

The background is a blurred map of a coastal region. It shows a blue body of water on the left, a light-colored landmass in the center, and a grey road network on the right. There are some green and brown patches representing parks or undeveloped land. A white rectangular box is overlaid on the bottom left of the map, containing the title and subtitle text.

# **SAVING SEATS**

**HOW TO IMPROVE OUTDOOR SEATING  
IN HOLMA AND THE WESTERN HARBOR**

# THE QUESTION

I will be investigating how the seating arrangements in both Holma and the Western Harbor help promote social interaction or community in their neighborhoods as well as provide multiple ways for different types of people to connect with the outdoors. In areas that do not seem well used or placed, I will explore the reason why and how to improve such areas through research and observation.

# BUT WHY SEATING?

Having well thought out seating can make the users feel welcomed, safe, and connected.

It can increase their outlook on themselves and their community.

A good seating arrangement can increase social interaction among tenants.



# BACKGROUND

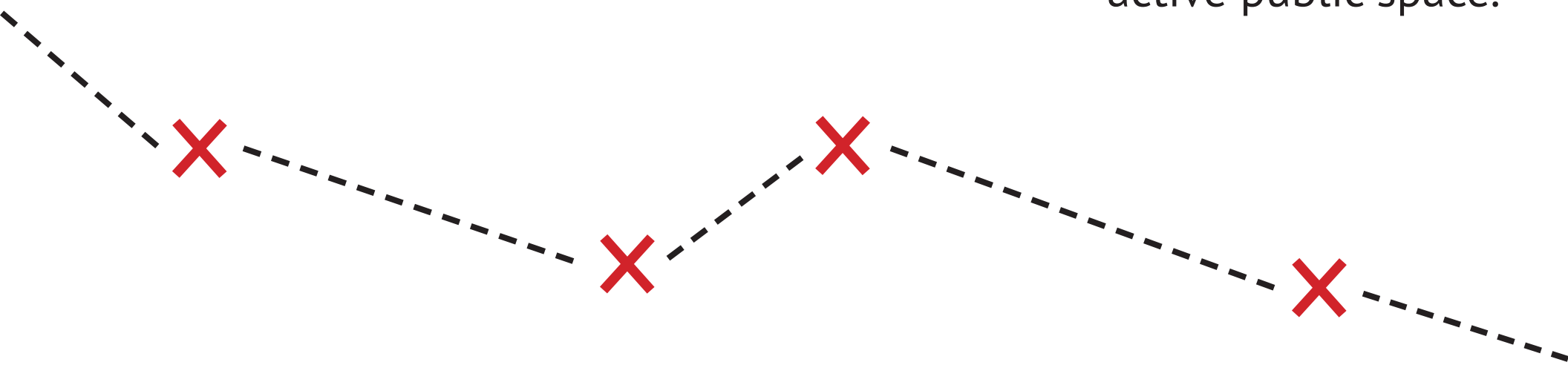
The children of Holma make up about a fourth of the population of the neighborhood. The children in the Western Harbor only make up a sixth of it. The majority age group in the Western Harbor is people between the ages 25-44, with people in the age range of 30-34 making up a third of that total. In the borough that Holma is situated in, the largest group of non-Swedish residents is from Iraq. In the borough that the Western Harbor is situated in, it is Danish. Holma has a much larger population of Middle Easterners than the Western Harbor.

	<b>Age: 0-18</b>	<b>Age: 25-44</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
Holma	1,074	1,170	3,873
Western Harbor	765	2,163	5,023

	<b>Danish</b>	<b>Iraqi</b>	<b>Total Population</b>
Hyllie (Holma's borough)	817	1,069	11,187
Center (Wester Harbor's borough)	1,281	486	10,354

# THE METHOD

In both areas, I walked around the neighborhood, documenting the different types of seating that each area provided. Since I did my research in November, the weather was not normally the type that roused people to sit outside. Because of this I will be comparing the shape and placement of the accommodations with ones that other researchers have agreed to be productive in creating a pleasant and socially active public space.



# HOLMA FINDINGS

The large amount of trees and hills sometimes made it hard to see the benches from the pathways, making finding them almost like a scavenger hunt



Most of all the green spaces are right outside the apartment complexes.



Almost all the seating arrangements at Holma were wooden park benches or picnic tables.

Total Seating Documented on Vist: 55

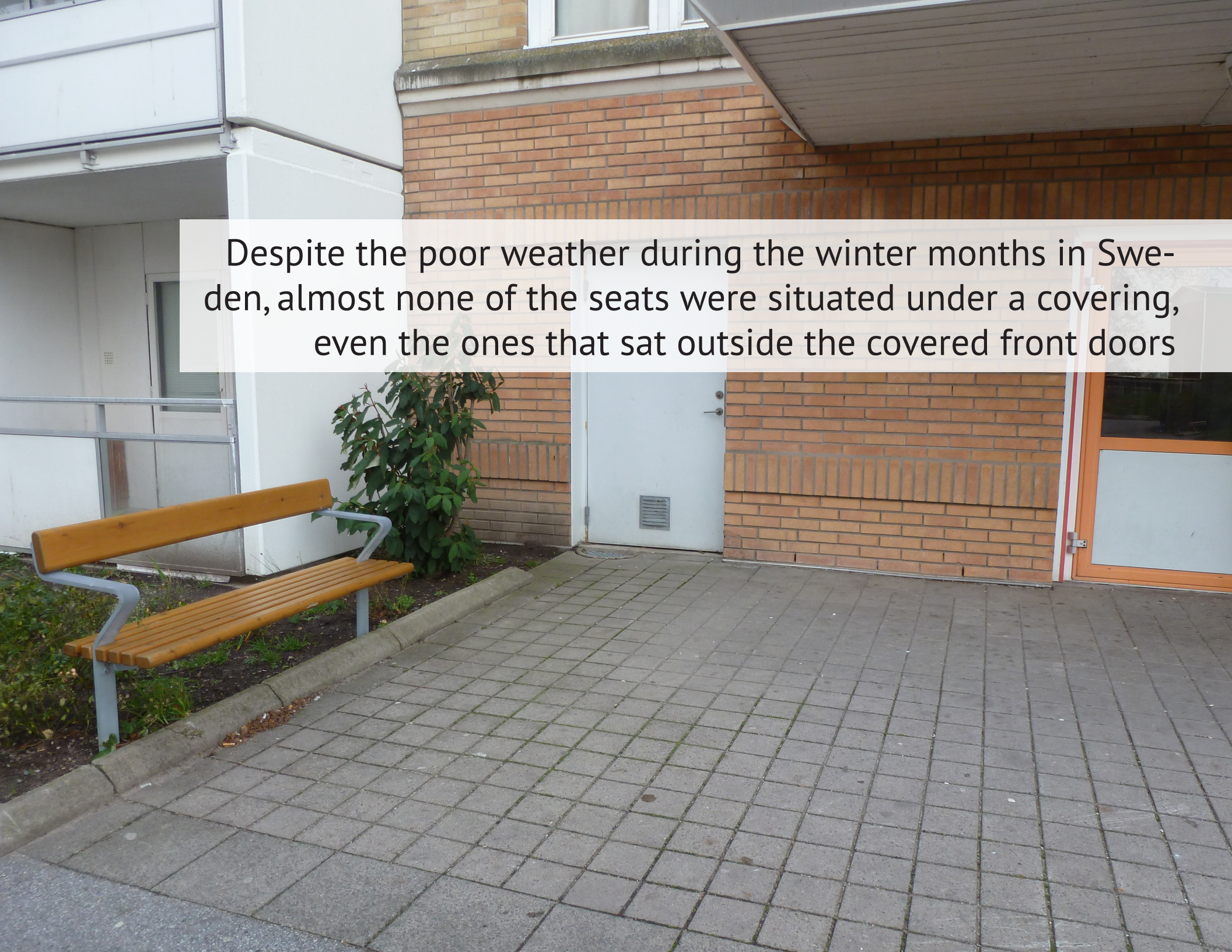


Seating not typical park bench or picnic table

Seating that is typical park bench or picnic table



Despite the poor weather during the winter months in Sweden, almost none of the seats were situated under a covering, even the ones that sat outside the covered front doors




The sculptures and water elements in Holma feel separated from the seating and green space.



# W. HARBOR FINDINGS

One could see a majority of the area's public space from one vantage point



A photograph of a modern residential courtyard. The foreground features a paved walkway made of light-colored, rectangular tiles. To the right, there is a small garden bed with various plants, including some with yellow and green leaves, and a large, weathered log. In the background, a white building with large windows and a balcony is visible. A semi-transparent white box with black text is overlaid on the image.

The green spaces that exist inside the small streets, where the low rise buildings open up to, felt very planned and small or very private

The seating in the Western Harbor is incredibly diverse.

Total Seating Documented on Vist: 55



Seating not typical park bench or picnic table

Seating that is a typical park bench

Seating that has a table

A photograph of a residential courtyard. In the foreground, a wooden picnic table with two attached benches sits on a gravel surface. Behind the table is a well-maintained hedge with autumn-colored leaves. To the left, a multi-story apartment building with red and grey siding and balconies is visible. To the right, a white building with a window is partially seen. The sky is overcast, and some trees without leaves are in the background.

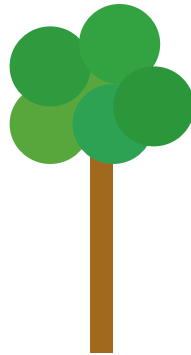
Very few of the benches and chairs are attached to or are placed near a table.



The sculptures and water elements in the Wester Harbor are very intertwined with the public space

# THE IMPROVEMENTS

Most of the improvements can be placed in one of the three categories: the design of the seat, landscape, or sculpture.





# HOLMA IMPROVEMENTS



Since the seating in Holma is mostly made up of wooden park benches, the best move for the neighborhood would be to diversify the seating designs, like the Western Harbor.

# WHAT WOULD IT DO?

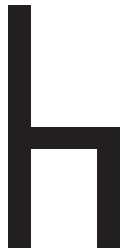
By adding in a wider range of seating choices, the public space can become more welcoming allowing people to connect with the environment over a favorite chair.



The benches that are near the front entrance to the apartment complexes should be the ones that are the most covered.

# WHAT WOULD IT DO?

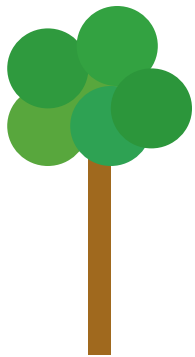
People who are visiting the residents of Holma will most likely have to wait outside for the person to either open the door or to arrive home. Making this person wait in poor weather would drastically decrease the person's mood. A covering could help relieve some of the annoyance of the harsh elements.



Making more benches visible from walkways, especially from roads that are frequently traveled on.

# WHAT WOULD IT DO?

Bringing a few more seating arrangements into view might help people feel more connected and maybe even comfortable, especially for the elderly who frequently look for available seating when walking.



Add in more sculpture and water elements that integrate themselves with the seating arrangements and the public.

# WHAT WOULD IT DO?

Having sculptures that focus on the residents may make the public space more personal and stimulate social interactions.



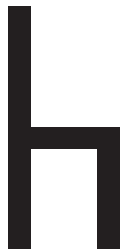
# THE WESTERN HARBOR IMPROVEMENTS



Incorporating tables to the seating arrangements to encourage longer stays outdoors.

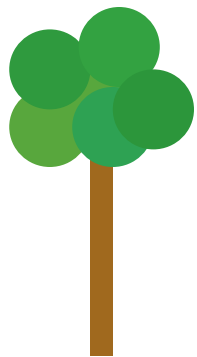
# WHAT WOULD IT DO?

When people are more comfortable and stay outdoors longer they are more likely to interact with others around them. A table can promote more social interaction amongst neighbors and promote community.



Since most of the Western Harbor public areas can be easily surveyed, it would be a good idea to add a few more private and hidden seating areas.

## WHAT WOULD IT DO?



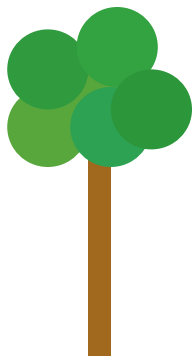
Having more private and shielded areas can give refuge to women and youth who seek out these types of places more frequently. This will allow the residents to feel more comfortable. The Western Harbor also gains more traffic from visitors than Holma, so having a private space for residents might be important for social interaction and outdoor play between the tenants..



Another issue that the Western Harbor has is that most of the buildings do not flood into a shared green space like the ones in Holma do.

## WHAT WOULD IT DO?

Having a green space right outside of the housing units can increase social interaction amongst neighbors.<sup>20</sup> Creating an area that is just outside the buildings can allow residents to connect with one another and create community.



# THE CONCLUSION

When it comes with seating, the more variety the better. Providing seating that includes as much people as possible can help in increasing social interaction within all the residents of a complex. Making sure that there is not one type of seating, view, or area to seat at will make for a more welcoming environment.

Also, research in better weather.