised in the City and Landscape Committee, and I know (because we have agreed) that Anna Aaen will also raise the issue there.

Over the coming weeks, I plan to do a mapping of 'Dark Design' in our city, so if you have any examples, feel free to write to me.

#aalpol #darkdesign

**Figure 1.7.** From Lasse Olsen's facebook page posted 28th of January 2022. Own translation

Much like the examples of how social media has raised the questions about dark design in the US and Europe, the public has also become aware of these exclusionary design practices in Denmark. While there has been a debate about this subject in Copenhagen, the debate in the provincial towns in Denmark have until now been relatively quiet. To our knowledge, no comprehensive study on the extent of dark design has been carried out in Aalborg.

# Research Question 2

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In the previous chapter, we introduced a definition of dark design along with some examples of how dark design has been implemented. We also gave an account of the homeless situation in both Denmark as a whole and Aalborg specifically. We have also described how anti-homeless laws affect the homeless.

Dark design has been described in many western cities around the world but as of yet remains under-researched in a Danish context. As seen in other larger cities around the world dark design push away the homeless from the city centres, malls, train and bus stations.

We are interested in finding out how dark design shapes the everyday mobility of people without homes as areas become unavailable to them by increasingly strict laws and especially design intervention. We seek to understand how the mobility patterns of the homeless change or adapt when confronted with social exclusion and new installations in Aalborg.

This leads us to the research question:

**How do dark design and social exclusion affect the mobility patterns of the homeless in Aalborg and what is home when you live a nomadic life?**

As described in the previous chapter, Aalborg holds the largest percentage of rough sleepers in Denmark, making it an interesting area of study. At the onset of the project, we do not seek to geographically limit ourselves to a specific area within Aalborg, but we do focus our attention on the inner city as it is expected that these areas are more prone to see dark design interventions and also have a higher number of homeless people using these areas. We wish to identify dark design interventions in Aalborg that target the homeless or other socially vulnerable groups through interviews with the homeless and other stakeholders as well as our own observations utilising the theoretical framework described in the next chapter.

Our analysis will also seek to uncover how dark design and social exclusion work in rejecting the homeless and how this affects their mobility patterns. Furthermore, we investigate the notion of home when you do not have one in the conventional sense and how the different functions of the home become spread out in the network. In our thesis, we will put our emphasis on the design interventions and even though the conceptual framework of dark design also covers law and policy, this will not be our main focus.





# Theoretical Framework

# 3

The following chapter will present the theoretical framework that will help investigating the research question *How do dark design and social exclusion affect the mobility patterns of the homeless in Aalborg and what is home when you live a nomadic life?* First, The Nomadic Life, The Idea of Home, and Right to the City will frame the mobilities of the homeless and examine the notion of home. After this, ANT, Multistability, and Affordance will be explored in order to frame the materialities of dark design.

## 3.1 The Nomadic Life

The world is becoming increasingly more mobile, both physically and digitally. Because of the internet, we can now be on the move from the comforts of our home, be it watching TV from all over the world, or doing our work online as most people experienced during the pandemic. In the modern world, it is nearly impossible to be immobile, but the degree of mobility can vary. Cresswell [2006] explores “the mobilization of mobility as a rooted metaphor for contemporary understandings of the world of culture and society” [Cresswell, 2006]. He sees two ways of approaching mobilities - a sedentarist metaphysics and a nomadic metaphysics. In the sedentarist approach, the more mobile people represent a threat to the rooted sense of place which has been described as a fundamental human need. To the nomad, mobility is freedom and tied to the development of both identity and society. The modern nomads travel for pleasure and enjoy the travelling itself as much as the arrival to their destination [Cresswell, 2006]. In this approach, the nomad chooses to travel but that is not always the case and should be further divided into two categories.

Zygmunt Bauman does so by using the metaphor of the tourist and the vagabond to exemplify the movement of two opposites in modern society - the ‘high up’ and the ‘low down’ of an increasingly mobile society. The tourist is affluent and free to move to any destination they desire. They have a ‘base’ where they keep their belongings, but they are not restricted to this area. The vagabond on the other hand is either forced to be on the move or forced to remain in place [Bauman, 1998].

Two recent examples of the “vagabond” are the Syrian refugees caught in no-man’s land between Poland and Belarus with no country willing to accept them. On the other hand, Ukrainian refugees are forced to move due to the invasion, (though they are welcomed by most of the European countries). An example of the tourist would be an employee in an international firm that travels all over the world for work and for pleasure in their time off. They have the ability to work everywhere as the hotel chains that they stay at are standardised and therefore the same wherever they go, and in the same manner, they can get the food that they like where ever they are in the world. The same thing goes for

the average middle-class citizen that has the capacity to travel for pleasure. The tourists become nomads that inhabit the network [Bauman, 1998].

The dichotomy is perhaps oversimplified as most people do not have completely free will or money to do as they desire. The vast majority have constraints on their movement be it time or social obligations [Hägerstrand, 1970]. Such constraints have also been described by sociologist Vincent Kaufmann who used the term "motility" to describe one's potential to be mobile:

*"Motility can be defined as the capacity of entities (e.g. goods, information or persons) to be mobile in social and geographic space, or as the way in which entities access and appropriate the capacity for socio-spatial mobility according to their circumstances."*

[Kaufmann et al., 2004, p. 750]

The three key components to motility are access, competences and appropriation. These can present themselves as constraints for the homeless such as access to proficient funds to be mobile. They might also not have a strong social network to rely on for help with getting around or the competences such as a driver's license or the organisational skills to plan ahead and get around [Kaufmann et al., 2004]. Someone with a high motility might not utilise it and choose to stay in place while others are forced to physically move even though they have a low motility with fewer competences and less access [Sheller, 2014]. This could apply to the "vagabond" who is often exposed to involuntary displacement and does not have a fixed base to come back to - a place they can call home.

## 3.2 The Idea of Home

For the majority, the home is a place of residence that is sedentary or a fixed place with an address. Here the owner or renter is free to do whatever they want within reason. The home is a place to keep all your belongings, to cook, to relax, to sleep and take care of basic human hygienic needs. The home has a door to the outside world, and it is possible to choose to be social or not and other people may enter by invitation only. A home shields the occupant from the outside world by managing the climate and keeping precipitation out. People defend their homes and act territorial because the home is their possession and therefore theirs to control. The defensible space movement has gone to considerable lengths to ensure people take ownership of their surroundings to increase safety and reduce crime. This has been done in several American cities including New York suburbs by reducing public space between buildings to an absolute minimum and creating gated communities by closing off roads passing through [Newman, 1996].

Porteous [1976] sees the home as a dwelling and argues that the home provides identity, security and stimulation all of which derive from the control of physical space and personalisation of the space which allows the personal identity to be developed. Because one's identity is tied so closely to the home, people feel territorial and want to protect it [Porteous, 1976].

The home is also a place that has emotional meaning and can be seen as an ideological construct that is based on the people who live in the home's experiences. There are several other dimensions to home and to try and understand the meaning of home, Somerville [1992] has identified seven key signifiers:

- **Shelter:** the materialities of a home that affords physical protection and a roof over your head.
- **Hearth:** the warmth of a home that makes you relaxed and feel welcome.
- **Heart:** the emotional relations that create a sense of happiness in a home.
- **Privacy:** the sense of control over a territory that gives you the right to decide who comes and goes.
- **Roots:** the source of identity and meaningfulness that comes from a home.
- **Abode:** the spatial meaning of home which can relate to any given place that one is staying at.
- **Paradise:** a mix of all of the above - an ideal home.

[Somerville, 1992].

It is the perfect home that many people wish for when they think of home. Because of the idealised nature of this signifier it can be difficult to distinguish between the real world and the ideal that many people strive for. All of these aspects of the home can be reversed when talking about homeless people. Of course, the homeless population is not a homogeneous group which means that some will have a home as heart as they have good emotional relations or a temporary abode that provides rest. Therefore, the meaning of homelessness is not simply the lack of a place to sleep, but a lack of shelter or rooflessness [Somerville, 1992]. Home is thus not necessarily a fixed, physical structure. The saying "Home is where the heart is" is a good example of the emotional meaning that goes beyond the physical and spatial dimensions of the home.

For the homeless, these basic needs as described above take place in a public place where their presence is merely tolerated. However, no public place allows all the same functions as a home, and thus, going to the toilet may rely solely on public toilets, and cooking may only be allowed in parks. Showers are taken at public swimming pools and libraries and homeless shelters may provide warmth and a climate shield. For the housed resident, the home is the fixed base that is the starting point at the beginning of the day and the place returned to after work, shopping or other tasks have been completed. A geographic ideal type pattern would resemble a star.

Home thus becomes not a fixed place but a distributed network of points for the homeless as the homeless must manage these needs in the public spaces or abide by the rules put up by various shelters. As a former homeless person describes:

*"One's daily life as a homeless person is divided up: You can bathe somewhere, use public toilets elsewhere, you have your everyday life at the library, and you may have an outdoor area where you can cook with a hob, you have a mini version of your home with clothes and kitchen utensils in a fifth place, and you have a sixth place to sleep."*

Søren Dahl Nielsen in [Niegaard, 2020], own translation.

This may not be a fixed place that is habitually returned to or is the start and end of all journeys. Thus, the map of the functions of the home becomes more erratic. A study of the activity spaces of homeless people in Prague and Pilsen found that homeless people in Prague have larger activity spaces. This was explained by two factors firstly a larger city may have increased distance between points of interest and secondly a larger city often has better public transport infrastructure which leads to increased mobility [Šimon et al., 2019]. The notion of home and the mobility are for people experiencing homelessness very much interrelated. As they do not have a fixed home they inhabit the city streets always on the move.

### 3.3 Right to the City - Public and Private Spaces

The city is a mosaic of private (housing, office buildings) and public spaces (parks, streets, libraries, city squares) and a mix of the two - private spaces with public access such as malls and train stations. Various forms of access restrictions apply to these places and private places are protected both by the law and by physical attributes such as doors and locks.

*“Today, it is accepted in practice and theory that one has right to design for particular social groups, that the shopping malls have the right to protect themselves from loiters and the poor (the non-clientele) and that ‘irrational’ use of public space (sitting too long, or even worse – sleeping) is absolutely a no-go.”*

[Savicic and Savic, 2014, p. 12].

Since ancient times, land and property have been protected under the law and in most countries, only the police can, with a warrant or under suspicion of a committed crime, enter a home without the owner’s permission. On the other hand, public spaces are shared among citizens that ideally have free and equal access along with certain other rights such as the right to protest or the right to free speech. These rights are however not without boundaries as it is still illegal to disturb the public order. City ordinances also place restrictions on the use of public space and in an effort to clean the streets some of these have targeted the homeless specifically, such as anti-camping laws, anti-vagrant, and anti-loitering laws [Mitchell, 2003]. The laws do not only make it illegal to sleep on the street but also take their right to fulfil their basic human needs. In some US cities, it is illegal to leave your possessions on public property [Rosenberger, 2017]. These laws are established either by the city itself as an ordinance or as state law - examples are legion. In a Danish context, it is illegal to camp in certain parts of the city, however, sleeping is not illegal. The issue is of course what constitutes a camp as described in 1 on page 7. Numerous problems also arise from private spaces with public access such as the malls and train stations mentioned above. Here the owner of these places can set their own rules of what is acceptable behaviour and enforce these by employing security guards or by installing security cameras thereby having people police themselves.

Cities are increasingly in competition with each other as cities have become tourist destinations rather than places of industry. As city-planners increase focus on livability

and attracting developers, the city has become a battleground of capitalistic interest and the needs of the many. Harvey [2008] points out that cities are places that we collectively reshape to fit our needs; however, under capitalism this reshaping of the city has been done by the capitalist who wields considerable political and economic power instead of the citizens. This has led to suburbanisation and the tearing down of inner-city neighbourhoods to build new infrastructure such as roads or in the name of city renewal - in the words of David Harvey:

*"This method is called 'Haussmann' (by which) I mean the practice that has now become general of making breaches in the working class quarters of our big towns, and particularly in areas which are centrally situated, quite apart from whether this is done from considerations of public health or for beautifying the town, or owing to the demand for big centrally situated business premises, or, owing to traffic requirements, such as the laying down of railways, streets (which sometimes seem to have the aim of making barricade fighting more difficult)... No matter how different the reasons may be, the result is always the same; the scandalous alleys disappear to the accompaniment of lavish self-praise by the bourgeoisie on account of this tremendous success, but they appear again immediately somewhere else.....The breeding places of disease, the infamous holes and cellars in which the capitalist mode of production confines our workers night after night, are not abolished; they are merely shifted elsewhere!"*

[Harvey, 2008, p. 10].

The notion of elsewhere is central to understanding the way the homeless are pushed around the city. As neighbourhoods degrade and are renewed or gentrified, those less affluent are being moved out into the periphery. For the homeless, there may be nowhere else and the notion of cleaning up the streets to get rid of the homeless problem is denying the homeless the right to exist.

*"Homeless people can only be on private property — in someone's house, in a restaurant's toilet — by the express permission of the owner of that property. While that is also true for the rest of us, the rest of us nonetheless have at least one place in which we are (largely) sovereign. We do not need to ask permission to use the toilet or shower or to sleep in a bed. Conversely, the only place homeless people may have even the possibility of sovereignty in their own actions is on common or public property"*

[Mitchell, 2003, p. 170].

Because the homeless do not have their own private space, they are forced to use the public to perform all their everyday activities, but this is not acceptable for the average housed resident of the city. As described in the quote above, activities such as using the toilet and sleeping are seen as private and should thus be performed in one's private home where they are perfectly socially legitimate, but this is not an option when homeless. There is a need

for order in the modern city and such actions create disarray so the homeless are being moved to make space for what is perceived as appropriate activities. The very existence of homeless people represents an uncontrolled society and the idea of what a public space is supposed to be is being threatened. To the housed resident, the gap between public and private space is very large and with very defined borders, but to the homeless, the borders are more muddled. When more and more public spaces are becoming unavailable to them and they do not have their own private space, they are forced to be on the move [Mitchell, 2003].

One of the reasons the homeless are increasingly forced out of public spaces is because of the way they are being perceived. The homeless are seen as a blight on the city and as criminals, thus justifying their removal. They are seen as unruly and erratic and sometimes even dangerous. Their removal is often justified by the mere fact that their presence makes people feel unsafe. However, a homeless person is much more likely to become the victim of a crime. There are cases from Denmark where sleeping homeless people have been attacked or their sleeping bags set on fire [Ankerstjerne, 2019]. A Danish study from 2007 found that of the 50 people interviewed, 16 had been physically attacked, spat on or urinated on [Erkan, 2007]. Goffman [1963] explains how people who are seen as stigmatised are excluded from public life, the workplace and society in general.

*"By definition, of course, we believe the person with a stigma is not quite human. On this assumption we exercise varieties of discrimination, through which we effectively, if often unthinkingly, reduce his life chances. We construct a stigma-theory, an ideology to explain his inferiority and account for the danger he represents, sometimes rationalizing an animosity based on other differences, such as those of social class."*

[Goffman, 1963, p. 10].

The homeless carry signifiers of their stigma by carrying their possessions in a shopping cart and by the clothes that they wear - the mere fact that they are sleeping in the streets make them stand out thus placing them in an out-group. On a wider scale, the stigma can be against whole groups of people in the case of black communities across the US which have suffered institutionalised racism. The practice of redlining prevents black homeowners from obtaining loans to exclude them from purchasing homes in affluent predominately white neighbourhoods. Racism can also be materialised in the construction of city infrastructure as is the case in the 1960s New York where city planner Robert Moses built road bridges so low that only cars could pass underneath, thereby blocking the roads to the beach for city buses. The poor and the black community relied on these buses for transport and thus they were prevented from going to the beach [Winner, 1980].

As shown above, it is not only the laws and the politics of power that can be made to exclude the "undesirables". The built environment also reflects these efforts in hostile architecture, unpleasant design and dark design.

### 3.4 Materialities of Dark Design

In the following, we will try to establish a vocabulary to be able to discuss the materialities of dark design and how artefacts can be made to exclude. We start off by introducing some key concepts of technical mediation from Actor-Network theory. We then look at Don Ihde's concept of multistability as interpreted by Robert Rosenberger and Peter-Poul Verbeek. Lastly, we will cover Jenny Davis's work on the operationalisation of the concept of affordances.

### 3.5 Actor-Network Theory

Latour seeks to overcome the subject-object dichotomy of humans and things by making an ontology that treats both symmetrically. In actor-network theory, humans and non-humans can have agency. As "actor" has a certain human connotation Latour instead uses the word actant to describe the humans and non-humans alike. An actant has the ability to affect an outcome that without the actant would not be possible [Verbeek, 2005]. Using beer brewing as an example the brewer and the brewing paraphernalia along with the yeast and barley are intertwined in an actor-network and without each other brewing would not be possible. This way of looking at things puts both the brewer and the yeast on equal footing. These networks of relations can be arbitrarily long as the barley would need to be sown and harvested and brought to the market, involving more actants. The seemingly simple act of brewing a beer at home is only possible through the relations and interactions of humans, things and technology in actor networks. Actants act out programs of action. The mediation of technology in actor-networks takes place through 4 types of interactions: Translation, composition, reversible black boxing and delegation. Since delegation is the main technological mediation in dark design only this will be elaborated further.

#### Delegation

Artefacts can be scripted to perform an action that would otherwise be delegated to a person. Latour uses the example of the speed bump and the door closer [Latour, 1992].

The door is very interesting from a sociology perspective. If a door is open, heat or cold rushes in and temperate air rushes out. Thus, it is best to keep the door closed, which is easy if the door is to the home, but in a building with public access with many people coming and going it is possible that not everyone has the presence of mind or the discipline to close the door. So, the first solution that comes to mind is to put up a sign saying "please keep door closed" however a friendly reminder may not be enough. So the task can be delegated to either a doorman or a door spring - a human or non-human actant. The human actor however cannot be on duty 24 hours a day and must also have regular breaks. Thus, the problem of closing the door persists at some point in the day and then there is the added cost of paying a salary. The delegation to non-humans ensures that the door remains closed however a new problem arises as the door spring may slam the door in people's faces. Even if we solve this problem by adding more actants such as sensors and motors to make an automated door, the doors have as of yet to function perfectly and may fail to open, prompting a not entirely unanticipated sudden halt [Latour, 1992].

*"We have all experienced having a door with a powerful spring mechanism slam in our faces. For sure, springs do the job of replacing grooms, but they play the role of a very rude, uneducated, and dumb porter who obviously prefers the wall version of the door to its hole version. They simply slam the door shut. The interesting thing with such impolite doors is this: if they slam shut so violently, it means that you, the visitor, have to be very quick in passing through and that you should not be at someone else's heels, otherwise your nose will get shorter and bloody. An unskilled nonhuman groom thus presupposes a skilled human user."*

[Latour, 1992, p. 157].

Grooms is the French-English word for doorman. It is also interesting to note that the more technology that is used to solve the door problem the more skilled the user has to be. We have all tried the irritating moment where we push a door that must be pulled. In architecture, a door that does not work as expected is called a Norman door. This is usually solved by adding a sign stating if the door must be pushed or pulled. Latour goes further with the example of the door spring since if the spring is too strong, it discriminates against small children, the elderly or anyone with packages [Latour, 1992].

The speedbump is another instance of delegation. Imagine a dean of a university who wants car drivers to slow down in order to increase pedestrian safety - this program of slowing down can be delegated to a police officer. The program of the driver may be to speed if running late; however, if a police officer with a radar gun is encountered, the program changes to slow down in order to avoid getting a ticket. However, this can also be done by putting up a speedbump, the program of the driver then changes to avoid speeding as it destroys the suspension of the car [Verbeek, 2005].

In the context of dark design, delegation happens when a bench is made to deliberately be uncomfortable for longer stays such as a slanted bench. However, when exclusion is delegated to an object it will perform its task regardless of the person sitting there or their reason for doing so. If a homeless person was using a normal bench a police officer would have to contact and talk to this person thus evaluating if the removal of this person seems justified or not and perhaps enter into a dialog with the person. When the rejection is handled by an object such as the slanted bench, dialog is out of the question and any negotiation would be very much in vain. The pregnant woman, elderly gentleman and homeless person are equally rejected by the object. However, that is not to say that the rejection will affect them equally, because while an inconvenience for the non-homeless whom must find somewhere else to sit, there may be nowhere else for the homeless.

### 3.6 Multistability

In order to correctly identify and discuss dark design, a conceptual framework must be in place and operationalized. Rosenberger, inspired by Ihde and Verbeek, proposed the concept of Multistability as a way to explain how hostile architecture works. The framework builds on Ihde's post-phenomenological work with human-technology relations. As we shall see this technology in this regard is understood in broad terms and is not something neutral.



In Husserl's phenomenology, the researcher must put brackets around their pre-existing knowledge surrounding a phenomenon in an effort to avoid biases. The emphasis is put on the description to focus on the analysis of the experience, not the interpretation. Heidegger's philosophy differs from Husserl's as he did not believe it was possible to bracket pre-existing knowledge. It is not possible for the researcher to position themselves outside of the phenomenon since our lifeworld is experienced from a position of *dasein*. *Dasein* is translated as being-in-the-world. It is an a-priori concept and thus ontologically put before everything else contrary to the cartesian statement: "*I think – therefore I am*". *Dasein* puts existence first: "*I exist - therefore I am*". In the cartesian philosophy mind and body are separated and the world and things in it exist independently of our apprehension of it. In phenomenology, the mind cannot be separated from the body and thus the sensorial inputs from the environment are our lifeworld. Heidegger approaches phenomenology with a hermeneutic perspective. A phenomenon is experienced as a whole that can be analysed in its parts, and knowledge can then be derived through synthesis and a new understanding of the whole is reached [Verbeek, 2005].

*"The difference between Husserl's variational analysis and Ihde's notion of multistability lies in the goal of the analysis, whether one is searching for an essence or invariants. The Husserlian concept of essence is understood as something objective, independent of context, and reflecting a certain truth. It comes in the singular. By contrast, the postphenomenological notion of multistability colors the experience (or the analysis) in a specific way, it is context-sensitive, and it refers to invariants in the plural. Whereas Husserl looks for one single essence, Ihde seeks many invariants."*

[Wellner, 2020, p. 108]

Ihde uses the Necker cube as an example of multistability as the cube can be seen as both facing outwards and inwards as well as seen as a web or just two squares depending on the viewer [Verbeek, 2005]. Another often-cited example is the hammer which can be used both as a tool in construction and as a murder weapon. In this light, a bench has a dominant stability which is a place to sit but can also be used to lie on thus used for sleeping not sitting.

Designers shape the artifacts with the primary purpose in mind and may not always be in control of how the artifact is used as this is up to the user. However, by giving an object a certain shape it is possible to reduce the multistability of the artifact thus underlining the primary purpose. When imagining a typical bench, armrests are sometimes placed at either end and it is possible to lie down. However, by making relatively unnoticeable changes such as placing an armrest in the middle of the bench or shortening it, it is possible to enforce the dominant stability by reducing the multistable form.

### 3.7 Affordance

While ANT claims that humans together with technology co-shape outcomes, Davis critiques ANT for ontological indistinguishability between actants as it obscures politics and power relations. Contrary to Latour, Davis insists on treating subject and object or

humans and non-humans asymmetrically in order to be able to place intentionality and moral responsibility for technological outcomes with humans.

*“Most science and technology studies (STS) scholars today assume co-constitutive assemblages as a starting point for analysis. Human-technology relations are intrinsically relational. My arguments diverge from predominant perspectives, however, by establishing agentic asymmetry between human subjects and technological objects. I contend that although humans and technologies mutually construct each other, the weight of responsibility always falls to people.”*

[Davis, 2020, p. 52]

To further this point Davis draws a line between the intentionality; humans and non-humans, as an object cannot act with intention. *“I hinge the assumption of object-subject asymmetry on a distinction between efficacy and agency. Efficacy refers to the capacity to effect change. Agency refers to the capacity to inflict will.”* [Davis, 2020, p. 53]. Davis also notes three points of critique in affordance literature. First, a lack of a clear definition mostly due to a wide adoption in many fields of research. Second, a binary approach whereby affordances are either absent or present. And thirdly, that affordances are seen as universal for all people in all circumstances with no built-in biases.

By asking the question: "How artefacts afford, for whom and under what circumstances" the binary outcome and universality is negated. Even though humans and technology evolve and co-shape each other Davis positions her work away from technological determinism as humans may come up with new and creative uses of technology perhaps outside intended use. Davis ties together the literature and operationalizes it with her mechanisms and conditions framework thus technology and user interactions can be analysed. The mechanisms are the *how* artefacts afford while the conditions explore the power relations built into the socio-technological system.

### Mechanisms and conditions

*“I suggest a framework in which technological objects do not just afford or not afford but request, demand, encourage, discourage, refuse, and allow. Requests and demands are bids placed by technological objects, on user-subjects. Encourage, discourage, and refuse are the ways technologies respond to bids user-subjects place upon them. Allow pertains equally to bids from technological objects and the object’s response to user-subjects. Together, these make up the mechanisms of affordance.”*

[Davis, 2020, p. 66].

### Mechanisms

**Request and demands** A request or demand is placed by the technology onto the user who must decide how to engage with the technology. While requests are optional, demands are not [Davis, 2020]. Internet cookies are often requested by websites and while

the request is optional it may be made so that *allow all cookies* is the easiest path to follow. In a sense the user is persuaded to take this action. Certain features of the website might not function properly if cookies are not allowed thus this becomes more of a demand. Demands preclude the options of alternate actions but, while demands are not optional the user can still choose to simply not use the technology. Although requests are optional, a request can be strong or weak and depending on how it is enforced, users are drawn to a specific path but can deviate. An online questionnaire can request users to fill in a text box with their answers. A weak request would allow a user to progress without filling in the box while it can be made a demand by denying progress if not filled in.

**Encourage, discouraging and refuse** Encourage, discourage and refuse is how technology responds to actions initiated by the user. If certain actions are desired, technology can encourage users to take this path by making it easy and appealing [Davis, 2020]. Staying with the example from web design, Facebook’s endless feed encourages scrolling and thus spending more time on the platform while a page system may have the opposite effect. The user would tire easily after a certain number of pages have been clicked which might be the case when using Google. Objects discourage when they erect a barrier preventing a certain action, thus might not be immediately obvious to the user. Using the cookies example again, trying to opt-out of cookies is often made more difficult with users having to select from a long list of cookies whether each should be allowed or denied. This action takes time and thereby the users are discouraged. Online forms are a good example of where technology refuses progress if a box is not filled out. Forms can be made to assume nationality thereby the form would for instance not allow a non-8-digit phone number to be filled in.

**Allow** Allow is bi-directional and neutral, this concept sits outside request/demand and encourage, discourage and refuse. There is no encouragement or demand for how the interaction should take place and there are no barriers to overcome. Neither is there any encouragement that pushes users in a certain direction. While allow is neutral, it is not apolitical. Davis for instance describes how Facebook’s ads allow targeting white supremacist users and pushing anti-Semitic content [Davis, 2020].

### Conditions

Conditions are under which circumstances the user has met the mechanisms described above. They can vary depending on who the user is, their age, gender, race and socio-economic status and nationality.

**Perception** For technology to be useful to people it must be perceived as such. Knowing how to interact with an artefact relies on past experience as well as imagination. Davis [2020] provides an example of using a measuring cup as a wine glass. Both will contain a liquid but for different purposes, one is for cooking while the other is for consumption. Realising that the measuring cup can be used for drinking illustrates a shift in perception.

**Dexterity** Dexterity is a combination of the senses, physical ability as well as knowledge. The use of an artefact may rely on perfect eyesight or the ability to walk or it may require specific knowledge. For a touchscreen to be useful first, the user must perceive it as such and then have knowledge of how to interact with it e.g. what hand gestures are permitted. Then have the hand-eye coordination to physically touch the screen.

**Cultural and institutional legitimacy** Imagine a gardener wanting to protect newly sown grass. He could place a sign requesting people not to step on the grass or he could erect a barrier with a piece of twine suspended between two trees. While people may step on the grass anyway they would perhaps think twice if the barrier was a black and yellow police tape barrier. The gardener's twine barrier is a weaker request than a police's yellow and black tape barrier even though the material itself is perhaps of comparable strength. This is due to the legitimate institutional power and how the police have the power to enforce the request, which is more of a demand.

*“Cultural and institutional legitimacy is an intrinsically political condition tied to existing status and power dynamics. How access is distributed and for whom technologies are (implicitly and explicitly) intended reflect status markers within the broader social system, most often privileging those with valued status traits.”*

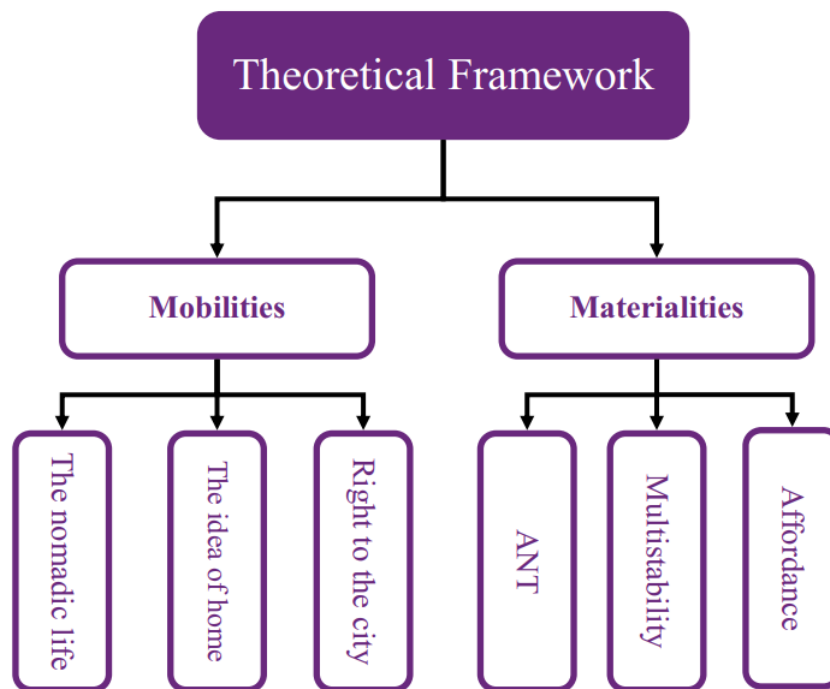
[Davis, 2020, p. 92]

The cultural legitimacy is also an important factor, take for instance the introduction of the personal computer which was marketed as a toy for boys in the early 1980s. As Lilly, a woman enrolled in computer science major at Carnegie Mellon University, recalls she had to ask her brother for the key to the computer since it was locked in his room. Since 1984 women majoring in computer science in the US have declined before leveling out in 2007 [Planet Money, 2014]. Due to this shift in cultural legitimacy, the percentage of women in computer science fell from 37% in 1984 to 18% in 2014 as women dropped out partly due to there not being any introductory classes to compensate for lack of previous experience but also because they perceived themselves as doing worse than the men despite this not being the case [Planet Money, 2014].

### 3.7.1 Analysing the Materialities

Firstly, we intend to look at the design of the artefacts from a perspective of what stabilities are dominant and how they are enforced, and what other stabilities may be present. Secondly, we will look at how the artefact may present itself in relation to how people interact from an ANT perspective. We will look at what programs are present and how they are made possible by delegation. Thirdly, we will analyse the power relations inherent in the design by using the mechanisms and conditions framework. We will pay special attention to how materialities may demand, refuse or discourage as these are the main drivers of social exclusion. There are apparent overlaps between these theories, particularly in ANT and affordances. However, as Davis points out above ANT is not sensitive to understanding the power relations and politics involved.

The theoretical framework is illustrated in figure 3.1 and while the theories under the header of Materialities have been operationalised, the theories under the Mobilities header provide a theoretical background that will aid in framing the mobility patterns of the homeless population as well as their sense of home.



*Figure 3.1.* Diagram showing the described theory.



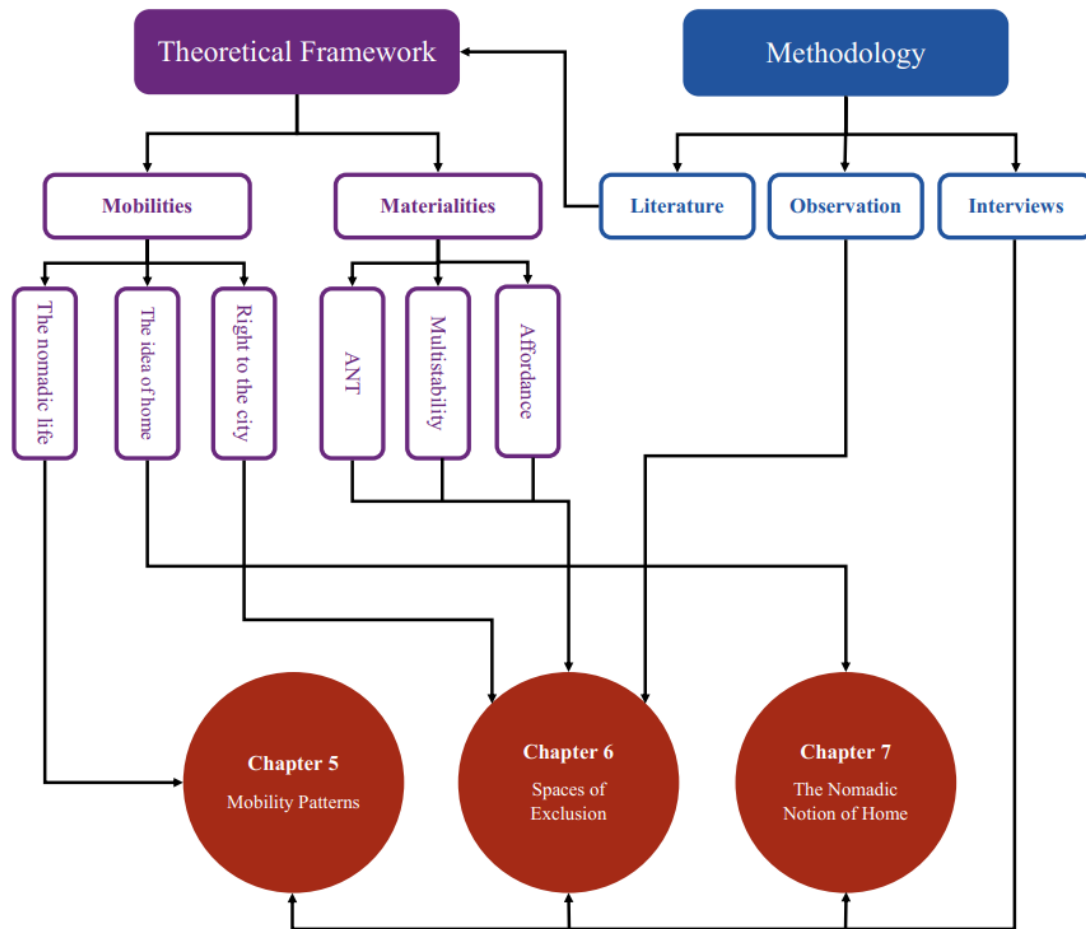
# Methodology 4

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This chapter will describe the chosen methods and how they are being utilised in this project. First, the research diagram is presented to give an overview of how the theoretical framework and methodology will be utilised throughout the project. Secondly, how a literature search and data mining was performed. Third, how the stakeholder analysis was done in order to identify possible interviewees and fourth, how said interviews were planned and conducted.

## 4.1 Research Design

As described in chapter 3 on page 23, a theoretical framework has been developed. Alongside this, the chosen methods, which will be presented later in this chapter, will help answer the research question. Figure 4.1 below shows, how the theoretical framework and methodology are implemented in the three analysis chapters that are to follow.

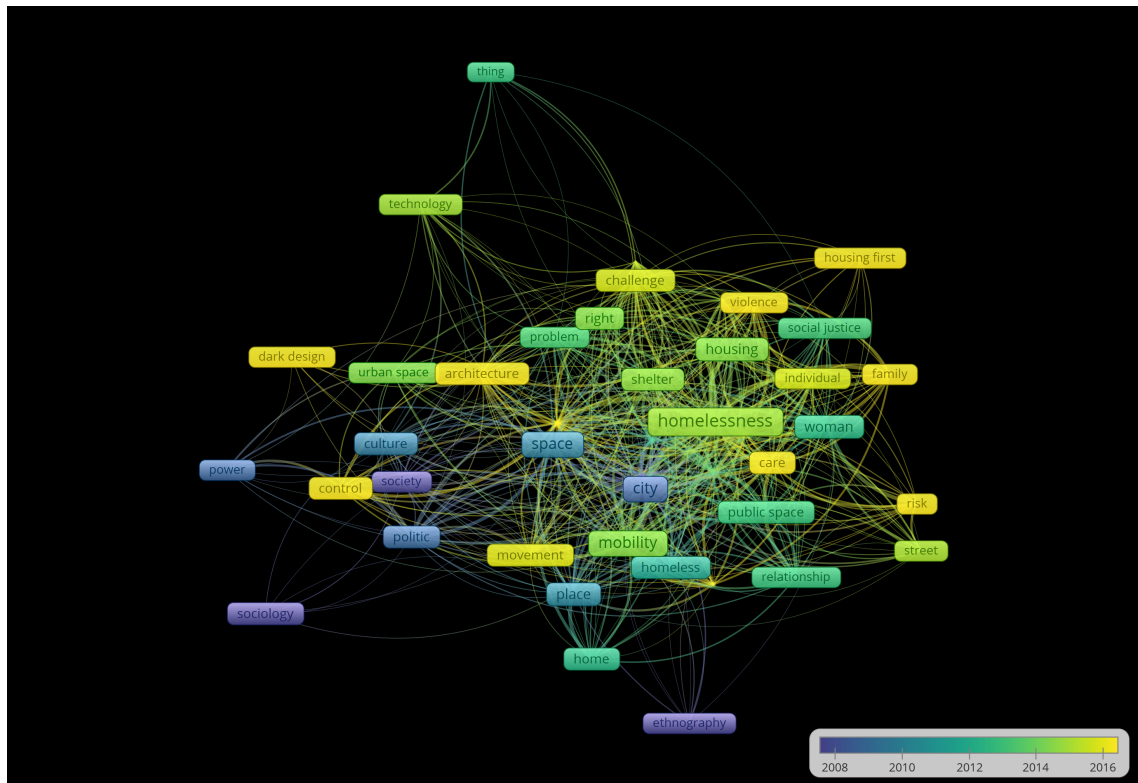


*Figure 4.1.* Research design.

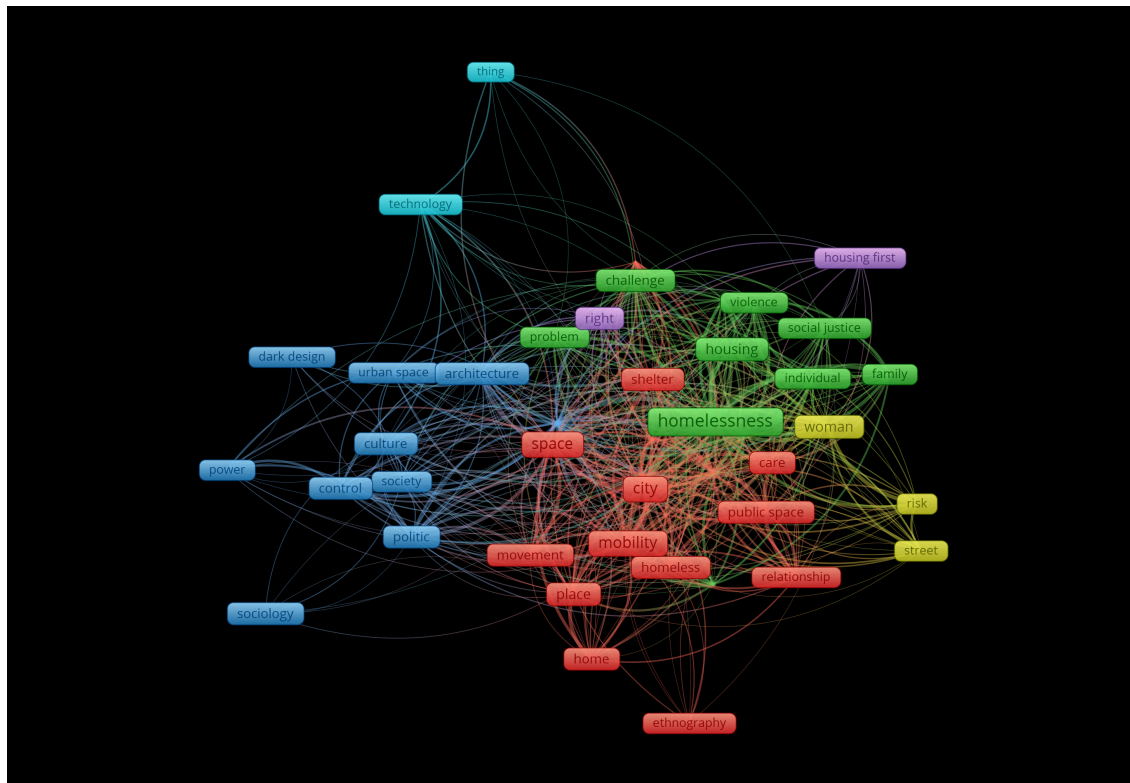
## 4.2 Literature search and data mining

A large amount of literature has been gathered in the previous semester as part of Niels Bo Nielsen's internship with professor Ole B. Jensen and the Dark design research team at Aalborg University. During the internship a database with over a thousand references in relation to dark design was constructed by registering references from peer-reviewed articles, master thesis's and other student works as well as selected books all of which dealt with dark design. This backwards literature revealed the foundations on which this emerging field of research stands and more practically what literature other researchers have found useful when diving into this subject. By using tools such as VOSviewer it is possible to get a graphical representation of this database making it possible to view how keywords and topics relate to each other. This has been a very useful tool in discovering firstly the foundations of the research and secondly to find the most essential keywords and topics covered. As seen on fig 4.2 dark design is a more recent term and thus in yellow. In fig. 4.3 co-occurrences of terms are clustered together here - dark design is colored in blue and is linked to urban space, culture, power, architecture, and politics.





**Figure 4.2.** Visualisation of literature database in VosViewer most used words colour coded by year of publication



**Figure 4.3.** Visualisation of literature database in VosViewer on the most used words in title and abstract, clusters in colour are words that occur together

A forward literature search has also been made after selecting and reading some of the most central texts. The most central are by Ole B. Jensen Robert Rosenberger, and Gordan Savicic and Selena Savic. The forward literature search was done in two databases. First Scopus was searched finding literature that cited the above-mentioned works and therefore published later. A similar search was done in Google Scholar which seem more comprehensive listing everything related but also had more unrelated results. The abstracts were read before being added to the database to rule out unrelated literature.

The Infomedia database which catalogs all newspaper and magazine articles from 1975 onwards with few restrictions was also searched. Here dark design has become an established term since 2016 thanks in part to the focus put on this subject by professor Ole B. Jensen. Searching the Infomedia database led to many newspaper articles primarily dealing with the displacement of the homeless during construction or city renewal or discussion about what is dark design and what can be identified as such. This literature was sorted into three folders by area Aalborg, Aarhus and the rest of Denmark. A fourth folder was added for newspaper and media articles from around the world, mainly in the global North. Furthermore, individual authors' list of publications were assessed to reveal supporting literature or further development within their field.

A network of authors collaborating and inspiring each other was also found as Rosenberger is heavily influenced by the work of Ihde and Verbeek. Together these three have advanced the field of post-phenomenology. Ihde is the main founder of post-phenomenology, with Verbeek as his protege advancing the field of STS and Rosenberger operationalizing the

theory in his work on Hostile architecture.

### **4.3 Stakeholder analysis**

In order to find stakeholders involved with the homeless population in Aalborg, a preliminary Google search was performed to find information about the diaconal NGOs that run the shelters and night and day centres in Aalborg. This was done to find interview subjects with knowledge about the homeless and thereby gain a way in to find interview subjects among the homeless population. Other than the homeless people themselves, we are also interested in collecting information from the governmental agencies and started by looking into what Aalborg Municipality is doing to support homeless people and other vulnerable groups. Aalborg Municipality has Housing First which means that they provide housing for everyone who should wish it, but if for some reason a person does not want or is unable to live in permanent housing, there are homeless shelters and night centres available in several locations. These, however, are run by the diaconal NGOs that are pictured in figure 4.4 below:



Kirkens Korshær is the largest relief organisation performing social work with the homeless, drugusers, mentally ill, poor and lonely people.

Frelsens Hær is the Danish branch of The Salvation Army, an evangelical Christian society working in 126 countries. They provide food, counselling, conversation and advice as well as field trips for children.

KFUK work is aimed at providing shelter for women who are at risk due to domestic violence, prostitution or substance abuse or are just going through a difficult time in their lives.

KFUM is the Danish branch of YMCA. They help children, adults and whole families who find themselves in difficult circumstances, eg. the lonely, homeless, psychological vulnerable as well as people with substance abuse problems.

Blå Kors helps socially vulnerable groups with alcohol and drug abuse problems as well as their relatives.

**Figure 4.4.** Infographic on the diaconial NGOs that operate in Aalborg. The size of the circle approximate the number of volunteers on a national level [Kirkens Korshær, N/A; Frelsens Hær, N/A; KFUM's Sociale Arbejde, 2021; KFUK's Sociale Arbejde, N/A; Blå Kors, N/A].

The figure above shows some basic information on the different diaconal NGOs on a national level to give an idea of their size and capacity to help. There are more organisations that seek to help the homeless and other vulnerable groups but the five that are shown above are the ones that have departments in Aalborg and therefore are relevant to our project. The list of stakeholders helped us find relevant informants to interview.

## 4.4 Interviews

In order to gain knowledge on the homeless population in Aalborg, select actors identified in the stakeholder analysis were interviewed. The interview design and structure are based on Steinar Kvale's seven stages of an interview inquiry to ensure getting the best outcome of the interview.

The first step is thematising which consists of clarifying the purpose of the interview before it is conducted. When the purpose is identified, the designing of the interview can begin. In this stage, it is decided what type of interview structure will give the best outcome, for example, a structured interview with very strict settings or a semi-structured interview where there is more room for changes of topics. After these stages are decided on, it is time to conduct the interview based on the prepared interview guide. After the interview, the collected material needs to be prepared for analysing, which is normally done by transcribing it but in this project, we listened through the recordings and made notes of potential useful places. The fifth stage is analysing the prepared transcription and deciding how to utilise the collected data. These findings are then verified, making sure they can obtain validity, reliability and generalisability and then incorporating the findings of the study into the project [Kvale, 2007].

In order to get different perspectives of the movement patterns of the homeless population of Aalborg, several people within the field were selected for interviews. For this project, interviews have been conducted with Maria Frey Sjøblom, head of service and activities at Aalborg Bibliotekerne, Søren Dahl Nielsen, formerly homeless and organiser of the Homeless March 2019-2028, Lise Maltha from the secretariat for Udsatterådet in Aalborg Municipality, Lasse Olsen, a former alderman in the town council in Aalborg Municipality and member of Enhedslisten and Simon Hjorth Jacobsen, police inspector at Northern Jutland Police. We also reached out to "Gadeteamet" or the Street Team who referred us to their leader, Jeannette Fischer-Nielsen, but she did not reply to our enquiry. Interview guides were planned ahead but the interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews as this gives the opportunity for the person being interviewed to elaborate on topics beyond the interview guide as well as asking follow-up questions. They can be seen in appendix C. The interview with Maria Frey Sjøblom was planned to gain knowledge on how the homeless population in Aalborg use the libraries and how the libraries "handle" the homeless people. We were informed by some of Maria Sjøblom's colleagues on one of the city walks that some homeless people move nomadically between the libraries in Aalborg which was also investigated in the interview. During the literature review on the usage of libraries, we came across Søren Dahl Nielsen who has written several articles on his experience as being homeless where he amongst other things mentioned how he and his mother spent a lot of time at the local library. He also wrote about how the home becomes divided into several points. Even though he is not from Aalborg but Zealand, he is still able to provide

information on being homeless and what home is to a homeless person.

During the interview with Maria Frey Sjøblom, she recommended that we get in touch with Lise Maltha. She works in the secretariat for "Udsatterådet" in Aalborg Municipality's Center for the socially vulnerable which is a council that consists of a group of adult socially disadvantaged residents of Aalborg. This knowledge could give us insight on the homeless population and the decision-making in Aalborg Municipality regarding city inventory such as benches etc. In order to gain knowledge on the policy-oriented parts of dark design, we contacted the police department in Northern Jutland, who referred us to police inspector Simon Hjorth Jacobsen. He is the leader of the Northern Jutland department of prevention whose main focus is on general safety in the streets of Aalborg. We were especially interested in gaining knowledge on the newer anti-camp laws and anti-mendicancy laws and how they are enforced in the field. As described in section 1.5 on page 19, Lasse Olsen started a debate about Dark Design on Facebook and received a lot of responses to his post. Therefore, a meeting with him was set up to get his insight on possible dark design in Aalborg.

Additionally, we interviewed three homeless people and one former homeless person in Aalborg: Adam, Brian, Chris and David. These are not their real names as we have decided to anonymise them. We got in contact with Adam through the chairman of SAND Nordjylland, Christian Vang Hansen, and met up with him outside of Salling on the pedestrianised street Algade in Aalborg. We met Brian in the same spot after getting his contact information from a security guard that knows him. We did not have any contact with Chris and David prior to our interview as we simply walked up to them on the street where they were respectively selling Hus Forbi and asked if they were interested in an interview. For these interviews, we had also prepared a list of questions to ask them but made sure to leave room for them to elaborate.

## 4.5 Observation

Before starting the process of interviewing, city walks were conducted to get a feel for the Aalborg area. This was done in order to see if we could see any examples of dark design implementations in the streets of Aalborg other than the ones mentioned in Lasse Olsen's Facebook post in section 1.5 on page 19 (see also appendix D). This means that we had some preexisting knowledge and knew where to look in Aalborg. During the first walk, we drifted based on this knowledge but the following walks became increasingly targeted as we gathered more information from the people we interviewed or the people that we encountered around Aalborg on the walks. Sometimes these walks did not yield any useful or new information but this was rarely the case.

Talking to people working in the streets gave us a lot of knowledge about the homeless situation in Aalborg. We did not record these conversations but wrote down field notes after the conversation ended. Some of the people with whom we talked did not want to go on the record as they feared that it would put their organisation in an unfavorable light. They were nonetheless candid and the information they provided was most useful. We sought to verify the information by asking our experts whenever possible. The field notes can be found in appendix A.

During our city walks we would photograph designs that seem to be excluding in nature as well as the known places where people experiencing homeless hang out. We have made an effort to not include people in the foreground as if not possible blur their faces to protect their identity as well as comply with GDPR guidelines. The photographs can be seen as a part of the field notes but also in themselves communicate the appearances and the atmosphere of these places. Therefore, some of them are used in the analysis as illustrations documenting the design interventions as well as conveying the scale and placement. Lastly, we have used photographs to document interactions with the artefact in the urban environment.

#### **4.5.1 Validity of our Findings**

This research builds on only a few in depth interviews therefore to further increasing the validity of our findings, more interviews would need to be conducted. Furthermore, a more stratified sample including the Greenlandic community which the examples of dark design we found in Aalborg seem to target would be highly beneficial to understand how dark design affects this group. We would have liked to interview women about their homelessness; however, women are more invisible at street level and do not make out a significant proportion of the homeless statistic. This can be because they are afraid to contact homeless shelters out of fear of stigma or if they have children are afraid they will be taken from them by the municipality. It is also likely that they also prostitute themselves for a place to sleep as Lise Maltha talks about in the interview.





# Mobility Patterns 5

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## 5.1 Everyday Life for a Person Experiencing Homelessness

For most of us the day begins at home, waking up, then having a shower putting on a fresh set of clothes before we have breakfast, then we leave for work or school. Most of the day is spent inside before we return home, by bus, car or bicycle. In our spare time we might work out or do sports so we leave our home again and maybe shop for dinner on the way back. We will typically spend the evening at home watching TV perhaps with our phone in hand scrolling through Facebook. During the weekend we might invite friend over for dinner and a board game. In the evening we simply go to bed after brushing our teeth. Home is thus the beginning and the end place of each day and is a base where we can choose to invite people in or shut the world out and recharge.

We first started to consider how the life a homeless person differed considerably when we read Søren's quote about how all the functions of everyday life was spread trough out the city and that each function that is normally found at home had to be performed elsewhere resulting in having to drive considerable distances between each place.

This is how we came to think of home in the network and that homeless people are forced to be on the move and not inhabiting a home but inhabiting the mobility network. Home for them is not a singular place but made of points in a network.

The analysis will begin by giving an account of what life is like for a homeless person so as to better understand what challenges they face but more importantly being able to identify points in the network and the mobility patterns. Firstly, we will tell the story of Søren Dahl Nielsen who was homeless during his highschool years. We will then present Adam, Brian, David who are currently homeless in Aalborg.

## 5.2 Søren the Homeless Activist

Søren Dahl Nielsen (22) is a former homeless person turned homeless activist. He is the front figure of the homeless march which seeks to create awareness of the problems the homeless are facing [Nielsen, 2019].

Unlikely circumstances made Søren Dahl Nielsen and his mother homeless as their apartment turned out to be infested with harmful mould that made them ill. Helsingør Municipality had a minimal decontamination done; however, they refused to sign off that the treatment was effective and that the apartment was safe to live in. Søren Dahl Nielsen and his mother then decided to vacate their home. The municipality saw this as them being obstinate and refused to provide them with adequate housing since they were perceived as

voluntary homeless. For financial reasons the private housing market was out of reach for Søren Dahl Nielsen's mother. This resulted in them being homeless from August 2015 until March 2019 [TV Nordkysten, 2021], roughly 3.5 years. According to Søren Dahl Nielsen, Helsingør Municipality has very few subsidised housing units and it is not uncommon to be on the waiting lists for years. During their homelessness they mostly slept in their compact car but were also living with friends, family, staying at a trailer park or rented a room a few months at a time until the situation became untenable and they had to stay in their car again.

At the time of their homelessness, Søren Dahl Nielsen was attending high school (translated from the Danish "gymnasium") so their day would begin by waking up in the car and having yoghurt for breakfast before driving to the high school. The afternoons were spent at the library until closing time. Their belongings were kept at a storage unit where they also had a cooling box for keeping food. Cooking was especially challenging as it was done on an electrical hot plate. Since they could not prepare food at the storage unit, they drove to Nordhavnen where there were electrical outlets.

*"We did not have a real fridge but we had a small cooling box. It is one of the problems of being homeless you do not have a fridge so you cant really shop for long periods of time or get the good discounted items that are going out of date since they spoil quickly."*

Søren Dahl Nielsen in appendix B.9 15:00, own translation.

After cooking dinner they drove to a fitness center which provided a place to sit and a place to shower and go to the toilet. The fitness center closed at 23 and they then drove back to Nordhaven where they found a place to park near an electrical outlet so a small space heater could heat the car in the colder months. Søren Dahl Nielsen says the he slept really well in the cold car.

*"It felt a little unsafe. However, you sleep really well in a car. Because of the cold, the body naturally falls asleep faster. It was actually the best time for me in regards to sleeping because I fell asleep so quickly."*

Søren Dahl Nielsen in appendix B.9 36:52, own translation.

Even though the car provided a sense of shelter, shielding them from the elements, they still felt unsafe and exposed. Sometimes people would stare in the windows or knock on them. A few months after this, an arsonist set fire to a parked car on Norhavnen. Luckily, they were not parked there on that particular day.

Søren Dahl Nielsen says that they were much more mobile than the typical homeless since they had a car.

*"I think that we have been a more mobile type of homeless because we had our car. I think other homeless people and rough sleepers are more fixed and anchored in a specific place - the place that they sleep is close to a supermarket"*

*etc. I think it is more difficult for them to get around. We have known homeless that had a bike or took the train if they could afford it. In comparison we were privileged, we were able to move around but it was still irritating having to cover these distances all the time. It is fluid, there is no one place where you have everything together as you do in a home."*

Søren Dahl Nielsen in appendix B.9 1:14:15, own translation.

Søren Dahl Nielsen's experience differs from other typically homeless people as they did not have to deal with mental problems or substance abuse. They also had a car to sleep in which would be out of reach financially for the poorer homeless. As Søren Dahl Nielsen points out above they were more mobile than most homeless they encountered. However, they were also fixed in place between the points in the network as they choose to remain in Helsingør Municipality so that Søren Dahl Nielsen could have a normal school life with friends and parties as well as stay in contact with friends and family. Despite having a car, their way of inhabiting the network of points that perform mono-functionally meant that their experience resemble that of the other homeless people based in Aalborg that we interviewed for this project.

In order to identify the points in the network for Aalborg we performed 4 interviews with Hus Forbi sellers on the streets of Aalborg. We met Adam, our first interview person, on a sunny spring day outside Salling. The interview was arranged with the help of Christian Vang Hansen chairman of SAND Nordjylland.

### 5.3 "They do not talk to me - they talk to my dog"

Adam is 35 years old and has been homeless for the last 3.5 years. He walks the streets with his dog Molly, a German Shepard mixed with Siberian Husky. His few possessions are kept in a pram. In here, he keeps his money in a blue coffee pot along with beers, dog food and sleeping gear. His only source of income comes from selling Hus Forbi newspapers which he buys for 15 DKK and then resells for 30 DKK. On bad days he might only be able to sell one or two newspapers but on the very best days he has managed to sell for 600 DKK. However, he considers his dog as doing most of the work in regards to selling newspapers as most people talk to Molly and not to him. When people do talk to Adam its mostly to tell him to leave or berate him for making the dog live with him on the street.

His daily life is spent walking around the city. He likes to sell newspapers near the department store Salling but also spends time at Cafe Parasollen and at the safe haven on the north side of the library referred to as "Hullet" or "the hole". He sometimes collects bottles and cans but never from the trashcan as he is afraid to get hurt again, either by getting pricked by a needle or getting cut by a broken glass bottle. Showers are taken at sports facilities where he only pays 25 DKK for entrance or sometimes nothing as the attendant may take pity on him. However, other times he is told to leave with the words "We don't want you bums in here".

Going to the toilet is also difficult as it requires a credit card at the train station and at the bus terminal. This has been especially hard during the Corona pandemic as he would have to give people 5 DKK in coins and have them use their card to let him in. However

most people would tell him "No" because of the risk of catching the virus. Security guards at the bus terminal are especially strict and he is often told to leave almost before he has gotten his foot in the door. Other places are easier and the toilets outside the library and in Kvickly, a supermarket in the western part of the city, are places where he is not turned away. Other than that he relies on the few public toilets.

For Adam, the mobility network consists of points where he is excluded such as the toilets at the DSB train station and the bus terminal. But also places where he is allowed or rejected entrance such as the swimming pool depending on the attendant. Additionally, there are also places where he is welcomed such as the diaconal day centres where he gets most of his meals. Adam has lived in many cities during his homelessness and considers himself one of the highway knights from the Danish "landevejsridder", a term that is often romanticised bringing forth connotations of a person living the free life wandering from place to place and subsisting by doing odd jobs such as sharpening knives or playing music.

## 5.4 "I am very much at home on the street"

Brian was introduced to us by a security guard. Setting up a meeting failed the first time around as Brian's cellphone had lost charge during the weekend. Brian relies on prepaid sim cards as he has no money or bank account from which to pay for a subscription; he only uses it for phone calls and texting since using the internet drains both talk time and battery of his old phone too fast. However, he was very willing to talk to us after he found a way to recharge his phone. Brian has been homeless for about 8 years, and we estimate him being 50 to 55 years old.

Brian did not like talking about himself but saw himself as a front figure for the homeless as he had previously tried to establish another homeless shelter in Aalborg but could not get it funded. He was once a member of "udsatterådet" (council for socially disadvantaged) but was excluded by the other members of the council due to numerous disagreements. The exclusion by "udsatterådet" has caused him to feel like a persona non grata thus he now avoids any institutions that might help him. He is especially skeptical about the municipality which he holds in contempt as they in his opinion do not provide adequate help and care for the homeless population. Although he might be seen as a recluse while we were talking to him, many people both homeless and non-homeless waved and shouted "Hello Brian" as they walked by.

He lives on the street with his only source of income coming from finding bottles or selling Hus Forbi newspapers. Brian has an old worn bicycle with one pedal missing. So in many ways he has a higher everyday motility than Adam. However, he does not like to go far away as the bicycle would require more frequent maintenance which he cannot afford. Fixing it himself is not an option either as he has no way of cleaning his oily hands. If he goes to sleep with oily hands it will rub off in his sleeping bag which he tries to keep as clean and dry as possible to prevent it from going moldy. Every thing he owns is mobile and he has to take time out of each day to make sure that moisture does not destroy his kit including his phone. When asked if he had everything with him in his backpack he smiled coyly and said: "Maybe".

He considers it an injustice that there are fewer public toilets. He reasons it is because the

municipality does not want people like him occupying the toilets. He mostly knows how to get around this problem after being homeless for 8 years but he thinks it is a disservice to the homeless population and people in general that are forced to rely on private places like Salling. When asked about where he finds food he simply states that it is not a problem to find food in Aalborg even though he does not use any of the day centres or night time shelters.

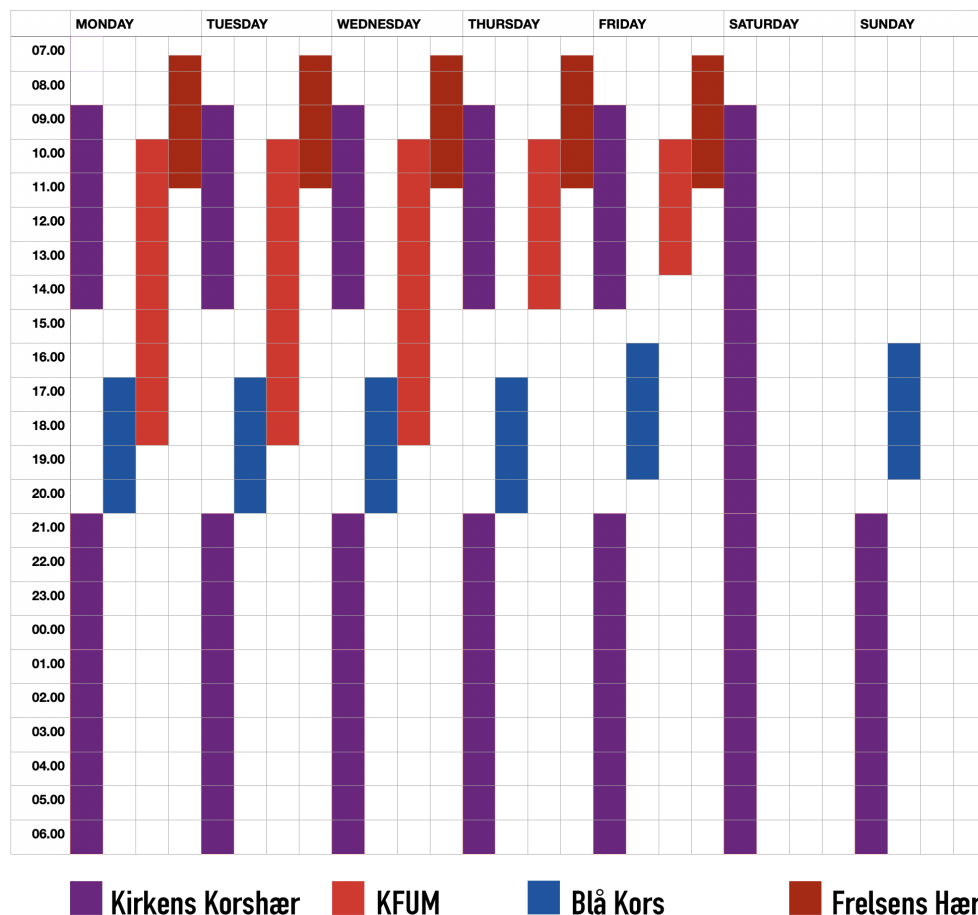
Neither Brian nor Adam receive government benefits and survives solely on selling news papers or picking bottles. Brian prefers not to stay at the shelters due to the numerous disagreements and also because according to him he can only stay at the shelters for 180 nights before being turned away to make room for an eastern European. Brian also does not like to abide by the rules set by the people running the shelters as he sees them as arbitrary.

For Adam, his dog Molly prevents from sleeping in shelters partly because not all shelters can accommodate a dog but also because he fears she will be injured by a needle or broken glass. Riding the bus is also not possible as Molly must be in a cage. He does however sometimes take the train which have no such restrictions, which is mostly trouble free. During his homelessness he has figured out that he is less likely to encounter ticket controllers after 16:00 on the small regional trains. He prefers to pay for his fare though.

Food and money are procured inside the city centre of Aalborg. Hygienic needs are often harder to take care of since they can be turned away or simply cannot use the cashless door locks on public toilets. Both men prefer to leave the city when it comes to sleeping.

## 5.5 Daytime Mobility Patterns

For people experiencing homelessness, many of the functions described at the beginning of this chapter, that take place at home are simply not possible to do without walking a considerable distance. Some wake up after spending the night at Kirkens Korshær homeless shelter at Søndergade 14, where they are woken up at 6:45. They quickly have to pack up their few belongings before breakfast as the shelter closes for cleaning between seven and nine. If they did not have time to have breakfast, Frelsens Hær runs a morning café from 7:30-11:30 offering free coffee and breakfast. After that, Kirkens Korshær's day centre is open as well as Café Parasollen, where lunch is provided. In the evening, Hjeterummet opens, offering dinner and a place to stay before Kirkens Korshær opens their night centre.



*Figure 5.1.* Opening hours of the diaconal day and night centres in Aalborg [Aalborg Kommune, N/Aa].

As seen on figure 5.1 above, Kirkens Korshær's night centre is open every night, meaning that as long as there is room, there is always a place to go for a bed at night. The day centres also mostly overlap during the days, leaving few gaps where none of them are open. In the interview with Lise Maltha, she explained how they in the Municipality keep track of many of the homeless people's where-about. Of course, it can be difficult to generalise every homeless person's routine throughout the day, but in general, the day and night centres seem to be the common denominator. These places are anchor points in the network for people experiencing homelessness as they fulfil several of their needs, such as food, warmth and a social life. This has been the case for many years. In the book "Ruter og rytmer", Bech-Jørgensen [2003] describes how the homeless population in Aalborg had certain routes that revolved around the day and night centres in the city centre. Pictured underneath in figure 5.2 is a conceptualisation of this daily rhythm where the homeless people of Aalborg move between the different day and night centres controlled by their opening hours.



**Figure 5.2.** Illustration conceptualising the mobility pattern based on the opening hours of diaconal institutions. Nighttime is represented with blue while daytime is yellow. Mornings and evenings are orange.

Looking at this map as anchor points throughout the day, there will be several detours that are different for each individual. As the stores start to open and the city fills with people, many of them find a spot to sell the Hus Forbi newspaper. For Adam and Brian this is their only source of income. The best places to sell newspapers are places with a large flow of people, thus the town squares and outside shopping centres and supermarkets are among the favorite spots, perhaps finding a bench nearby to sit on.

As the day progresses some time might be spent in the library which affords warmth and a place to recharge ones phone. According to Maria Sjøblom, most homeless people are very aware of not overstaying their welcome so they often move between the different branches of the library. The library is one of the few remaining places that try to accommodate everyone. As long as they do not disturb other library goers and abide by the rules set by the library, they are free to stay. On welcoming people experiencing homelessness, Maria Sjøblom said:

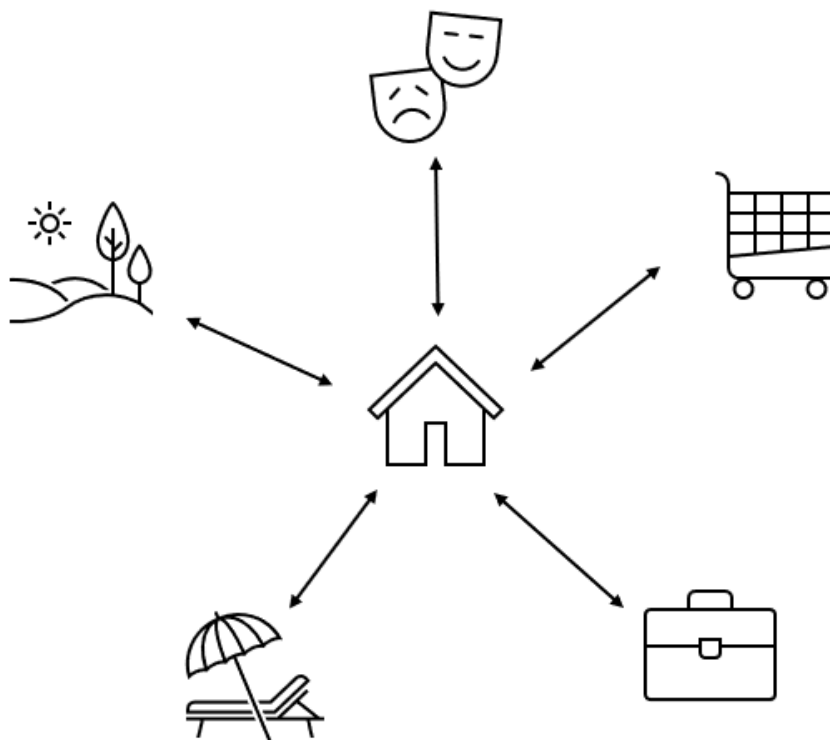
*"We have been put into this world to be an offer for all citizens. It is a question of supplying them with information and the opportunity for fellowship [...] They have an equal right to information and literature and the like. The thing is, it can be tough to accommodate them sometimes and that is why I try to mediate*

*all of the time. So for me there is no doubt that everyone has the right to be here."*

Maria Sjøblom in appendix B.7 09:50, own translation.

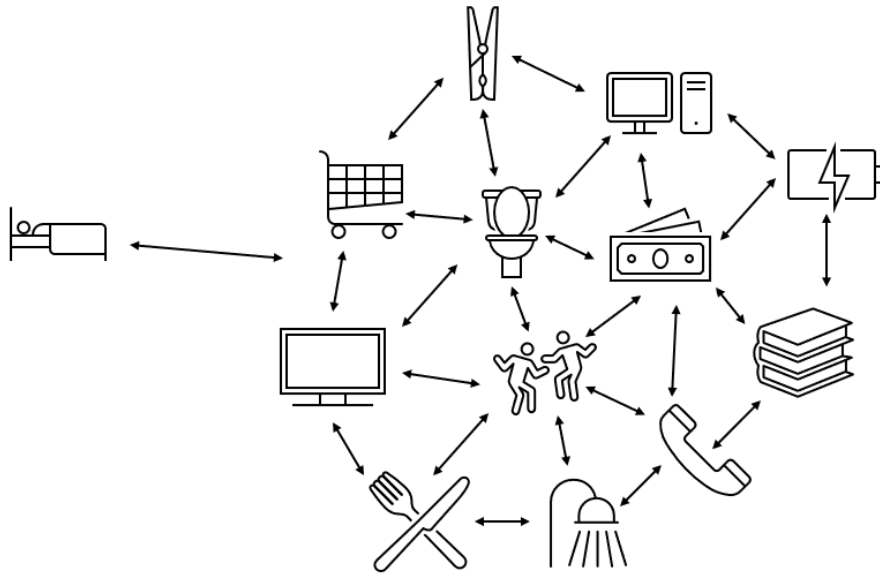
Many people experiencing homelessness have experienced being socially excluded and apart from the day and night centres where the homeless are welcomed, the library affords some of the same things as a living room. This is a place where you can sit and relax and read a book or watch some television like you would in the comforts of your home. The main difference is that you do not have the same privacy in the library.

For the non-homeless, the mobility pattern resembles a centralized network as home performs multi-functionally. All the necessary functions to sustain life is within a few steps of each other. For the homeless this is not the case as there is no singular place for them that can perform all the same functions as a home. Thus they are forced to move around to fulfil all of these functions. They will be at one place for breakfast before finding a good spot to sell newspapers. Then a new place opens for lunch or dinner. If they need to use a toilet they again have to rely on the diaconal institutions as there are only a few public toilets or they have to go to the library. During the library's opening hours they can use the toilet inside or the mobile toilet placed outside at the safe haven on the northern side. Therefore their mobility pattern resembles a distributed network as the points in the network they visit everyday perform mono-functionally.



**Figure 5.3.** Illustration of the centralised multi-functional home.





**Figure 5.4.** Illustration of the mono-functional distributed home.

At night a choice must be made of where to sleep some prefer sleeping at the shelters while others find a place in a park or outside the city.

## 5.6 Sleeping rough in Aalborg

What is striking is the fact there should be 50-60 homeless people sleeping rough in Aalborg according to the report on homelessness from VIVE [Benjaminsen, 2019]. However, they seem to remain perfectly invisible. There could be many explanations for this, among them is the fact that the last published census was done before the Coronavirus pandemic and the numbers may have changed. We did try to reach out to senior researcher Lars Benjaminsen from VIVE who is responsible for the census, however the report was due to be published in September 2022 and he did not have any analysis or preliminary numbers he could give us.

During our city walks we made a point of asking people we encountered that seemed to work in the area if they had any knowledge about homeless staying in the area. We did this informally and did not record these conversations but wrote down useful information afterwards as short field notes, which can be seen in appendix A. The park service team at Kildeparken had never seen any homeless people sleeping in the area as their day often starts early they should be likely to spot them. The gravediggers at Almen Cemetery only knew about one woman who would stay there. They would say hello in the mornings when she was about to leave, but she never returned their greeting. She had left her belongings in a bicycle trailer at the cemetery. They were unsure why but speculated that she may have a new one. In any event, they had left the trailer untouched just in case she might need it. Last year we did observe a homeless person staying in the underpass at the library however, he has since moved on as there is now construction work going on and the area is sealed off. Both Maria Sjøblom and Lise Maltha said that the former Tivoli at

Karolinelund was a favorite spot among rough sleepers but now most of the park is sealed off due to construction work on the new park. We would have liked to interview women on being homeless; however, there are very few of them. Only 23% of the homeless population are women. According to Lise Maltha this might be because they tend to stay in abusive relationships or prostitute themselves for a place to stay. They may be afraid to contact the municipality out of fear that their children might be taken from them. The report from VIVE [Benjaminsen, 2019] show that women to a higher degree rely on sofa-surfing.

For Adam and Brian sleeping mainly happens on the periphery of the network, as the city generally does not afford sleeping either due to dangerous encounters with others who might attack them or security guards or police who tell them to move on.

### **Adam the Shelter Seeker**

When Adam became homeless he began scanning his environment for places to sleep. He always tries to remain unseen especially in the city as he wants to avoid run-ins with the police or security guards but also other people as he has been urinated on while sleeping. He therefore avoids the inner city pedestrianized streets and tries to find a quiet place to minimise the chance of being woken up and told to move on. When asked about if he has ever been told to go away by the police he had this to say:

*"When you finally fall asleep and relax, you get woken up and have to find another place to be. Then you are lying there and then maybe two hours later, another security guard or police officer tells you that you cannot sleep here and then you have to get up again so sometimes you are so stressed. Your body is so tired because you keep being woken up - you do not get to sleep through [the night]."*

Adam in appendix B.1 14:35, own translation.

The anti-camp laws also means that he is often told to go away even though his few possessions does not constitute a permanent camp. This is also a reason why he fears sleeping in the city centres as the police can also issue a 3 months zonal ban effectively forcing him to go to another city.

Adam recalls an episode where he had been sleeping in the farthest corner of a parking garage. Apparently an older couple had spotted him and called the police since they felt unsafe and though he looked like a violent criminal - his only offense was sleeping.

This is why he tries to sell a lot of newspapers when he is in the city centre as it will allow him to find a shelter (the outdoor type) outside the city where he can stay a few days and catch up on sleeping.

### **Brian the Stealth Sleeper**

*"Rough sleepers don't sleep on the street"* Brian explains (Appendix B.2 4:30, own translation). Like other people a dark and quite place is required and that is not possible where there are other people. Brian is a rough sleeper but relies on stealth and secrecy when sleeping rough. So he gets up early in the morning and clears his campsite so no-one

would be able to see where he has slept. His main concern is keeping everything clean and dry. He also never cooks as this activity will make him more visible.

*Your behavior is very much a product of the person you are and the abilities you have and if you have some special needs which you of course have as a street homeless, including 90 % chance of intensive drug abuse, you then find yourself a place that suits it. I will never tell you where I sleep, and that's of course because there's actually nowhere you are allowed to sleep. And when you walk the streets every day and look like I do - if the Police get tired of me, I have a big problem. If I meet them inside Bilka, if I meet them here, if they say you should leave, well, then I actually have to leave, it actually says so in law [...] So if they say "you cannot sleep here" - then I can not sleep here, and so if they are angry with me they can target me and I cannot sleep anywhere. So no-one knows where I sleep"*

Brian in appendix B.2 26:30, own translation.

According to Brian if you are under the influence of drugs or alcohol it is more likely that you will sleep in the city as it is unlikely that you will be able to walk very far. What is very striking about Brian's quote is that he mentions skills and abilities along with personal needs as determinants for how rough sleepers find a place to stay. These words seem to be very much in line with those of Kaufmann et al. [2004] and his thoughts of motility as described in section 3.1 on page 23.

Brian has helped many newcomers or people who cannot be alone so he has on numerous occasions also slept alongside other people to take care of them. This has usually been much closer to the city as he would never share the location of his sleeping places.

### David the Sofa-surfer

David is originally from Poland but came to Denmark in 1983 during a youth Judo camp at the age of 16. His father was associated with Lech Walesa so after the Polish police ransacked their apartment his father told him to defect. David left his pregnant girlfriend in Poland but after getting political asylum, he managed to get his son to Denmark. David had a steady job and owned an apartment but lost everything in the years following his son's death. His son was only 23 at the time of his death. David now gets incapacity benefits and supplements his income by selling Hus Forbi. He considers himself self-employed and sees selling newspapers as a job so he starts his day at 7 and continues only for as long as he wants to. He likes to use the library and often goes there to read newspapers and perhaps recharge his phone.

David keeps to himself and does not like to be around other homeless people. He has an arrangement with a woman where he sleeps 3-4 nights a week. He stocks up the fridge and takes care of her. David tells us: "she says she loves me more than anything on earth" but they do not have sex as this would according to David complicate their relationship. Other nights of the week he spends with an old friend from childhood and the rest of the time he is a rough sleeper. David has also experienced being told to leave a place where he was sleeping.

*"Well, it is unpleasant, right? If someone comes over and tells me to move...  
I have the black belt in judo but I sure as hell don't want to fight so I just say  
"Okay, have a nice day"."*

David in appendix B.4 06:50, own translation.

It very interesting that he brings up Judo in this context as it speaks to the anger he feels when being excluded but also wanting to defend his right to be there and to sleep but he still manages to think better of it and thus avoid an escalation of the confrontation.

### 5.6.1 Policing in Aalborg

We asked Simon Hjorth Jacobsen from North Jutland Police how they administrated the anti-camps laws in Aalborg. Simon Hjorth Jacobsen told us that there are not many homeless people sleeping on the streets of Aalborg and it was not something they would encounter often, if at all, mostly due to Aalborg's housing first policy and ample space at the homeless shelters. According to him there have been no permanent camps in Aalborg at all, but in case there ever was one they would have to assess if it was of a permanent nature by looking at the artefacts of the campsite. A small tent in it self would not be considered to be of a permanent nature but fencing an area off would. Simon Hjorth Jacobsen also told us that zonal bans have not been used to deter rough sleepers or homeless but only applied to acts of gross vandalism in Jomfru Ane Gade. As far as he knew, the anti-mendicancy law have only be used once on an Eastern European who was begging in Hasseris, an affluent neighborhood in Aalborg. He was swiftly deported as he had no residency permit. With regards to creating a feeling of insecurity the police rely on complaints from citizens and would then rely on their judgement after talking to the people involved thus in practice policing works much the same way as they do in cases of loud music being played.

Even though the enforcing the laws seem relatively relaxed when compared to Copenhagen both Brian and Adam have had run-ins with the police or security guards telling them to move on, they seem to have found way to avoid this. What seems clear so far is that they do not sleep in the city center.

Simon Hjort Jacobsen told us the policing of the homeless population is mostly seasonal as the good weather would encourage people to drink. Most often they would just talk to them and try an split up the group. If they are drunk they might not even register getting a fine so this is not really effective. Therefore only if the assess that someone was too drunk to take care of themselves would they be brought to the police station for six hours to sleep it off.

It is striking that the accounts from Simon Hjorth Jacobsen differ from what Adam and Brian told us. The way the law is administrated in Aalborg seems relaxed when compared to Copenhagen. This may be due to the fact that there has never been any homeless camps in Aalborg.

This could also be because it is mostly security guards who patrol the inner cities that remove the homeless and the asymmetry of the encounter. While the encounter for the security guards or police officer ends as the homeless person leaves, the homeless person must find a new place to sleep with the chance of being told to leave again. Thus the

experience for the homeless person is much more invasive and more likely to be instilled in their memory. The laws criminalising homeless camps has also meant that people fear the police, as they are afraid of receiving a zonal ban if they sleep in groups. This forces them to sleep alone, leaving them isolated and vulnerable to violence. This is also why many homeless people tend to move out of the city to find a quiet place to sleep, such as Adam and Brian.

### 5.6.2 Summary of Sleeping Places

Our interviewees slept in different places, Søren and his mother slept in their car, Adam and Brian would try to go outside the city to sleep and David would sleep with friends most days of the week but would also sleep at the night centres. Adam and Brian preferred not to stay at the night centres, Adam due to his dog and Brian Adam, Brian and David have experiences with sleeping rough. Their experiences have made them wary of sleeping in the city centre.

To avoid being told to leave they keep their sleeping place a secret Mostly because they have had run-ins with police and security guards before but also because there is a chance of being the victim of random acts of violence if sleeping in the city. This is why they seek areas outside the city for sleeping but since they still rely on the city and the functions it provides as described in section 5.5 on page 51 they can not go very far. Our experts say that some of the places in the city where the homeless are sleeping are Almen Cemetery, and formerly, Karoline Lund, and the bus underpass at the library.



# Spaces of Exclusion 6

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In the previous chapter we have investigated the mobility patterns of the people experiencing homelessness. We have found that sleeping mostly takes place either at the night centre or outside the city centre in undisclosed locations that they would actively try to keep secret for fear of losing their sleeping place. During the day they relied on the places in the city centre which collectively served many of the same functions of a home.

In this chapter we will analyse some of the places that have been changed to exclude the homeless and socially vulnerable, starting with Kildeparken and John F. Kennedys Plads which have for many years been a favorite hangout place for people with substance use disorder. We will also look at how benches have been removed after complaints of anti-social behavior by residents or business owners who felt unsafe. Furthermore, we will investigate how the mobility patterns have changed as a result of dark design and ongoing construction work. But first we will touch upon how a shift in demographic has changed Aalborg from an industrial city into a city of knowledge which may have resulted in a decrease of tolerance.

## 6.1 The Commercialisation of Public Space

Aalborg has in the last 20-30 years been transformed from an industrial city with port facilities and industry close to the city centre into a "knowledge city". More recent planning documents from 2016 show that Aalborg city centre is to be developed with a focus on strengthening commercial and cultural activities making Aalborg a vibrant city "around the clock, year round" [Andersen, 2016]. C.W. Obels Plads is an example of where this shift has already taken place. It is located right next to the centuries old monastery in the middle of the medieval city centre. It has traditionally been a place where the poorest of the population have sought help. From 1919 there was a soup kitchen at the square which in 1992 was taken over by KFUM and renamed Cafe Parasollen and it soon became a place for the homeless and socially vulnerable to get a meal. As Aalborg transformed, C.W. Obels Plads became valuable real estate since it is connected to the large shopping street Bispensgade and Cafe Parasollen was relocated in 2003 [Ørkild, 2017]. 20 years ago there were hardly any outdoor cafes in Aalborg. But since then the square have become home to cafes, restaurants and a microbrewery. These commercial ventures have to a large degree taken over most of the square in the summer months. The cafes and restaurants extended their service area into public domain beyond the borders of the cadastre. There are of course rules to this process so an application must be sent to the municipality once a year requesting use of the space [Aalborg Kommune, N/Ab]. The outside service areas have increased over the years and now have a sort of permanence to them in the summer

months as the chairs and tables are left outside even at night. The once large square now consists of a walkway around the cafes filled with tables and the middle of the square has been claimed by the surrounding cafes resulting in a small triangle of space marked by a bench encircling a tree as the only truly remaining public space. There of course still a few benches in the periphery of this space but the best places to sit are the cafes and restaurants which have demarcated their area with small fences or rope barriers. This means that in order to sit comfortably you have to pay effectively commercialising public space, pushing away the less affluent.

In an article, Barber [2001] talks about how public space is disappearing as town squares are replaced by malls which are private spaces that do not serve the democratic function of the agora. Thus, people are reduced to consumers at these places, community functions, hard won democratic rights and liberties such as protesting and free speech are prohibited at these areas.



**Figure 6.1.** C.W. Obels Plads

While C.W. Obels Plads is only one square, it can be seen as a microcosm of what is happening elsewhere in Aalborg as the city grows denser and the industrial workers are replaced with university students and the affluent middle class. This transition is not only spatial but also demographic as more and more middle-aged people have moved from the suburbs into the city taking their values of orderliness with them as Lise Maltha points out:

*"The city has developed in a way where more middle-aged people have come to the city and they want peace and quiet. They want peace and quiet and culture. Even though they might have been punkers when they were 14."*

Lise Maltha in appendix B.6 24:20, own translation.

This lack of tolerance and increased focus of commercialisation has also had an effect of



how the marginalised groups are treated. As residents and business owners are registering more complaints with Aalborg Municipality it has become harder to insist that the city is for everyone.

## 6.2 Dark design in Aalborg

Aalborg does not have many examples of dark design. During our first observations we would try and look for slanted heating vents and perhaps spikes or other ways of closing off space that might be helpful for rough sleepers. The ensuing discussion on Lasse Olsen's Facebook page served as a starting point for our city walks when we were looking for examples of dark design in Aalborg. Apart from the glaring example of the metal pipe surrounding the lift at the train station, many of the places accused of dark design did not really qualify as such upon further investigation for example the library playing loud music in the arcade. We did not find any examples of spikes or slanted vents. But dark design need not be an add-on of spikes and studs and many times the design changes are very subtle. Instead of what is there, dark design can also be what is not there becoming present by the removal of useful amenities such as public toilets and benches.

## 6.3 Kildeparken and John F. Kennedys Plads

### "Runderen"

The area around John F. Kennedys Plads, the train and bus station along with Kildeparken behind the tracks can be seen as one area that has traditionally been a hang out place for the homeless and people with substance use disorder. A favorite spot of the people with substance use disorder has been John F. Kennedys Plads, specifically a place known as "Runderen". However, it has also infamously been dubbed "The Greenlandic embassy" or "the Polar Circle", but these terms are used in a derogatory manner thus stigmatizing the place as well as the people there. Before construction began on the PlusBus station, John F. Kennedys Plads was encircled by trees. In the middle of the lower half of the square there was a huge circular fountain and surrounding this benches and short hedges. The in-circulated area could only be entered from the opening places at the four corners north, south, east and west. The relatively large area provided ample space for larger groups to assemble. According to Lise Maltha, a small group of 10-12 people consisting mostly of Greenlanders were very rough with each other and acts of in-group violence was common along with heavy drinking and shouting. This area around the train station and the bus station in Aalborg has for a long time been a place that attracts the homeless and socially vulnerable. Bech-Jørgensen [2003] describes how in the beginning of the 1990s, numerous conflicts arose internally in the group which contributed to insecurity among other users of the space - a situation that has carried on into present time. With construction of the new bus terminal underway, Aalborg Municipality sought to make a safe haven in order to provide a space for this group of people. This safe haven was erected in 2018 near their old hang out place but this time behind the toilet building in Kildeparken next to the Singing Trees.

### The Cacophony of Singing Trees

When Lasse Olsen raised the debate about dark design in Aalborg one of the places he mentioned in his Facebook post was the Singing Trees. According to Lasse Olsen, the homeless and socially vulnerable used to use Kildeparken a lot. They felt like they were a part of city life as there was a few benches and a small football field on the near side of the toilet building. The group of homeless was sitting at the picnic tables and would mostly drink or sometimes play football with the kids there. However, this area has been slowly taken over by the Singing Trees according to Lasse Olsen. The park where The Singing Trees are today were formerly known as The Park of Music which was inaugurated in 1987 when Sir Cliff Richard performed at Aalborg Congress and Culture Centre and planted the first tree [Aalborg Kongress og Kultur Center, N/A]. In 2012 a rectangular speaker box was added to the trunk of each tree that played a medley of the artists' most popular songs and the park area became known as the Singing Trees. When a button at the top of the speaker box is pushed, music is played for a minute or two. Between 1987 and 2019, 95 internationally recognised artists have planted trees in the Park of Music each with a speaker box underneath.



**Figure 6.2.** Singing Trees: In the foreground a speaker box, in the background the toilet building is visible

The football field has since been moved to the other side of the safe haven. As people and especially children like to engage with the trees often pushing multiple buttons at a time, a cacophony of sound emanates throughout this space. Lise Maltha explains how this has in essence pushed the homeless and the socially vulnerable away from this area. The speaker boxes work in the same way as the speakers at Vejle station which played march music as discussed in section 1.2 on page 12. Lasse Olsen was unsure if this was intentionally done by Aalborg Congress and Culture Centre to push the homeless away by planting trees closer to the safe haven.



**Figure 6.3.** A registration of the date on the speaker box of the singing trees. Older trees are in green while the newer trees are colored in red

To clarify if this was the case we mapped the date of the trees as can be seen on figure 6.3. The mapping shows that the newer trees marked in red are planted in the lower left corner of the park, away from the safe haven marked in bright green. Thus there is no evidence to suggest that the area surrounding the safe haven has been taken over by the Singing Trees in an attempt to push away the homeless. The safe haven in its present form was first erected in July 2018 - 6 years after the placement of the speaker boxes [Tryg Aalborg, 2018a].

While we were mapping the trees close to the safe haven a young man shouted to us "Play some hip hop, we want new music - not this old music" and while there may be no intent at creating dark design to push away people using the safe haven, the music may not be to their liking as much of it is classical. For the users of the safe haven they may have a place to call their own but it does not include the soundscape, which is not representative

of who they are. This means that even though the socially vulnerable are encouraged to use this space they are discouraged by the cacophony of sound.

The Singing Trees are an art installation and that raises many of same issues as the debate surrounding the bronze books on the benches in Copenhagen. An art work from 2012 of nine benches called "Læsegruppen" translated: "the reading group" by artist Tina Maria Nielsen [Nielsen, 2012]. Benches are spread out in the Sundsholm quarter on Amager. For the homeless the bronze books functioned in a similar way as an arm-rest placed in the middle of a bench [Thomsen and Modler, 2020], leading to speculations about the intentionality:

*"Is this a matter of the fine stack of books being a cover by Copenhagen Municipality's hidden agenda to keep away the at times drunk citizens from lying down and sleeping on the city's benches? Perhaps this could be the case. Fair Play Dansebar is right next door with ample opportunity to get plenty of "cold ones" inside."* [Duckert, 2016]

Duckert's short but well written text about the benches also mentions the fact that she never sees anyone sitting there - inviting as the place may be.

The placement of the safe haven near the Singing Trees was a result of negotiations between the municipality, the socially vulnerable, residents of the area and the business community as part of a strategy to increase the feeling of safety in the area. Therefore, the Singing trees cannot be said to be dark design but the placement of the safe haven may have aspects of it as the area does not hold the elements of city life which the socially vulnerable seek. 5 months after the safe haven at Kildeparken was established, the Center for the socially vulnerable which is a part of Aalborg Municipality writes the following:

*"When the centre's employees ask the socially vulnerable they tell us that they like hanging out at Kennedys Plads because there is life and because they feel they are part of the life in the city. The residents living nearby and the businesses at Kennedys Plads unfortunately still experience a behavior that causes them to feel unsafe."*

[Tryg Aalborg, 2018b], own translation.

The safe haven next to the Singing Trees was an attempt to give the homeless a another place to stay other than "Runderen", acting as a lightning rod for the anti-social behavior at John F. Kennedys Plads but also ensuring that there was another place once construction on the PlusBus terminal began - according to their own documentation:

*"At some point work will begin on establishing the bus lane at Kennedys Plads. All else being equal this group of citizens will seek another place to stay. The various efforts must ensure that we are at the forefront of what happens in relation to the vulnerable, so that they will hopefully use the safe haven in Kildeparken to a much greater extent, so that there will also be a decrease in behavior at Kennedys Plads that creates insecurity."*

[Tryg Aalborg, 2018b], own translation.

However, people with substance use disorder did not all move to the new safe haven but instead starting sitting on the concrete surrounding the lift.



*Figure 6.4.* The safe haven at Kildeparken next to the Singing Trees

### Railing Surrounding the Lift

The train station is a private place with public access. It provides a public access toilet and several waiting areas. One is inside the station with bolted down chunky metal furniture and outside there are two glass shelters next to the train tracks. Although the glass shelter has relatively short benches it has been used by a homeless person who stayed there during the night. Outside the station on the train side there are many benches under a roofed area. One of these benches did have an arm-rest in the middle of the bench but the rest did not. On the staircase to the main entrance there are posters forbidding loitering but despite this it is still a hangout place for the socially vulnerable see figure 6.5 on the next page. The interior of the station that in the 1990s was a lively place bustling with activity near the ticket counter and the kiosk is now almost empty as people now no longer buy tickets physically. The kiosk is now a 7-Eleven with sliding doors separating it from the main hall. Along with the supermarket inside Kennedy Arkaden, which also contains the bus station, this is the closest place to "Runderen" to buy beer.





**Figure 6.5.** Loitering prohibited on the staircase of the main entrance of the train station

John F. Kennedy's Plads, the train station and tracks as well as Kildeparken are all connected via an underground tunnel. Access to this tunnel is provided by staircases as well as three lifts located at John F. Kennedy's Plads, outside the front entrance of the train station and the middle platform. A metal ramp in the middle of the staircase leading to Kildeparken provides access for people with physical disabilities as well as people with prams. As John F. Kennedy's Plads was sealed off and construction work began on the PlusBus terminal the people with substance use disorder did not automatically move to the new safe haven at Kildeparken. Instead they started using the concrete stone setting surrounding the lift outside the train station as their main hangout place. Concrete blocks might not be perceived as a pleasant place to sit as there were other more comfortable options. However, when John F. Kennedy's Plads was closed off, the homeless and socially disadvantaged recognised this as a place to sit with many of the same qualities that they had at "Runderen". A place where they could be part of city life. The rowdy and anti-social behavior that the socially vulnerable had at "Runderen" persisted at the lift. However where "Runderen" was sealed off by the low hedges acting as an insulator and containing the socially vulnerable, the lift has no insulating barriers. The lift was a critical piece of infrastructure that many people depended upon especially people with physical disabilities. The lack of access to free public toilets also meant that this group would urinate and defecate in or near the lift making it unpleasant to use. After frequent crackdowns by the police and numerous attempts at mediation, the municipality saw no other options than to put up a steel pipe around the lift forcing this group away. This was perhaps Aalborg's first instance of dark design that was truly visible for all as it was in an area with lots of people passing by. And as mentioned in the introduction what prompted Lasse Olsen to call for an investigation of dark design in Aalborg. According to Lise Maltha this was a last resort and in many ways a failure of the municipality to accommodate this group.



*Figure 6.6.* The railing surrounding the lift outside Aalborg train station.

From a perspective of technological mediation, the dominant stability of the stone setting around the lift remain somewhat unclear; however, it might be in place to protect the lift from accidental damage should a vehicle such as a delivery lorry reverse into it but it could also be ornamental in nature. Due to the height and width it also provides a place to sit, although the concrete block is cold to sit on during most of the year. This multistable form has been closed off by installing a railing on top made of galvanized iron pipes. A person trying to sit must then either sit on the edge of the concrete block or on top of the railing - neither is particularly comfortable. Thus a prolonged stay is discouraged. From an ANT perspective this is a form of delegation. As described above, the street team and the police have made many attempts to split up the group sitting there or trying to move them elsewhere. By installing the railing which makes sitting uncomfortable this task of preventing the homeless and socially vulnerable from using the lift as a place to sit has been delegated to the railing.

## 6.4 Public and Private Toilets

### The Toilet at Kildeparken

We have visited the area around the safe haven a few times during this project. Once was with our tour guide, Tinus, from Cafe Parasollen, who when he was younger and homeless used sleep in the toilet. During that sunny spring evening in April a group of young people were playing beer bowling on the grass south of the trees, music from the Sound box emanated throughout the park almost drowning out the soft spoken Tinus who was explaining that he once dreamt of becoming the drug king-pin of Aalborg. As we were standing there we noticed a young man run away from the group to relive himself behind the bushes despite the toilet being only few more meters away. We already knew why.





**Figure 6.7.** The toilet at Kildeparken. Left photo captured on 10/2/2022. Right photo captured on 16/5/2022

The toilet building provides only one toilet, the rest of the toilets have been locked. This single toilet is not maintained to any hygienic standard. The floor was dirty and covered with newspaper, leaves, cigarette buds, tin foil and a small zip lock bag. The walls had graffiti on them. Curiously the seat of the toilet seemed not to be dirty when we visited the first time. However, when we visited again in May the floor was somewhat cleaner but the toilet had been used recently as can be seen figure6.7. As there are no access restriction the toilet can be used as a place to sleep or to use drugs. This is one of the few public toilets in Aalborg that has no type of access restricting in the form of a payment lock. But since the toilet is not maintained to a high hygienic standard it also means that people will choose to relieve themselves elsewhere as was the case for the young man who went in the bushes. For the socially vulnerable the poor maintenance of the public toilets can lead to spread of diseases such as Hepatitis which will disproportionately affect the homeless population and people with substance use disorder.

### **Toilets at Train Station and the Bus Terminal**

The toilet at the bus terminal and train station are both accesses restricted so the user must pay to enter the toilet and lock the door. There is only an electronic lock with a red or green light to indicate whether the door is locked or unlocked. However, after 20 minutes the door automatically unlocks. To discourage people from waiting outside the door and entering the toilet after a person leaves by grabbing the door before it closes fully, the door can only be locked once with each payment. The lock on the door utilitiesses a cashless payment system which only allows payment by card and MobilePay. This system demands that the user must have a debit/credit card as MobilePay also relies on a debit/credit card



as well as a smartphone. As many do not carry cash or coin to use, this is a good service since most people rely on cards or mobile phones as their main choice of payment [Heisel, 2022]. While at first glance it may seem like this system would also exclude children, it is possible for children down to the age of seven to acquire a debit card such as VISA Junior [Nordea, na] and younger children would probably be accompanied by an adult so this does not affect them. While people with disabilities may rely on staff to help them, the staff may choose to turn away people experiencing homelessness. This caused a lot of trouble for Adam during the Corona pandemic where no one would use their card in exchange for his coins in order for him to use the toilet. The toilets themselves were clean and spacious with amenities for both the physically disabled and people with small children. The toilets at both train station and the bus terminal are on private property so they are not obligated by law or policy to change the locks to also accept coins. While this system allows most people to use the toilet, people experiencing homelessness are refused.

The lack of public toilets in Aalborg disproportionately affect the socially vulnerable as they are in many cases prohibited from using toilets at private places with public access such as stores, restaurants, as well as the train and bus station mentioned above. The exclusion can either be in the form of a payment system or by staff who simply inform them that they are not allowed to use the toilets. While staff may take pity and bend the rules, a machine cannot be bargained with or reasoned with; it will still demand payment. The cashless payment systems can be seen as a form of delegation as the act of exclusion has been delegated from a human to a technological system. The reason for demanding payment in the first place may be to cover the cost of cleaning maintenance and water use which may not be insignificant. Lise Maltha was aware of how the lack of public toilets affected the homeless population and tried pushing for a solution either by installing more free public toilets or providing a payment system that would accept tokens handed out to the socially vulnerable. Going forward it is the intention of Aalborg Municipality to install a free to use, self cleaning public toilet at the new PlusBus terminal.

Apart from the one free to use toilet next to the safe haven in Kildeparken, Aalborg Municipality has put up another one in the second safe haven in Aalborg which is located next to the library.

## 6.5 The Safe Haven at the Library



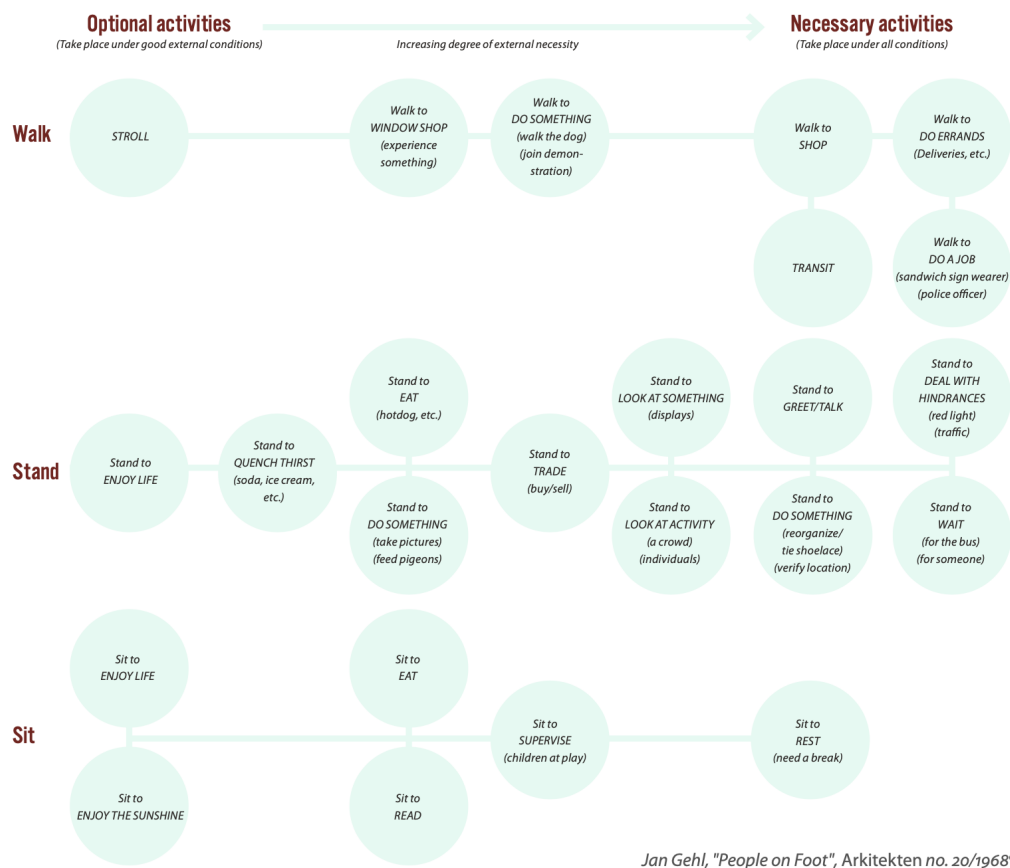
*Figure 6.8.* Safe haven at the north side of the library

The safe haven at the library is intended to be a place where the homeless can hang out and have a place to call their own. The site consists of a small fenced off area which offers privacy. The location is elevated so anyone using the place will be invisible from street level. The site consists of a semi permanent outside toilet, a small shelter with a fixed bench inside, and two picnic tables. One of the picnic tables is placed under a pent roof on the library wall. The safe haven also provides an outdoor electrical plug so it's possible to recharge a phone. The shelter is on the north side of the tall library building so it gets very little sun. The shelter is made for sitting but is not long enough for a person to be able to lie inside. The shelter therefore allows sitting but refuses sleeping. In case of rain the shelter is barely big enough for two or three people. However on a sunny day there is space enough for 8-12 people. The safe haven was never intended as a place to sleep since Aalborg has ample beds for the homeless at the night centre according to Maria Sjøblom. The placement of the safe haven was the result of a compromise according to Maria Sjøblom as everyone agreed a safe haven was a good idea but no-one wanted to have it near their place of work or business. Since the library is intended to be for all and already a place where the homeless were coming, Maria Sjøblom decided that they would find a site. As with all safe havens in Aalborg, the municipality takes care of the maintenance. While the intentions are admirable the safe haven does not provide many of the qualities that people experiencing homelessness are looking for as the site is hidden away from city life.

## 6.6 Removing a Bench to Remove a Problem

Benches are a common good offered to everyone who wish to sit and is according to Jan Gehl one of the best ways to ensure vibrant city life. Benches invite the elderly to take a

short rest. It offers a place to repack a backpack with the latest purchase or maybe find a lip balm in the bottom of the bag. The bench is also a social artefact that facilitates conversation. It is a place to enjoy the sun. Gehl and Svarre [2013] divides these activities that city space facilitate into a scale between necessary and optional activities in relation to a place to sit as seen on figure 6.9. The necessary function is a place to rest, while the more optional activities are related to the enjoyment of life. In between the two are the functions such as a place to eat or read that are made easier by having a place to sit.



**Figure 6.9.** Necessary and optional activities in relation to city life [Gehl and Svarre, 2013].

In order to ensure a good quality of life in the city as well as attracting people to the city more of the optional activities must be possible. According to Gehl and Svarre [2013] benches and sitting areas are best placed near the edges of public space so that we feel safe and know that no danger can creep up from behind. The design of the sitting area is important in relation to what types of activities are afforded. Choices of material and placement are also important considerations. The shape of the design such as height and curves defines the stability of the design. Construction materials affect under what circumstances the the bench is comfortable. Stone or concrete will be cold to sit on in winter but may provide a cooling affect in the summer months. Metal may become too hot to touch in the height of summer while wood is more thermally neutral but may require more maintenance.

The design of the bench does not only define what type of sitting and duration of stay is possible but also the social interactions between people, whether it is to promote sharing a bench or facilitation a conversation. The considerations described above would in many ways make a place universally attractive at least in principle. This means, that they will attract anyone in the city, also the homeless and socially vulnerable which has caused some conflicts in Aalborg. In the following sections, some of these instances will be described and analysed.

### **The bench outside Føtex**

The bench outside Føtex in Slotsgade has for years been a favorite spot for people with substance use disorder as well as a good place to sell Hus Forbi. Føtex is a relatively large supermarket with lots of costumers and placed in the very centre of Aalborg which means there is a constant flow of people. This made this particular bench very popular among people with substance use disorder. Chris, a former homeless who will be properly introduced in chapter 7 on page 79, used to sit on this bench with his friends. After getting sober, Chris can see how their behavior at the benches could make people feel unsafe. They would often drink a lot and then get rowdy, screaming and shouting. Oftentimes police or an ambulance would be called to pick one of them up. He does not blame Føtex for having the benches removed as he understands why Føtex would not want them hanging around outside the store. Chris explained that there was a bench outside Føtex that was placed perpendicular in relation to Slotsgade as well as one bench in a small nook across from the entrance to Føtex the later bench can be seen in figure 6.10 on the facing page. Along Slotsgade there are still 2 benches placed against the facade of Føtex. We have tried to confirm the placement of these benches by looking at Google maps and we were able to confirm that the perpendicular bench was still there 21st of April 2021. The bench was placed there between May 2017 and October 2018. David was also inquired about the removal of some of the benches near Føtex. He explains that when the bench was removed it made him feel unwelcome even though he was not part of the group that sat outside Føtex:

*"I feel unwelcome but on the other hand, I understand why Føtex doesn't want any trouble because sometimes people who couldn't behave would sit there. Føtex didn't want that so they removed the bench, and I get that."*

David in appendix B.4 17:50, own translation.

Both David and Chris would find other benches so they did not feel it was a big loss and understand the reasons why.



*Figure 6.10.* The last remaining bench opposite Føtex's entrance

### The "Beer Crate" at Frederikstov

Back in the summer of 2016, it was decided to remodel the square at Frederikstov which was used for parking [Steffensen, 2016]. It reopened in the spring of 2017 as a new space that was intended to house numerous activities including a farmer's market twice a week. The square had a large wooden structure installed that was to be used as a stage [Andersen, 2017]. The large boxy stage soon became known as the Beer Crate as the area became a place to party for people with substance use disorder [Steenberg, 2017]. Next to Frederikstov is the supermarket Netto which we have heard derogatorily referred to as "Ghetto Netto" by people familiar with the area. The supermarket offered a place to buy beers; however, the remodelling of Frederikstov did not include a public toilet. This meant that the people with substance use disorder would use the surrounding area, much to the dismay to the residents [Steenberg, 2017]. In September 2017 the "Beer Crate" was removed much to the relief of the residents.

For the second remodelling Lise Maltha was asked for input and mentioned that the benches there were important for the socially vulnerable as they had a long history of using this place. In her opinion, the benches must not be placed too close together or be too long as this has a tendency to attract large groups of people. Since then, Frederikstov has had a new playground installed which was initially intended to be small roofed playhouses [Gustin Landscape, 2021] but again, Lise Maltha warned that the socially vulnerable would start sleeping there if that was the case. The new playground features metal plates which resemble small houses but they are not closed off and offer no roof. The new remodeling also calls for greening of the area by planting trees around the perimeter as well as establishing an outdoor service area for cafes [Jørgensen, 2021]. The plan also includes building a public toilet.



### Toni had a Bench Removed

Toni Jensen owns and runs a menswear store in Bredegade, one of the pedestrianised streets in Aalborg. After construction of the new PlusBus terminal at John F. Kennedys Plads began, the bench outside his store became a hangout place for people with substance use disorder. According to Toni Jensen they would sit and drink and sometimes make inappropriate comments to his customers. Things escalated as they started to throw bottle caps and shout at the customers. Toni Jensen finally had enough when a woman sat in the entrance and refused to move. He had to call the police and have them escorted away from the storefront. Their presence made his costumers feel unsafe and was bad for business as the costumers were scared away. Toni Jensen wrote an email to the municipality and asked them to remove the bench outside his store. 14 days later the bench was removed. He was sad that it had to come to this as he has nothing against the homeless but he has a business to run.



*Figure 6.11.* On the left the missing bench outside Bertoni

### How Dark Design Reconfigures the Network

We have in the text above presented three examples of how benches and other seating arrangements have been removed from the city centre of Aalborg. This has been done to remove people with substance use disorders that have been using these areas. Their rowdy behavior has caused residents and business owners to feel unsafe. The lack of public toilets close to these areas have also caused people with substance use disorder to urinate and defecate on the streets sometimes using either trashcans or flowerbeds. While it is the policy of Lise Maltha and Aalborg Municipality that Aalborg must be a city for everyone this can sometimes be hard to achieve in practice as people complain about socially vulnerable people's anti-social behavior that make them feel unsafe. And while Toni Jensen and Steenberg [2017] both state that they have nothing against the homeless they still find their anti-social behavior hard to tolerate in their "backyard".

From an ANT perspective the people with substance use disorder run a program of looking for a place to hang out and drink beers or vodka, often close to a supermarket for easy resupply. The neighbour's to these areas have a program of NIMBY (Not In My Back Yard) wishing to tolerate the homeless and the socially disadvantaged but preferably elsewhere. The city responds to this by trying to appease everyone first by dialog often initiated by the street team or in extreme cases the police. When this fails they reconfigure the network by removing a bench. Thus the people with substance use disorder must again find a new place to hang out. The technological mediation of removing a bench can be described as delegation. Instead of dialog; asking people to go elsewhere, the removal of a bench performs the same function by saying "not here". Simply refusing people a place to sit. A bench is for the most part neutral in its allowance unless intentionally made not to be as in the case of dark design. The bench will allow people to sit and a well placed bench will perhaps even encourage it if comfortably designed. Benches that are placed nearby supermarkets offer the possibility of easy resupply and are therefore often occupied by people with substance use disorder.

The list below describes the chain of events that have had an effect on the mobility patterns of the socially vulnerable by either excluding or attempting to include the socially vulnerable in the urban spaces of Aalborg. Apart from the opening of the two safe havens, all of the other events have had a negative impact on the homeless and socially vulnerable.

- 2012: The Singing Trees
- 2016: Frederikstov closes for 1st remodeling
- 2017: Frederikstov reopens
- 2018: Safe haven Kildenparken opens
- 2019: Safe haven Library opens
- 2020: Construction begins at John F. Kennedys Plads
- 2021: Spring - Føtex removes benches
- 2021: Autumn - railing surrounding lift
- 2022: Spring - Bertoni removes bench
- 2022: Playground on Frederikstov opens

These events have contributed to the reconfiguration of the network and thereby changed the mobility patterns of the homeless in Aalborg. This may be the reason why Toni Jensen suddenly started having problems with people outside his store. Which led him to take actions that once again initiating a reconfiguration of public space. Pushing the homeless and the people with substance use disorder elsewhere. This situation could perhaps best be described as a cat-and-mouse game, because who will register the next complaint with the municipality perpetuating the ritual of bench removal?

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# The Nomadic Notion of Home 7

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As described in chapter 3.2 on page 24, the notion of home is more than a fixed building with a lock on the door. There are aspects that go beyond the physical and spatial dimensions and this is indeed the case for people experiencing homelessness. Because what is home when you are homeless? When looking at Somerville [1992]'s seven signifiers that indicate the meaning of home, one could argue that the meaning of homelessness is the lack of said signifiers: lack of shelter, lack of hearth, heartlessness, lack of privacy, rootlessness, lack of abode and "purgatory" [Somerville, 1992]. This might not always be the case though, as certain aspects are not that binary. To investigate the question of home, we asked our five interviewees who have experienced homelessness what home means to them.

## A Mobile Home

Søren Dahl Nielsen and his mother lived in their small car for roughly 3.5 years, making them able to travel greater distances in between the places that fulfilled their daily needs as described in section 5.2 on page 47. Having to abide by the different rules at the specific place during the day meant a lack of autonomy. They were not allowed to sleep or cook at the storage unit and both the fitness center and the library have tacit codex for what is accepted behavior. Their stay at these places required the staff to bend the rules slightly or turn a blind eye. Søren Dahl Nielsen and his mother would have to be careful not to overstay their welcome or risk incurring a ban from the facilities they relied on. This was the case in Nordhavnen when the power to the electrical outlets was shut off by the authorities at the harbour.

*"Eventually, they turned off the power so we were no longer able to heat up our car and cook at the harbour. The harbour authorities had figured out that we were using the power."*

Sørensen Dahl Nielsen in appendix B.9 16:16, own translation.

During the day, the library performed many of the same functions as a living room but since they had no privacy or control over the territory it did still not feel like a home. Neither the car, the library, the storage unit or fitness center could substitute even partially the feeling of home although some of the places could fulfil some of the same functions. Even though they spent a lot of time at the library it did not feel like home because they could not leave their belongings out of sight. This inhibited their freedom of movement as one person always had to remain with their belongings. The many shifts of places during the

day also precluded having an emotional attachment to the various places thus they never felt a place was home. In many ways, their car did provide shelter, abode and a minimal feeling of privacy however the car never gave a sense of hearth, heart and roots as it lacked the emotional relations.

*"In comparison we were privileged, we were able to move around but it was still irritating having to cover these distances all the time. It is fluid, there is no one place where you have everything together as you do in a home."*

Søren Dahl Nielsen in appendix B.9 1:14:48, own translation.

For Søren Dahl Nielsen a place to live is not the same as a home. He does not have any nostalgic feeling towards the apartment they vacated. In his new place where they have now spent more time than in their previous apartment he still does not have a feeling of home. He seems indifferent with both his old and new apartment which indicates a lack of home as heart. Since it lacks privacy as a lack of soundproofing in the walls makes it possible to hear other people having a conversation in the apartment next door. He sometimes finds it annoying being able to hear his neighbour playing guitar during the day.

After his homelessness, Søren Dahl Nielsen needed a long recuperation period which has meant that he did not start his further education after getting an apartment. Being homeless has been very stressful for him and he told us that he needed the time during Coronavirus pandemic to just relax and find his bearings. Even though he has not felt many psychological effects such as PTSD he is aware of the fact that this might happen in the future.

Helsingør Municipality enquired Søren Dahl Nielsen and his mother if they intended to move out of the municipality hinting that this might be a solution to their homelessness. However since they had their family and friends in Helsingør and the fact that Søren Dahl Nielsen was attending high school meant that they felt at home in the municipality. This indicates that home can also be more than just four walls but a wider geographical location connected to both the location and the relations to other people.

### **A Man and his Dog**

Adam has approached the municipality in the past to get accommodation and cash benefit but was told by the social worker that he would have to put his dog, Molly, down in order to get his own place, as they did not accept pets. This was completely unacceptable to Adam, as he sees Molly as his best friend. Looking at Somerville [1992] and his seven signifiers, Adam had the possibility to get shelter, but chose his dog instead.

*"You can ask a lot of me, but it's for damn sure that I'm not going to put down my best friend!"*

Adam in appendix B.1 02:25, own translation.

When asked where he lives, he simply pointed to his pram, that contains all of his belongings, but he does not feel at home on the street - he does not feel at home anywhere.

When we asked him about what home means to him, the first thing that came to his mind was a place for him and Molly with peace and quiet, near the woods and water. A place where he could close the door and not be bothered by anyone. This indicates that the privacy aspect is very important to him when it comes to home - something he does not have at the moment as he is forced to sleep rough. He noted how the stress of being woken up several times a night in the city takes a toll on him which is why he likes to go to outdoor shelters to simply spend a day sleeping in his temporary abode. When he elaborated on his idea of home, he described a small house with a small garden that he could put a fence around so that Molly could roam free. Whenever he spoke of the meaning of home, Molly was always a part of it. He did not want much for himself in terms of a big house, but as long as there was a garden and nice nature around to walk Molly, he would be happy. This emotional connection to Molly might not be enough to make the streets of Aalborg feel like home but all of his ideals of home revolved around her companionship. Even though he has a dream about his ideal home for him and Molly and does not feel at home on the street, his pram with all of his possessions still holds significant meaning when asked where he lives. He connects his possessions with "where he lives" which indicates the importance of the materialities that make up for the (lack of) home.

### **Feeling at Home on the Street**

Brian talks about lacking many of the resources needed to have a home. According to him the requirements of having a home are many of the same skills and abilities that the homeless lack and therefore the reason they ended up homeless in the first place. In many ways Brian does not believe he will ever be able to have a home again. He simply lacks the resources which seems to be diminishing as he ages. Although he has not given up completely he seems to have somewhat accepted his fate. Being homeless has become part of Brian's identity. When we asked him where he felt at home he said:

*"The city is not a place where you leave home and then go to work and then leave work to go shopping. The city is not like that - the city is where you always are, there is no other place - it's something else, right? My home has been split up [...] See how many people greet me. I'm very much at home on the street."*

Brian in appendix B.2 39:30, own translation.

The quote above point to the sedentary notion of home and that when you are homeless the city becomes a place you stay because there are no other places that you can be. The last part also hints at the division between places when points in a network must perform some of the same functions of a home. And that life takes place at different points in the network as described at length in 5.5 on page 51. The city and the streets and the relations to other people have in a way become a home for Brian. Having been homeless for so many years Brian has found a way to live his life on the streets being able to find food and shelter.

### The Family on the Bench

Chris is 53 and has for the past 12 years been living in Aalborg. He met his girlfriend Susan while collecting bottles. They got talking when she offered him a plastic bag to keep the bottles in as he was just using his jacket pockets. She invited him home where he got clean clothes and a meal. However, they both ended up homeless on the street, partying and drinking. Chris used to start the day by drinking a beer for breakfast, but now he is a recovering alcoholic and has been sober for two years ever since the funeral of a friend. A few days after the funeral his girlfriend of 12 years, Susan, died of liver failure.

Chris is no longer homeless and lives in "Opgangsfællesskabet" which is an accommodation program for homeless and other vulnerable adults over 30 years old, who need help living in their own apartment. They serve breakfast every day and a hot meal once a week in the common area where all of the residents can socialise. He sells Hus Forbi as a way to supplement his incapacity benefits and still visits several of the day centres every now and then, as he enjoys being social and does not like to cook just for himself. Most of his friends are alcoholics and he still joins them on the bench but he does not drink as he is on Antabus. He considers them family since all of his family has passed away.

*"The whole alcohol thing, right? We have lost so many of our good friends, both Polish and Greenlandic. They have been dropping like flies in the last couple of years [...] Susan and I always called it our family on the bench. I do not have any family of my own left."*

Chris in appendix B.3 18:20, own translation.

The family on the bench became a substitute for his biological family. They give him a sense of companionship, something he still appreciates.

*"Before when I was alone, I thought: I am not going to sit in a house all by myself. Why the hell should I? Then I would rather be on the street and be with other people who are also homeless. And then there is a common TV room and communal eating. I can understand that a lot better than sitting alone in a house, that is just not me. I have to talk to other people and be with other people, that makes more sense to me."*

Chris in appendix B.3 21:10, own translation.

Even though Chris was homeless and had the opportunity of getting accommodation, he chose to stay on the street and using the night centres because of the social life it offers. Being social around other people was more important to him than having his own private space. This all changed when he met his girlfriend though. They managed to get an apartment in "Opgangsfællesskabet" and moved in there together. Even though Chris now lives in the apartment alone, he still feels at home. He notes how Susan decorated the apartment to make it more homey, giving him a sense of hearth. Even though he feels at home in his space, he still seeks out his family on the bench.

## Partially at Home

Much like Adam, David does not feel at home on the street. He has been homeless in Aalborg for ten years now and when he is not able to sleep on a couch at friends', he tends to use Kirkens Korshær's night centre. Even though he has been on the street for ten years, he prefers to stick to himself and does not socialise with the other users of the day and night centres. He merely uses them to get a meal and for shelter at night. He does not find the same companionship in the people that share his experience of homelessness in the same way that Adam, Brian and Chris do. Instead he relies on his other friendships. When asked what home meant to him, his thoughts went to his friend who lets him stay on her sofa a couple of nights a week. In this case, it was not the location or building or sofa that he related to the feeling of "home" but his friend who lets him sleep on her sofa a couple of nights a week. Even though this place is only a temporary shelter, he still feels at home there because of his relationship to his friend. We asked him if he had ever considered applying for some sort of housing but he told us that he did not want to get housing because he was happy staying with his friend one in a while.

*I help her. I sell news papers and buy food and other things for the household [...] She does not need to worry. I tell her "You look after me and I look after you".*

David in appendix B.4 16:09, own translation.

His friend tells him that she loves him and opens up her home to him, giving him a sense of home as hearth and heart. Even though it is not a permanent abode, it still seems to be enough for David in terms of making this particular place feel like home.

## Summary

The feeling of home is very subjective but seems to be very much tied into emotional relations, be it a friend, a partner or a dog. Home seem to be co-shaped by both relations and materialities. For several of the interviewees, when asked about what home means to them, their thoughts went to the physical setting of the ideal home. They related the word home to the sedentary understanding of a fixed abode but may still have some feelings of home that are not tied into a physical location. For example Brian, who said that he does not have a home but when asked to elaborate stated that he feels very much at home on the street. This shows the difference in perception of home as something to possess and home as a feeling. This is also seen in David, who thought of his friend when asked about home, meaning that the emotional connections are more important than having a roof over your head. Privacy also seemed to be an important factor in the idea of home but it also had different meanings. For Adam, his ideal home affords privacy and can keep other people out of his personal space whereas for Chris, having a home represents isolation, shutting him in. Again, this relates to the emotional relations - Adam wanted a small house where him and Molly could relax away from other people, and Chris (when he was still homeless) just wanted to be with his family on the bench and not alone in a house.

As described in section 5.5 on page 51, when experiencing homelessness, the home becomes distributed into mono-functional points that are placed all over the city and many of these

functions are also found in the typical fixed multi-functional home. This forces people experiencing homelessness to move in between the different points to perform activities that would normally take place "at home". Even though they are always on the move, they are at the same time forced to stay within reach of the different points in the network that are generally located in the city centre of Aalborg. The only function that is not always possible in the city centre is sleeping rough as the policies and laws make it nearly impossible.

# Conclusion 8

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Compared to other large cities in Denmark, Aalborg has the highest percentage of people sleeping rough coming in at 23% compared to Aarhus and Copenhagen, 9% and 14% respectively. With a homeless population totaling 253 people [Benjaminsen, 2019], Aalborg is an interesting case as the rough sleepers are not particularly visible in the city centre. Our main drive for this project was figuring out how the mobility patterns of people experiencing homelessness are affected by dark design. To begin with, we mostly imagined that this would affect where they slept. While benches may afford sleeping, people experiencing homelessness prefer not to use the benches in the city centre for this purpose, this is due to policing and anti-camping laws. People experiencing homelessness also fear being victimized which means that they go outside the city centre to find a quiet and dark place to sleep. They will keep their sleeping places a secret as they do not feel they are allowed to sleep in the city streets despite the law was not meant to target single rough sleepers. However, after looking into their mobility patterns in chapter 5 on page 47 and realising that sleeping mostly takes place outside the city centre we found that it mostly affects where they stay during the day.

The mobility pattern of the homeless differ from the sedentary lifestyle most of us live. A home performs multi-functionally and thus provides a safe place for everyday activities such as cooking, washing, entertainment as well as a place to sleep. These activities are for the homeless spread out with each place only performing a singular function - they are in essence mono-functional places. For a person who has a home, the different functions of home remain within a few steps of each-other, a homeless person however, must cover considerable distances between places where they can go to the toilet, cook dinner or go to sleep. Thus, the mobility patterns of the homeless resemble movement in a distributed network. Because of this, people experiencing homelessness are forced to move nomadically between these points of the network but even though they do not have a fixed home, they can still find a feeling of home in this network. The main feeling seem to revolve around emotional relations giving them a sense of homes as heart on the street. Furthermore, their thoughts on the ideal home are based on the materialities of a sedentary building, although this is highly subjective.

Dark design in Aalborg is more subtle than elsewhere and there are not many artefacts. Our observations as well as interviews with experts and people experiencing homelessness only provided few examples of dark design such as the railing surrounding the lift at the train station and the removal of benches in troubled areas of the city centre. From an Actor-Network Theory perspective, the act of removing a bench or making a design intervention that excludes can be seen as a form of delegation where the artefact performs the task of saying "go away" rather than a person. This has been done by removing the

artefact or closing off the multistability, enforcing the dominant stability as in the case of the railing.

These instances of dark design were a consequence of complaints from residents and business owners, the lack of truly public free access toilets are to blame and as result, the people with substance use disorder simply used the street. The complaints also center around rowdy and sometimes violent anti-social behavior. City planning and numerous construction projects have also affected the traditional hangout places of the homeless and socially vulnerable, leading to a a reconfiguration of the network and a shift in their mobility patterns. This has in effect pushed the socially vulnerable from one place to another. This group of people wish to be a part of city life and the safe havens are a limited success which may be due to the fact that these places are erected away from the desirable places. Aalborg city has traditionally sought to tolerate/contain the socially vulnerable and the homeless through dialog with the homeless, residents and the business community. The instances of dark design are a last resort measure taken by the municipality when all else fails; however, these measures are temporary in nature as they simply move the problem elsewhere.



# Perspectives 9

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In this chapter we will present questions and statements as well as reflections we have had during the process of writing this Master's thesis. They aim at putting this project into a wider context as well as being a starting point for a discussion about dark design.

- The lift became unavailable to others due to the anti-social behavior the socially vulnerable exhibited. The railing surrounding the lift was a last resort after numerous attempts at mediation by Aalborg Municipality - are their actions morally justified?
- The safe havens provide a place for the socially vulnerable to hang out - is this inclusion or does it simply hide the socially vulnerable from the general public excluding them from their favorite spots?
- In some ways the simultaneous construction work going in the city centre of Aalborg has had a similar impact on the mobility patterns of the homeless as dark design pushing them away from their usual hang out and sleeping places. Specifically the work taking places at the library underpass, Føtex, Karolinelund and at John F. Kennedys Plads.
- The anti-camp laws have effectively excluded the homeless from sleeping in the city out of fear of being prosecuted, it is still however legal to do so if no permanent camp is established. But it still remains unclear what exactly would constitute a permanent camp. While the police in Aalborg seem to give a wide berth this is not so in Copenhagen. This unclarity in the law means that one person in Northern Jutland may go free while another in Copenhagen may be prosecuted for a similar offence.
- In the interview with the Unpleasant Design team [Savičić and Savić, 2012], Factory Furniture raises the question if accommodating the homeless also mean that a society has failed in solving the problem of homelessness.

FF: Homelessness should never be tolerated in any society and if we start designing in to accommodate homeless then we have totally failed as a society. Close proximity to homelessness unfortunately makes us uncomfortable so perhaps it is good that we feel that and recognise homelessness as a problem rather than design to accommodate it." *UDt: Your Camden bench won many design awards, amongst them the 'Best European practice for inclusive design' for 2012 by the Centre for Accessible*

*Environments (CAE). The way we understand inclusion in this case is that, by preventing problematic behaviours, the bench is accessible to a wider social group. In this respect, we could perceive homeless people, as for example, someone who would exclude others from using the bench. How do you think we should include homeless people in our cities?*

*FF: Homelessness should never be tolerated in any society and if we start designing in to accommodate homeless then we have totally failed as a society. Close proximity to homelessness unfortunately makes us uncomfortable so perhaps it is good that we feel that and recognise homelessness as a problem rather than design to accommodate it."*

*Savičić and Savić [2012].*

We are however of the opinion that we must face the realities of the situation which are that homelessness is not an easily solvable problem. Therefore making design intervention that further exclude people experiencing homelessness does seem to do more harm than good.

- We have not uncovered how dark design affect the mental and physical well-being of the socially vulnerable since it is beyond the scope of this project. However we do believe such research would further the ethical discussion on the topic of exclusion.
- It could be argued that dark design reduces the usefulness of public space for everyone and in the more extreme cases could potentially severely hurt people by accident, for instance if someone were to trip over spikes.

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# Field notes A

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DSB medarbejder: de gør rent efter de hjemløse hver dag, og de har været meget generende - de besørger i elevatoren og ryger og drikker i venterummet. Meget generende, når de for eksempel skal hjælpe en ældre ned med elevatoren. Det er blevet bedre efter, at bøjlerne er blevet sat op omkring elevatoren, men de rykker bare et andet sted hen. DSB medarbejderne lader de mere fredelige sidde, hvis de fx lader deres telefon op og ikke er til gene for andre, men fjerner de støjende.

Hellestedet i Kildeparken: De har et skur bag Aalborg hallen, hvor de kan opholde sig og som kun er tiltænkt dem. Det var meget pænt og ryddeligt med rivemærker i jorden - kun en øldåse og en pakke smøger på et af bordene. Der var ikke nogen i skuret, da vi var der.

Medarbejder fra Aalborg Kongres Kultur Center: samler skrald omkring hallen. Nogle af de hjemløse opholder sig nogle gange under et halvtag på AKKC, hvor de efterlader lidt skrald, men de er ikke alt for generende. Han mener, at opholdsområdet er opsat af kommunen.

Bibliotek: forsøger at hjælpe dem, hvor de kan, men har nultolerance over for alkohol. Mange kommer ind for at lade deres mobil op, bruge computer, og for at deres vaske tøj og sig selv. De hjemløse skifter mellem bibliotekerne, men bibliotekerne har været nødt til at give karantæne i nogle tilfælde, hvis de har overtrådt nogle grænser - hvis nogle bliver truende, har biblioteket en biblioteksbetjent. Bibliotekarerne har hørt, at der er flere hjemløse, der overnatter på kirkegårde og ved stadion.

Toni Jensen fra Bertoni: fik fjernet en bæk ude foran sin butik på grund støjende og truende adfærd fra en gruppe hjemløse, der sad der. 14 dage efter, han klagede til kommunen, var bænken fjernet og problemerne ophørte. De hjemløse der sad der råbte efter kunder, kastede kapsler efter dem og satte sig sågar midt i døren og spærrede for kunderne. Det skabte utryghed og var dårligt for hans forretning, da det skræmte kunderne væk, så han ringede efter politiet. Butikkens grund går ud til brostenene, hvor bænken var placeret. Der var også en anden bæk placeret ved en anden butik lidt længere op af gaden, som oplevede samme problemer og derfor også kontaktede kommunen, og fik den fjernet.

AK Entreprenører: de ser ikke rigtigt de hjemløse sove i bybilledet, når de starter kl 7 om morgenen. De har set nogle i Karolinelund men ellers ikke.

Gravere på Almen Kirkegård: kender kun til en kvindelig hjemløs, som plejede at sove på kirkegården. Hun hilste aldrig på dem, men svinede ikke eller skabte gener, så de lod hende være.

Hurtig snak med gadeteamet og frivillig på Café Parasollen: Måske kun 10% af brugerne af Café Parasollen er hjemløse, resten er socialt udsatte eller bare ensomme. Gadeteamet sagde, at det ikke er et generelt problem med gadesovere i Aalborg ud fra deres erfaringer. De ved dog, at der er nogle, der sover ude ved forbrændingen i containere.

# Interviews B

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The audio files for these interviews will be included in the external appendix and will have the following names:

## **B.1 Adam**

*Adam interview*

## **B.2 Brian**

*Brian interview*

## **B.3 Chris**

*Chris interview*

## **B.4 David**

*David interview*

## **B.5 Lasse Olsen**

*Lasse Olsen interview*

## **B.6 Lise Maltha**

*Lise Maltha interview*

## **B.7 Maria Sjøblom**

*Maria Sjøblom interview*

## **B.8 Simon Hjorth Jacobsen**

*Simon Hjorth Jacobsen interview*

## B.9 Søren Dahl Nielsen

*Søren Dahl Nielsen interview*



## C.1 Questions for the Homeless

### INTRO

Vil du være anonym?

Må vi optage samtalen?

Vil du kort præsentere dig selv?

Hvor gammel er du?

hvor længe har du været hjemløs?

### DAGLIGDAG

Hvordan ser en typisk dag ud for dig?

Hvordan klarer du dagligdags gøremål? madlavning, toiletbesøg, bad tøjvask.

Hvilke områder i byen opholder du dig i?

Er der steder hvor du ikke føler dig velkommen?

Hvilke områder føler du at du bliver presset væk fra?

Er du blevet bedt om at forlade et område?

Hvad er de største problemer du oplever i din dagligdag?

### GADESOVER

Har du sover på gaden eller har du sovet på gaden?

Hvorfor sover du på gaden?

Hvad gør at du vælger et herberg fra?

Hvilke ting gør et sted godt at sove?

Er der nogen steder hvor du tidligere har sovet hvor det ikke er muligt at sove mere?

Hvad er grunden til at du ikke længere kan sove der?

Er du blevet vækket om natten og bedt om at finde et andet sted?

**HJEM**

Hvad betyder hjem for dig?

Hvad vil det sige at have et hjem?

Ønsker du at få et hjem?

Hvis du selv kunne vælge hvad ville hjem så være for dig?

Hvor bor du?

har du et sted hvor du føler dig hjemme?

**MOBILITET**

Bruger du offentlig transport?

Bruger du offentlig transport som en måde at få varmen på?

**ANDET**

Har du en mobiltelefon?

Har du et hævekort?

Oplever du problemer med at betale for ting?

Hvilket råd ville du give til mig, hvis jeg blev hjemløs i morgen?

Er der noget vi ikke er kommet ind på som du gerne vil tilføje?

**C.2 Questions for Lise Maltha**

Må vi optage samtalen og bruge dit navn?

Vil du have rapporten sendt til dig?

Vil du kort præsentere dig selv?

Er der dark design i Aalborg?

Tidslinje omkring Kennedy plads?

Hvordan ser en typisk dag ud for de hjemløse?

Hvordan er samarbejdet mellem jer og kommunens andre afdelinger og de andre organisationer?

Er der et hieraki blandt det hjemløse?

Hvordan løser i eventuelle konflikter?

Hvilken funktion har udsatterådet?

Hvordan kan det være at 23% af de hjemløse i Aalborg sover på gaden?

Hvorfor er alle varmestuerne drevet af kirkelige organisationer?

### C.3 Questions for Maria Sjøblom

Må vi optage samtalen og bruge dit navn?

Vil du have rapporten sendt til dig?

Hjemløses brug af deres faciliteter.

Hvordan de håndtere dem

Bliver området i bibliotekshaven brugt?

Hvor mange benytter områderne omkring bibliotekerne til at sove?

Hvordan er jeres samarbejde med gadeteamet og diakoni?

Får i klager fra de normale biblioteksbrugere?

At håndtere hjemløse er ikke jeres primære opgave, har I sat ressourcer af til det?

Hvordan er de hjemløse anderledes en de normale brugere?

Hvordan hjælper I dem, og kan I?

Hvilke konflikter har I?

Hvordan løser i eventuelle konflikter?

Ændringer over tid i antallet af hjemløse eller den måde i håndterer dem på.

Er der noget vi ikke er kommet ind på som du gerne vil have tilføjet.

### C.4 Questions for Simon Hjorth Jacobsen

Hjemløse generelt

Er der nogle specifikke områder i Aalborg, hvor hjemløse giver problemer?

Får ? flere henvendelser fra borger om hjemløse end tidligere?

Utryghedsskabende tiggeri

Har der været tilfælde i Aalborg med utryghedsskabende tiggeri?

Hvordan er blevet opmærksomme på det? klager fra folk eller under patruljering.

Hvordan håndterer I den slags sager?

Har der været tilfælde i Aalborg der har resulteret i advarsler eller fængselsstraf?

Lejrloven

Hvordan vurdere i om en lejr er utryghedsskabende?

Fjerner i nogensinde folk der sover på gaden?

Hvornår opfatter I det som en permanent lejr?

Zoneforbud

Ved du om der er blevet udstedt zoneforbud i Aalborg?

# Lasse Olsen's Facebook Post

---

D

The following figures are the comments from Lasse Olsen's Facebook page posted the 28th of January 2022.

Lad os da for pokker skabe nogle områder, hvor de kan få lov at være i fred.

Det er mit indtryk, at ordningen fungerede godt i Kildeparken, indtil Shakira, Cliff Richard og Pavarotti blev brugt som midler til at jage dem over på Kennedy Plads, hvor de har siddet til offentligt skue, indtil arbejdet med PlusBus-terminalen gik i gang. Derefter søgte de hen omkring elevatoren foran Banegården, og nu skal de finde sig et nyt sted.

På dagens møde i Job- og Velfærdsudvalget rejste jeg problemstillingen om 'Dark Design' i byrummet, og det blev taget utrolig godt imod af resten af udvalget. Vi har ikke truffet nogen beslutning, men vi har aftalt, at vi skal dykke yderligere ned i problemet. Jeg håber, at det bliver en del af den næste udsattestrategi, at der skal sikres plads til vores udsatte borgere.

Problemstillingen skal også løftes i By- og Landskabsudvalget, og jeg ved (for det har vi aftalt), at Anna Aaen også vil rejse problemstillingen der.

Over de kommende uger har jeg tænkt mig at lave en kortlægning af 'Dark Design' i vores by, så hvis du har eksempler, er du meget velkommen til at skrive til mig.

#aalpol #darkdesign



...lse på et senere møde i Job- og V  
...a, herunder risiko for reduktion af t

190 44 Comments 20 Shares

Like Comment Share

I bunden af trappeskakten til Fris parkeringskælder (trappeskakten ved lukketidsgangen) findes en varmekilde, som hjemløse sov ved siden af. På et tidspunkt opførte man et gitterhegn i behørig afstand til varmekilden.

Like Reply 13w

Godt tænkt, det er så vigtigt at nogle taler deres sag

Like Reply 13w

Maria Frey Sjøblom Kom gerne forbi det meget benyttede hellested, der er etableret i bibliotekshaven. Der er heldigvis ikke kun dårlige eksempler i byen

Like Reply 13w

Author Lasse Olsen Maria Frey Sjøblom Fedt! Det vil jeg også tjekke ud.

Like Reply 13w

Maria Frey Sjøblom Du skriver bare, hvis du vil have en rundvisning og en snak om, hvordan vi fra bibliotekets side arbejder med hjemløse og udsatte (bl.a. i tæt samarbejde med Gadeteamet Aalborg)

Like Reply 13w Edited

Lasse Olsen Gadeteamet giver også gerne en tur rundt

Like Reply 13w

Author Lasse Olsen og Maria Frey Sjøblom Det vil jeg meget gerne!

Like Reply 13w

Lasse Olsen Du har en besked med mit nummer i på messenger

Like Reply 13w

Maria Frey Sjøblom Lasse Olsen Fedt, du siger bare til hvornår det passer? Har huller mellem møderne i morgen fx?

Like Reply 13w

Jeg vil blande mig i hvor tåbeligt de hjemløse bliver jagtet i kommunen, bor i en anden kommune. Men Ålborg vil så gerne fremstå udvikling. Bevidst at fjerne siddepladser for de hjemløse er usmialige og for mig står det for afvikling af det offentlige rum. Der er mange ældre, handicappede og almindelig borger der har brug for et hvil når de færdes i det offentlige rum. Det er usmialige at der bevidst nedlægges siddepladser i byrummet. Alle har ret til at blive respekteres og være velkommen i det offentlige rum.

Like Reply 13w

Man behøver jo heller ikke været udsat for at have lyst til at sætte sig ned, nyde at solen skinner og eventuelt drikke en hakerbajer. 'Dark Design' gør byen mindre indbydende for os alle.

Like Reply 13w Edited

Fullstændig enig Lasse. Det er en sølle behandling af udsatte de borgere for. Trist trist udvikling. Tak fordi du kæmper deres sag. God afton Lasse.

Like Reply 13w

Tak for tage udsatte menneskers sag op

Like Reply 13w

Vigtigt Lasse! Tak for at du presser på

Like Reply 13w

Det er simpelthen så uhyggeligt og usselt, at det foregår!

Like Reply 13w

Hvor er det godt, at du er opmærksom på det, Lasse Olsen, og godt at de to relevante udvalg er lyttende. Det manglede da også bare!

Like Reply 13w

Vinkelsliber på. Hvem har ansvaret for de mærke tiltag Lasse Olsen?

Like Reply 13w Edited

Author Lasse Olsen Gelænderet er Bane Danmarks eller DSB's, så vidt jeg ved.

Like Reply 13w

Og ja, det er fristende at lufte vinkelsliberent!

Like Reply 13w

TAK Lasse

Like Reply 13w

Godt, Lasse

Like Reply 13w

Viadukten under biblioteket er blevet brugt nærmest dagligt af en enkelt gut, men har ikke set ham siden de begyndte på byggeriet.

Like Reply 13w

Det er ikke kun hjemløse. Som gående handicappede kan jeg snart ikke finde et sted jeg sidder, eller ligger 10 minutter. Jeg har prøvet at ligge ned på en bank på biblioteket i Aalborg og blev smidt ud, ved at en medarbejder puffede til mig med deres ben. De troede vist jeg var fuld. Men måske skulle man har brugt stemmen i stedet for, hvorfor gør Aalborg ikke som i USA? Lav en mini hjem. Kun lidt i husleje. Kun 25 eller 30 kv2 med eget bad og køkkenet. Jeg ved der er stof og alkohol misbrug men i det mindste kan person have en adresse hvor de kan få på penge af staten. I usa kommer mange med misbrugs problemer og kommer ude af det ved først at få en bolig, derefter støtte. Fjern krav om hvor stor boligen skal være..

Like Reply 13w

Anders Benlykke Grubbe

Author det gør Aalborg kommune også, der er via. Skurbyen ved rustenborg

Like Reply 13w

Jeg kender stedet. Men det jeg tænker på er mere som de gør i hjerring- hvor de har nogen til stede der hjælper med alt muligt.

Like Reply 13w

Reply to Tammy Lain...

Tænk hvis man var lige så kreativ ift at finde på løsninger til at hjælpe hus forbi-sælgers og andre tilsyneladende "illegitime elementer" i bybilledet. Simpelthen så tåbeligt!

Like Reply 13w

Hvem står bag, hvem finansierer og hvem udfører de nævnte eksempler på "dark design"?

Like Reply 13w

Det må jo nødvendigvis være Aalborg kommune der står bag.

Like Reply 13w

Author Lasse Olsen

AKKC står bag deres syngende træer, og jeg formoder, at elevatoren er DSB's eller Bane Danmarks, men de nævnte bænke er det formentlig kommunen, der har fjernet.

Like Reply 13w

Figure D.1. First page of comments on Lasse Olsen's Facebook post on dark design in Aalborg.



Figure D.2. Second page of comments on Lasse Olsen's Facebook post on dark design in Aalborg.