Golden Years in Lund

A qualitative study of how the elderly experience space and inclusivity in Lund

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Abstract

The global population is in a process of ageing. As living standards in most countries are rising and modern medicine is advancing, we face a demographic shift towards an older population. With this comes not only economic challenges but also a need to adapt and change society in order to accommodate the growing number of elderly. This thesis studies how the elderly experience space and their relation to Lund, a town in Sweden primarily associated with students and higher education. Observational fieldwork and semi-structured interviews were conducted and analyzed using the World Health Organization's guide to age-friendly cities as a framework. The results of this study shows that the presence of student culture has a positive impact on the elderly and that they feel included in Lund despite its profile as a town for students. The thesis also shows how efforts to change physical space to improve accessibility can be counterproductive due to the familiarity and emotional bonds that individuals form with space.

Keywords: Lund, elderly, ageing, environmental gerontology

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1. Introduction

It has been said that the only things that are certain in life are death and taxes. However, thanks to modern technology, advances in science and a generally high standard of living, life expectancy is steadily increasing, and there is a higher chance of being able to enjoy many years in retirement. So what does it really mean to be elderly today? The horrific Nordic legend of Ättestupa (mountain cliffs which elderly people would throw themselves from when they were no longer able to be a productive member of the family) may or may not have actually existed. What still exists, however, is the view of the elderly as burdens to society. As our elderly population is increasing, society must adapt and recognize their right to inclusivity and dignity regardless of age.

According to the population pyramid statistics from the Swedish Central Bureau of Statistics (*Statistiska Centralbyrån)* (hereafter SCB), Sweden has around 560,000 people within the ages of 70-74 and 272,000 aged 80-84 (2020). The Swedish Pensions Agency (*Pensionsmyndigheten)* calculated in 2019 that 2.3 million Swedes are pensioners by the standard that they are receiving monthly pension payments which are usually claimed at age 65 and above (2020). In other words, Sweden has a growing elderly population. This is a great achievement of contemporary society, but it raises questions about the elderly's place in the fabric of society.

The county administrative boards in Sweden (*Länsstyrelser)* states that the purpose of elderly care in Sweden is to ensure a high quality of life and to maintain independence (Regeringskansliet 2020). Being able to age in place, at home is one of the main focuses of social policy. To facilitate this, home care assistance is provided to help with matters such as cleaning, shopping and hygiene. When ageing in place is not viable, retirement homes can provide more comprehensive, day-and-night care. However, other factors that contribute to a meaningful life at an older age are less frequently mentioned in social policy. Simply the fact that they are no longer a part of the workforce and economic productivity is for many a depressing notion. In the face of this, it is natural to think of yourself as simply being a burden on society.

On an individual level, one of the most pressing problems is the widespread loneliness experienced by the elderly. A 2019 report from SCB stated that 1 in 10 Swedes above the age of 75 does not meet family, friends or acquaintances more than a couple of times per month (SCB 2019). The recent forced isolation brought on by the COVID-19 pandemic has of course made this problem far worse. Given that ageing in place allows for as much independence as possible is the preferred philosophy of our current social policy, it is necessary to study the person-environment relationships experienced by those living at home. Regarding this, the British House of Lords Science and Technology Committee suggests that "ageing is a malleable process and environments can have a powerful enabling or disabling impact on older age*"* (in Smith, 2009, p. 2). As Becker (2003, p. 130) states, "The spatial contexts in which elders live and the meaning they attach to the places they call home is a critical component of studying the ageing process." Therefore, this thesis examines the elderly population's relation to the city, specifically the

physical environment in central Lund. The elderly population is here defined as individuals aged 65 and above.

1.1 Aim and research question

The purpose of this thesis is to examine how elderly residents experience the physical environment in Lund through the lens of the WHO's guide for age-friendly cities. Through qualitative research in the form of semi-structured interviews and unstructured observations, I aim to study how the physical environment and social life is experienced by individuals aged 65 and above. The following research questions will guide this research:

- How is the physical environment in Lund experienced by the elderly?

1.2 Delimitations

Perhaps the most significant delimitation regarding this thesis is the current COVID-19 pandemic. It impacts both the ability to conduct interviews and the material that I wish to extract from them. In order for this thesis to remain relevant after the pandemic has ceased, I will focus on issues that are not caused by, or to a large extent, worsened by COVID-19. For example, inquiries into the social isolation and loneliness experienced by the elderly will most likely result in answers that are influenced by the pandemic to a larger extent than a question about obstacles faced on an individual's path to the pharmacy.

Furthermore, the isolation brought on by the pandemic made it more difficult to reach a wide variety of people for interview requests. The majority of the elderly, who are most at risk during this time, follow rigid guidelines to avoid human contact which makes them even harder to reach than the general population. For this project, I managed to find 12 participants, which was the initial goal. However, the current circumstances raises questions about a possible bias in the sample group. Being willing to partake in the study and replying to the invitation suggests that the individual is somewhat outgoing and may perhaps have a generally positive outlook on life. Due to the current social isolation, reaching those who are more introverted and dissatisfied is even more difficult than before. Consequently, the results could potentially be skewed towards positive reflections from the participants.

2. Literature review

The relationship between individuals and the environment around them has been studied for centuries and developed into many different fields. However, focusing on the elderly perspective is a somewhat modern phenomena. One explanation for this is the increased life-expectancy and, consequently, increased number of elderly especially in Western nations. A 2019 report about global population ageing projects that 1 in 6 people will be above the age of 65 by the year 2050. The figure today is 1 in 11 (UN 2019).

During the 20th century, research and policy actions addressing the person-environment relationship have often ignored the specific issues that affect elderly people. Poverty, crime, education and security in the context of spatial inequalities have mostly been studied in relation to children and people of working age. However, environmental gerontology (the study of one's surroundings in old age) and issues such as age-friendly cities are now being addressed to a larger extent (Smith 2009).

One of the most important figures in environmental gerontology is M. Powell Lawton. Dating back to the 1960s, Lawton's research into the social and psychological aspects of ageing has laid the groundwork for much of the theoretical frameworks, concepts and public policies in use today. Lawton's book *Environment and aging*, published in 1980, stressed that the physical environment and its consequences for ageing must be understood in order to implement effective policy and improve the quality of life for the elderly. Lawton's "ecological model of adaption and ageing" serves as a general theoretical framework for much of the literature related to environmental gerontology. What makes a city well-adapted to house elderly people is frequently discussed in both Lawton's work and more recent research. One of Lawton's contributions to environmental gerontology was the study of Alzheimer's patients' relation to outside spaces and how areas could be designed to accommodate them better.

Since the ideal strategy of ageing today is to allow for as much independence as possible and living at home rather than in care homes, the discussion of elderly-friendly cities is now very relevant. In their paper *The Challenges of Urban Ageing: Making Cities Age-friendly in Europe*, for example, Van Hoof et al. (2018) begin by discussing some of the issues related to this. Generally, the elderly living in urban areas experience a higher level of satisfaction with life compared to those in rural areas. This can be attributed to the proximity to services and support structures in the urban setting. According to this paper, the elderly population is growing faster than the total population in urban areas. Furthermore, the general urbanization of today brings with it affordability issues that often affect the elderly, retired population more than employed people (Van Hoof et al. 2018).

Based on this material, Van Hoof et. al. compare The Hague in The Netherlands and Krakow in Poland, two cities that are characterized as age-friendly. The authors conduct a comparative analysis with the framework of the eight domains in WHO's guide; social participation, communication and information, civic participation and employment, housing,

transportation community support and health services, outdoors spaces and buildings and lastly, respect and social inclusion. The information is gathered from various sources including public records, an academic paper and senior citizen interest groups (2018). The paper presents side-by-side tables comparing The Hague and Krakow's efforts in each aforementioned domain. This is very informative and explanatory, however, my thesis aims to instead focus on personal experiences. Van Hoof et al. evaluate the degree of age-friendliness mostly based on the official policies and services that are available and not how these are experienced and interacted within practice.

The doctoral thesis "Developing age-friendly cities: a public policy perspective" by Samuèle Rémillard-Boilard also explores the development of age-friendly policies using the WHO's guide for age-friendly cities (2019). The author held semi-structured interviews with 44 stakeholders that were involved in the efforts to develop age-friendly policies and initiatives in Brussels, Manchester and Montreal. The question of whether the suggestions in the WHO's age-friendly guide had been implemented in the three cities was analyzed strictly through a policy lens and the perspective of decision makers. The thesis concludes that the word "age-friendly" is quite ambiguous and that cities differ in how they interpret and judge the term. However, the focus on age-friendliness seemed to produce positive results despite the differences in interpretation and strategy. Montreal, for example, had managed to make 100% of buses accessible for all while Manchester focused more on social inclusion through the development of senior networks (Rémillard-Boilard 2019).

The 2015 report "Ageing in Cities" produced by the OECD also presents case studies of cities and their ability to provide an elderly-friendly urban environment. The report is largely concerned with exploring which types of policies benefit the elderly in the chosen cities. The researchers have compiled several statistics, like the annual increase ratio of the older population, which are presented in tables throughout. This comprehensive body of statistics offers great insight into ageing trends which can be used to guide policy for decision makers. There is a vast geographic and cultural spread in the chosen cities, these include, among others; Yokohama, Helsinki and Philadelphia. The methodological approach is to conduct comparative assessments of quantitative data, like the ageing trends, and also qualitative data about things such as interest groups and regional strategies for elderly well-being (OECD 2015).
The vast resources and personnel available to the OECD enables them to compile massive amounts of data and information about various projects and initiatives related to the elderly around the world.

The authors have listed their criteria that were used for choosing a sample. Firstly, the researchers looked for cities that considered ageing an important aspect in policy-making and had planned initiatives to meet the challenges of ageing. Secondly, whether the city is willing to address the challenges using their own policies. These criteria may exclude cities that are in greater need of reform and collaboration with the OECD. In the case of Philadelphia, the researchers point out their initiatives to ensure that the streets are safe to walk for pedestrians of all abilities and ages, a program carried out in collaboration with the interest group American

Association of Retired Persons (OECD 2015). Highlighting this can undoubtedly serve as an inspiration for other cities seeking to improve the well-being of elderly residents. However, in choosing to evaluate cities that already have these types of initiatives, the researchers miss the opportunity to examine and learn from cities that have not managed to achieve such actions. Furthermore, the report lacks the personal lived experiences and opinions of the affected group. Similar to the research by Van Hoof et. al. and Rémillard-Boilard, the OECD report efficiently describes existing policies and initiatives to mitigate the challenges of an ageing urban population. How the circumstances are experienced is, however, missing. Efforts for inclusion and re-designed environments for accessibility may be perceived as successful however, when it comes to the well-being of one of society's most vulnerable groups, impact is arguably more important than intent. Going through the available studies and research that have been published in recent years, it seems that much of the material falls into one of two categories: examining what types of elderly friendly measures an area has implemented or comparing cities based on such measures. In general, there seems to be a lack of qualitative research in the form of, for example, interviews with the elderly residents themselves. This is why my thesis aims to focus on lived experiences rather than just policy, diverting from much of the available research.

3. Conceptual and Theoretical Framework

3.1 Humanistic Geography

This thesis deals with the elderly population and their relationship to the physical space around them. In order to present a comprehensive theoretical framework, it is necessary to explore the basic relation between geography and the human condition. Many of the phenomena that are most important in our lives cannot be measured or calculated. Love, trust and well-being are intangible concepts that are near impossible to scientifically measure, yet these feelings are crucial to our quality of life. Studying the relation between people and geography can be done with numbers and measurements of distance in a subfield such as economic geography. However, if one aims to explore how geography influences feelings, behavior and thoughts, the physical aspects must be united with the metaphysical aspects. This is something that is done in the qualitative field of humanistic geography. Humanistic geography fundamentally places people at the center of geographical studies. Space and place are seen as both influence our behavior while also being the product of our behavior. In activities such as city planning, the discipline is not employed as often as the more quantitative branches of geography. Yet, there is great value in interpreting and trying to decipher the human experience in relation to geography. For example, the quality of an urban environment is not judged solely on the access to transportation and services. Feelings such as familiarity are also crucial to the experience (Tuan 1976).

A concept within the field of humanistic geography that is relevant for this thesis is that of *topophilia*, meaning the human love of place. Geographer Yi-Fu Tuan, who popularized the term in geographical studies, describes it as "a neologism, useful in that it can be defined broadly to include all of the human being's affective ties with the material environment" (Tuan 1974, p. 93). The love of a place can spring from a variety of different factors. A pleasant view or beautiful architecture may appeal to us aesthetically and create a sense of topophilia. It may also be the result of a physical contact with place. The sensation of sinking your feet into sand at a beach or the feeling of gliding over snow on a pair of skis, for example. What is often stronger than these, however, is the topophilia which stems from familiarity and emotional attachment. Much like a timeworn teddy bear or a favorite necklace that has been with someone for decades, our material environment occupies special places in our hearts. Living in a certain neighborhood or town for a long time creates an emotional connection to place built on past experiences and familiarity (Tuan 1974). This is especially relevant when it comes to the elderly since familiarity and the emotional connection to place often increase with time. It is unfortunately very common to see conflict between an elderly individual and their peers when the discussion of moving to a care home comes up. This should not only be attributed to the desire to remain independent or some type of pride. As (Tuan 1974, p. 99) states, "Beyond clothing, a person in the process of time invests bits of his emotional life in his home, and beyond the home in his neighborhood. To be forcibly evicted from one's home and neighborhood is to be stripped of a sheathing".

3.2 WHO Model on Age-Friendly Cities

Defining what constitutes an elderly-friendly city, in research often called "age-friendly", is difficult. Naturally, everyone faces different challenges and circumstances which makes it impossible to implement universal quick-fixes. The World Health Organization (WHO) have developed an "Age-Friendly Cities Guide" which includes a checklist of eight important domains to accommodate the elderly population (WHO 2007). This guide, building on Lawton's ecological model, is a result of 35 cities conducting research mainly through focus groups. The eight domains are: social participation, communication and information, civic participation and employment, housing, transportation community support and health services, outdoors spaces and buildings, respect and social inclusion (WHO 2007) (see Appendix I). Using a large scale bottom-up participatory approach, the WHO held focus groups in the involved cities, both in lower- and middle income areas. A total of 1,485 people aged 60 and above participated sharing their experiences and opinions (WHO 2007).

The underlying framework of this project was the WHO's theory of active ageing. It is described as the process of recognizing and optimizing opportunities for an active life beyond age 60. This includes health concerns, security, and social participation. For example, two of the WHO's suggestions regarding participation are as follows: *"recognizing the wide range of*

capacities and resources among older people" and "the whole community benefits from the participation of older people in volunteer or paid work" (WHO 2007, p. 5).

While these may sound like reasonable suggestions, there is a question of whom they are actually designed to benefit. Today, many countries try to raise their respective retirement ages in order to boost productivity. The reasoning behind this is often that the increased life expectancy around the world is depleting pension systems (IPE 2017). The concept of active ageing could potentially be used as a tool for pressuring people to stay in the workforce for society's economic interests under the guise of concern for their well-being. Additionally, it may further stigmatize a person's idle retirement as something that is burdensome for everyone else. However, WHO's eight-part model still serves as a suitable framework for this thesis because it offers a comprehensive guide based on the participation of the affected group and addresses both the physical and psychological aspects of ageing.

3.3 Theory of Ecological Ageing

At all ages, the way of interacting with the environment is partly determined by one's different levels of competence. For example, a child's ability to ride a bicycle is a competence that allows for a wider range of opportunities in life. In the context of elderly lives, it is often physical impairments or lack thereof that determine competence. This connection is one of the underlying assumptions of M. Powell Lawton's 1980 theory of ecological ageing, which uses a model called environmental competence-press (see Appendix II). Lawton describes the basics of this model as follows:

> "Behavior is a function of the competence of the individual and the environmental press of the situation … a behavior (or affective response) is seen as the result of a combination of a press of a given magnitude acting on, or perceived by, or utilized by, an individual of a given level of competence" (1982, p. 43).

In other words, the different types of environmental demands result in a plethora of different outcomes depending on the individual's competence. The adaptive and/ or positive behaviors can also result from a variety of combinations of press and competence. The zone of maximum performance potential is said to be the combination which best enables learning, the will to try new things, more energy and a positive thinking. Environmental press concerns the physical demands in everyday life such as distance to important amenities and the ability to get around in the home area. The personal competence is determined by factors such as physical and cognitive ability and motor skills (Smith 2009).

A simple example of something that lowers competence and may lead to maladaptive behavior in the press-competence model is balance problems. It can result in apprehensive attitudes toward visiting busy city centers and physically irregular environments. These are, in this example, the environmental press which outweigh the competence. Conversely, having a

high level of competence in an environment with low press will have a negative effect on the quality of life. For example, this can occur at retirement homes or communities. An elderly person with well-kept cognitive abilities and/ or good physical health will not thrive in a very low demanding environment. Idleness can, in this situation, be under stimulating and cause anxiety, sensory deprivation and unfulfilled potential (Lawton 1986). Furthermore, two additional hypotheses have been developed from this framework: the environmental docility hypothesis and the environmental proactivity hypothesis. The docility hypothesis states that, as personal competence decreases, the likelihood of environmental factors controlling your behavior increases. This was criticized as being too environmentally deterministic and overlooking personal agency. Consequently, the proactivity hypothesis was formulated. It adds that elderly individuals, like everyone else, alter and choose environments but notes that environmental resources are better used by those of higher competence and are therefore more likely to change behavior (Smith 2009).

In line with the philosophy of humanistic geography, the press-competence model combines the physical with the metaphysical. Behavior, attitudes and feelings are linked to the material environment which is what this thesis aims to explore related to Lund.

It is used both as an aid in choosing interview questions and for establishing different themes in the analysis. It is very useful in that it can provide hints to the person's situation once some basic questions about physical health and habits have been answered. The model is of course not fully accurate for everyone but it can make it easier to acquaint oneself with and understand the elderly person's life.
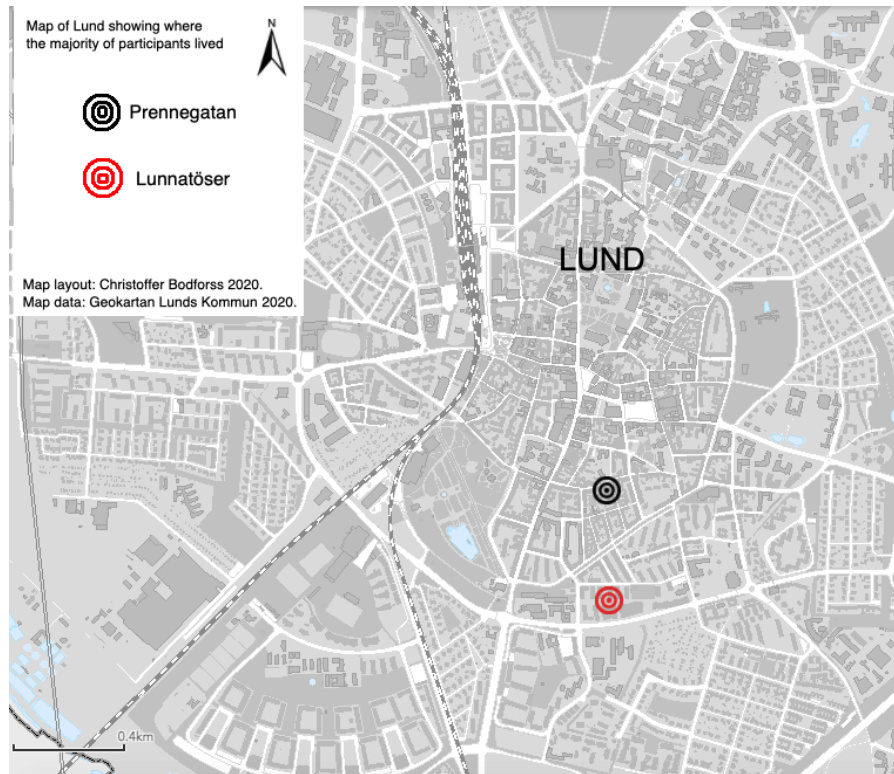
4. Background

Figure 1: Map of Lund. Source: *Geokartan Lunds Kommun*

Lund is a town of 92,000 inhabitants located approximately 20 kilometers north-east of the city of Malmö in Sweden and makes up an area of roughly 25 km². The municipality defines central Lund as the district located within the ancient city walls, which has been outlined in black on the map (see Figure 1). This area houses many buildings used by Lund University, two main squares, Stortorget and Mårtenstorget as well as Lund's cathedral. There is a slight downwards slope from the northern part of the town to the south. One notable feature of this area is the cobblestone streets which cover the majority of walking paths around the main squares and the cathedral. The cobblestone is a part of the medieval aesthetic which the town has preserved and cherishes.

The initial reason for choosing Lund and, more specifically, its central parts for this thesis was an interest in the dichotomy between age groups in the town. Lund is dominated by students, a population that is constantly changing as people complete their education and is replaced by new students. In a town that is so associated with students coming and going, one can sometimes forget that people also live here permanently, not connected to the university. This contrast is clear when one is observing, for example, the market hall (Saluhallen) on Mårtenstorget. Here, two vastly different worlds meet as many elderly individuals stand in line to buy meats and

cheese while young students pass by to stock up on alcohol for student activities. Students may usually keep to their collectives, student nations and study halls while the elderly and retired spend more time at home or at the activity centers. However, in central Lund the two segments of the population mix and share the physical space. For this reason, I deemed the central parts to be of most interest when researching the elderly's experience in Lund.

On the map, two circles have been drawn to show where the invites were first sent out. As discussed earlier, the COVID-19 pandemic made it difficult to reach out and come in contact with the elderly. The two neighborhoods that are circled, Lunnatöser and Prennegatan, were chosen for two reasons. Firstly, after asking around, I was informed that the two chosen areas had a high population of elderly residents. Secondly, I knew residents in each of these areas before writing this thesis which meant that I could come into contact with their neighbors through them.

5. Methodology

This thesis seeks to understand the lived experience of elderly individuals in Lund and potential obstacles and challenges they may face when moving around in the central areas. For this task, I have chosen to conduct unstructured observations as well as 12 semi-structured interviews with individuals aged 65 and above who live in Lund.

5.1 Observations

Early on, as I set out to formulate a research question and develop a research design, I decided to conduct unstructured field observations in order to familiarize myself with the theme of elderly individuals in Lund. Unstructured observations are done without any specific schedule or aims. Rather, the researcher tries to take as many notes as possible of what can be observed in the area that is being studied (Bryman 2016). This was done during two occasions, lasting for approximately three hours each. In order to get an understanding of how people of different ages occupied spaces during different times, my first observation took place at 11:00 on a Saturday with the starting point being Södra Vägen, south of the city center. I walked towards Mårtenstorget and stopped several times to take notes and photograph things that could be relevant to bring up in the interviews. The second observation took place at 11:00 on a Wednesday and followed the same route.

5.2 Sampling

To establish initial contact with the individuals aged 65 and above, around 30 envelopes with printed out invitations to participate in an interview study were handed out in the apartment complexes "Lunnatöser" and around Prennegatan in central Lund. These two areas were chosen due to its many elderly residents. When the invites were first distributed, I had not yet settled on an exact number of participants for the study. Due to the extraordinary circumstances created by the COVID-19 pandemic, it was difficult to anticipate the level of interest for my study and therefore also an exact number of participants. Nonetheless, after consulting my supervisor I decided to aim for 12 interviews. Sample size in qualitative research depends on several variables like the scope of the study and the subjects .When enough data have been collected regarding a subject, theoretical saturation is reached. This means that the researcher no longer gains new insights from conducting more interviews (Bryman 2016). In the case of this thesis, an example could be when a participant describes their physical challenges when walking along Södra Esplanaden and that these difficulties and attitudes toward them have already been discussed with other participants. Since the geographical area of central Lund is relatively small, I speculated that many of the challenges and difficulties faced by the elderly would be shared and thus chose 12 individuals to avoid theoretical saturation.

20 envelopes with invites were distributed at the apartments "Lunnatöser" and 10 invites around Prennegatan. After one week, I had received four responses. Three of them through email and one by text message. The first interview was held just three days after handing out the invites due to upcoming travel plans by the participant. This individual was very pleased with the interview and put me in contact with two of their friends, initiating a snowball sampling. In order to find a more geographically diverse group of people, this snowballing method was also used after finding the other initial interview subjects. At the end of each meeting, the respondent was asked if they knew of anyone around their age who might be interested in participating. Snowball sampling relies on the initial participants' personal networks. It is often used when the population needed for research is difficult to reach. An individual found through snowball sampling may also feel more comfortable participating when it is their friend or colleague who informs them about the project and that they have involved themselves (Bryman 2016).

In this study, snowball sampling was chosen for both these benefits. Since the elderly population is currently fully quarantined or extremely restricted, it would prove difficult to find a sample group by, for example, visiting senior centers or activity groups. Additionally, it would not be appropriate to walk up and initiate conversations with elderly individuals in public places due to the health risks. Furthermore, one might be quite apprehensive towards meeting with a random man and being asked about everyday activities. It was therefore important to build trust and make use of the snowball method to make participants feel more secure and comfortable. This was also taken into account in smaller choices, such as including a picture of myself properly dressed in the interview. The participants varied in age, the youngest being 67 years old and the oldest being 93 years old. The calculated average age of the sample group was 79.

5.3 Interviews

The approach of semi-structured interviews allows the conversation to naturally flow and, as opposed to steering toward an issue chosen by the interviewer, the interviewee is allowed to explore tangents and return to subjects that are of importance to them (Bryman, 2016). Having worked in elderly care and also volunteered at a retirement home in Lund for emotional support and playing music, I have come to recognize the importance of building a strong rapport to get them to open up about their struggles.

To aid the interview process, an interview guide was created (see Appendix III). This is not a strict schedule of exact questions that are supposed to be asked in order, but rather a list of issues to discuss. Following the guidelines suggested in Bryman (2016), the first step in developing an interview guide is to consider the general research area and specific research questions. In this thesis, those are ageing in an urban environment and how the physical environments of central Lund are experienced by the elderly. The questions were modifiable and not based too much on preconceived notions in order to be open for other subjects and experiences that may come up during the interview and not close them down (Bryman, 2016). All of the prepared questions in the interview guide were open-ended and formulated in such a way to allow for personal, subjective experiences to be shared. The overall intention of the interviews was to familiarize myself with the interviewee's life and try to see Lund through their perspective. I recognized that, as a young and healthy person, my perception of something basic such as a sidewalk will vary considerably in comparison with someone above age 65. In order to explore these differences and allow the participants to go off on tangents in relation to my questions, the length of the interviews were set to 45-60 minutes. The invitation to participate in the study emphasized anonymity and the option of social distancing. In order to provide a safe environment for any elderly people to talk, the option of meeting outside was suggested. Surprisingly, a majority of the respondents wished for a physical meeting. These meetings took place in small parks and areas with many benches in order to avoid any virus spread. Three meters separated me and the respondent at all time and the recording device was placed in-between us.

The meetings began with some small talk and a short introduction of the thesis as well as the reasons for choosing this particular subject. All interviews were conducted in Swedish. I informed them that I was in the process of writing a bachelor thesis in human geography and that the subject would be experiences of elderly people in Lund. After describing this, the participant was asked if it would be okay to record the interview in order to transcribe and analyze the material. They were also made aware that their participation would be anonymous and that their names would not be disclosed or published anywhere. Following this, I provided some information about myself like birthplace, age and the time spent in Lund in order to build some rapport. This provided a natural segue into asking them about similar information and creating a "factsheet" which is recommended in (Bryman 2016). These also include name, former occupations and age.

5.4 Method of Analysis

The method used to analyze the data from the interviews is a deductive thematic analysis. This is one of the most common methods used in qualitative research and is based on identifying recurring key themes in the data. It is a useful approach for researchers that are trying to get an understanding of the opinions, views or experiences of a group. In order to uncover the dominating themes in the data, the researcher needs to code the material. Coding is often done by carefully reviewing the transcribed material and highlighting words or phrases that represent a broader theme. For example, the phrase "I don't know" in an interview can be coded as uncertainty (Bryman 2016). The process of coding and developing themes does not have strict universal rules or formulas. It is up to the researcher to choose which words and phrases seem to be important in the material. In other words, two researchers reading through the same material may come to different conclusions in terms of themes. Bazeley (2013) argues that this lack of common procedure has led to vagueness in how researchers identify themes in their research.

The WHO's guide for age-friendly cities is divided into eight specific themes that are important to consider for the well-being of elderly individuals in cities. Thus, it is an already established analytical framework that can be used in research such as Rémillard-Boilard (2019) where it serves as the criteria to measure age-friendliness. In this thesis, the eight themes included in the WHO's guide function as pre-established themes to analyze the interviews, making the thematic analysis deductive. This approach avoids the risk of vagueness and arbitrariness in establishing themes as an individual researcher, as Bazeley (2013) discussed, and instead relies on the WHO's large-scale research in this area.

The 12 interviews were transcribed and read through to become familiar with the material. I then compiled phrases and words in the interviews related to the eight established themes and began organizing them. Each key word or phrase was assigned a number, from one to eight, representing each theme in the WHO's guide. This allowed me to grasp the general sentiments and analyze them.

6. Results and Analysis

Results from the observations are presented first followed by the interview material that has been analyzed thematically based on the eight categories that make up the WHO's guide for age-friendly cities. All interview quotes have been translated from Swedish to English.

6.1 Observations

The avenue Södra Esplanaden, which stretches from Stadsparken to the student housing at Parentesen, was muddy and full of pools of water. After sitting down on one of the benches and observing for around 20 minutes, the difference in how such an ordinary space was experienced depending on age became apparent. The younger people effortlessly skipped over the pools or took a quick step to the side while the elderly, especially those using a walker, needed to slowly navigate the space like a maze to move forward. Small differences in behavior and movement like in this scenario are difficult to notice without making a concerted effort to observe. Thus, the observations gave me some insight into how the elderly experience space in Lund.

The effects of the COVID-19 pandemic became very clear once I reached Mårtenstorget. I entered the market hall (Saluhallen) around noon on a Sunday and first noticed that only two of the four entrances were handicap accessible which meant that the majority of elderly visitors only used two entrance points. Once inside, the elderly stood in corners and separate areas with their number tag and tried to avoid contact while waiting to be served. A long line had formed in front of the liquor store (Systembolaget) due to restricted access. This resulted in a cluster of around 15 people occupying a large part of the ground floor which the elderly carefully navigated around to avoid the risk of disease. It was obvious that being inside the market hall was very stressful for the elderly who constantly remained vigilant to avoid physical contact while the other visitors moved around quite unconcerned. On the corner by Coop and Apoteket on Mårtenstorget, bikes, pedestrians and cars all shared the busy road. Here, I stopped and observed an elderly woman who looked fragile and moved very slowly with her walker along the sidewalk. Her eyes were fixed on the ground to navigate the cobblestone but she had to stop and look around every few meters since people were constantly passing her at high speeds. It seemed to be a very uncomfortable and stressful situation.

During a weekday the shortly after, I walked the same route at around noon. There were a lot less people in the streets and a greater number of them were elderly. Everything seemed to be moving at a slower pace and in a more calm atmosphere which was probably preferable for the elderly. I entered one of the cafés on Mårtenstorget and counted to 19 guests, 10 of them looked to be around the age of 65 and above. Everyone inside kept some distance to the other groups inside but a minor confrontation occurred by the cash register when an elderly woman felt that the man behind stood too close. After being asked to take a few steps back, the man looked around and scoffed as if he did not understand what all the fuss was about. This way of thinking seemed to be a recurring theme when sharing the public spaces. The elderly saw a real danger in close contact and remained timid while others just moved freely and unconcerned.

6.2 Outdoors spaces and buildings

All of the participants claimed that they try to live physically active lives by taking walks though five of them needed some assistance in order to move around freely, most commonly using a walker. Three of the participants stated that their physical abilities had been significantly reduced due to falling accidents, two of them receiving the injuries in outdoors public areas and one at home. Half of the sample group avoided one or more areas in Lund entirely if possible. This was due to some feature of the physical environment which made it difficult or impossible to walk. Lund is a town containing a variety of areas that differ in geographical shape. Relatively modern spaces such as the apartment complexes "Lunnatöser" on Södra Vägen, where some of the participants lived, have smooth walking paths and modern architecture while the city center has preserved much of the aged cobblestone streets and buildings (see Appendix V). Lund is also blessed with several well-kept and lush parks like Stadsparken and Botaniska Trädgården. The parks are a feature that all of the participants expressed a love for when discussed. The participants with limited physical capabilities agreed that using a walker works perfectly fine and that they, as well, are able to enjoy leisurely walks in the parks. However, those who were fit enough to take on longer walks out in nature yearned for easier access to larger forests like Skrylle Naturreservat, located 15 kilometers east of Lund, where one can follow nature trails of differing length and terrain.

Regarding personal safety when moving around in Lund, the overall opinion was that it is a safe town for the elderly. Thankfully, none of the participants had been the victim of any crime during their time spent in Lund. There were some concerns about walking alone after nightfall though one could argue that this is something universal, regardless of city or country. However, the one threat to physical safety that every single participant expressed concerns about was that of bicycles. Different aspects of the bicycle issue was a recurring theme, not just in response to safety and outdoor spaces but also regarding accessibility, respect and comparisons to other cities.

> "I enjoy walking to Mårtenstorget and looking at all the market stalls. Sometimes I will buy fruit and vegetables to bring home. I have problems with my balance so I use my trusty cane but, like I often say about all these bikes, it is not a question of 'if' I get hit, only 'when' I get hit"(Participant, 82).

Quotes similar to this one were often expressed when discussing the experiences of walking in the city center. Many participants also remarked that they try to remain vigilant at all times and constantly look around for bicycles but feared that one day that will not be enough. They shared several stories of close-calls that could have ended with severe injury due to carelessness by the other party. The overall sentiment regarding bicycles was not, however, that they should be banned or decreased in numbers. Rather, they were seen as something positive. It was acknowledged that bicycles are a far superior alternative to cars for reasons like environmental

preservation and noise levels. All 12 participants instead agreed that the preferred solution is to create bicycle lanes and vastly expand the already existing ones.

Due to the free-flowing nature of the semi-structured interviews, the initial question about former occupations sometimes led directly to a discussion about how Lund's physical environment has evolved over the years. For example, a 76 year old woman began the interview by saying that she had worked with her father in developing Lund's first telephone lines. This prompted a nostalgic look back at where she had grown up and played with her friends around Lund's cathedral. The restaurant "Stäket" in central Lund was one of the places that remained from her childhood. She told the story of her grandmother's 75th birthday which coincided with her own 10th birthday. This celebratory night in Lund, more than 60 years ago, when she was given the attention of her whole extended family remains as one of the best days in her life. Stories such as this one reveal how much a building or a public place, which most people barely notice, can mean for an elderly individual.

Perhaps the most contentious issue relating to public spaces and building was that of growth and densification. Only one of the participants expressed a positive attitude towards the current evolution of Lund. In general, it was not seen as a good thing that Lund is growing in size and that new housing opportunities are being constructed. This seemed to be primarily due to aesthetic reasons and not the population growth. As mentioned earlier, the parks and smaller green areas in Lund was something that the participants held very dear. There was a fear of Lund becoming a grey town built with concrete and losing its "soul" as a result of trying to make room for more people.

6.3 Transportation

The public transportation available in Lund, primarily buses, was greatly appreciated by the participants in this study, though, due to the COVID-19 pandemic, none of the 12 participants had used any form of public transportation in Lund since around March 2020. Only four of the participants had ready access to cars which made the buses an important part of everyday life during normal circumstances. Similar to the issue with bicycles, there was some concern with the congestion of buses that occurs in the area between Mårtenstorget and Lund Centralstation. One participant stated that she often felt intimidated by the buses circling around the smaller streets in these areas and being honked at for unknowingly being in the way. However, an appreciated feature of public transport in Lund was that all fares are free for those aged 75 and above. Those who were able to make use of this talked about how it was an encouraging factor for them to get out of the apartment and attend activities. Also, being able to get on and off the buses without having to pay for tickets made it easier to go on impromptu rides to a park or a store when one is in the mood for it.

Most of the participants had been skeptical towards the new tramway which opened on December 13th 2020. The contention was usually that the participants did not like the large,

obtrusive construction sites in the middle of the city as well as the fact that old roads were removed to make way for the tracks. However, several had changed their minds and been pleasantly surprised by the results as the project drew to a close. Two of the participants mentioned that they would really like to ride the new tram through Lund with some sort of tour guide that could inform the passengers of historic events along the route.

6.4 Housing

Eight out of the 12 participants in this study inhabited either the apartment complexes "Lunnatöserna" at Södra Vägen or in apartments at Prennegatan located approximately 300 meters south of Mårtenstorget. All of the homes in these two areas are owned by the tenants and not for renting. The four high rise apartment complexes called Lunnatöserna are quite new structures, with construction starting in 2005. Thus, their interior design is modern and accessible for people of differing physical abilities. Each building contains two elevators of different sizes for easier access. The participants living in these buildings returned to one feature in particular, namely that the apartments as well as all other areas within the buildings lack thresholds and doorsteps. This minor detail which most able-bodied people would not even notice has made a huge difference for the elderly people living there. As one noted:

> Thankfully, I am still in relatively good health and I don't have much trouble walking. But still, one of the reasons for moving here was the absence of steps and thresholds. You never know what the future holds and this way I don't have to move if I should lose my mobility (Participant, 76).

Additionally, all entrances and doors to basements and storage rooms are automatic and can be opened by pressing a button. This, as well, is a feature that improves the quality of life for the elderly tenants and makes it easier for them to go outside and stay active. All of the participants in this study who lived at Lunnatöserna were to some degree active in the tenants owners' association (*bostadsrättsförening)*. Two of them held leader roles and organized activities such as spring cleaning, crafts workshops and, of course, fika.

The participants from Prennegatan lived in apartments located in rows of two-story houses which shared an inner courtyard. These apartments were older and offered less features to improve accessibility. Instead, the primary benefit of living here, according to the participants, was the close relation to the neighbors. The large windows, shared courtyard and open area seemingly brought the tenants closer together here compared to Lunnatöserna. This was exemplified during the first interview conducted at this location. The conversation, taking place on some benches in the courtyard, was constantly interrupted by neighbors waving and making small talk. Immediately after this first interview, the participant introduced me to their elderly neighbors who sat nearby and drank coffee. I was informed that this coffee break was one of their daily routines in the tenant owners' association and they enthusiastically invited me to sit

down and interview them as well.

The apartments and the courtyard were surrounded by gates but these were never locked according to the residents. They all viewed this openness to the surrounding area as something positive. However, during the month before the interviews, a strange man had visited the premises during nights and acted suspiciously. This greatly worried all of the participants and had even resulted in one of the participants temporarily moving to their acquaintance out of fear. Despite this unpleasant situation, the participants all agreed that the communication with the tenant owners' association and their response had been satisfactory and that new safety measures were planned.

6.5 Civic participation and employment

All of the 12 participants in this study had passed the traditional retirement age of 65. One of them was still working part-time though this was in order to stay active and not because the salary was needed. The interviews did not inquire into previous income levels or current wealth as it seemed inappropriate. However, none of the participants expressed any worries about lack of income or difficulty supporting themselves. The WHO's guide discusses the need for employment opportunities for the elderly in "places of low income and limited government support"(WHO 2007, p.53). This study suggests that the sample group is not in such a need of employment.

The level of civic participation was high among the participants in this study. Eight out of 12 were actively involved in functions like tenant owners' associations, community boards and senior citizen social groups. The overall opinion regarding this was that Lund provides ample opportunities for elderly to engage in such activities if they want to. A recurring issue in the interviews, which had prompted four of the participants to join in protests against the municipality, is the construction of "Galten". This project aims to revitalize the area between Mårtenstorget and Bankgatan by demolishing some older buildings and creating a more modern living space. Lund municipality claims that this will make Mårtenstorget more lively and offer many new housing opportunities (Lunds Kommun 2020).

According to the four participants who were actively protesting against Galten, the majority of the opposition came from elderly individuals. They seemed to be the group that were most concerned with preserving the current aesthetic of Lund. As one participant explained:

> "We (the elderly) don't want these high-rise buildings in Lund, it ruins the atmosphere of the town. People love the old buildings that are kept from the old days. Just look at those ghastly new buildings over by Arenan" (Participant, 76).

The organization "Gamla Lund" is one of the groups that have protested the construction of Galten. They are dedicated to the preservation of historic buildings and spaces in Lund and have managed to influence the municipality's decisions regarding several projects (GamlaLund 2020).

6.6 Respect and social inclusion

Lund is a town that is often associated with youth. As of 2020, Lund University has around 40,000 students and the 13 student nation social clubs and the quadrennial Lund carnival are two of the most iconic institutions in the city (Lund University 2020). Despite the dominance of student and youth culture, the participants in this study did not express any major discontent with these circumstances. Only one participant remarked that noise levels could sometimes be a nuisance during weekends but acknowledged the fact that it was expected as they lived in close proximity to one of the student nations. Rather, the presence of youth seemed to positively influence the elderly, as one participant expressed it:

"I really believe that it is good for us elderly folks to be surrounded by young people. It brings life to the streets when you see them having fun and dressing up for some function. The fact that so many are studying also creates a sort of intellectual atmosphere, I feel."(Participant, 82)

The three participants who had studied at Lund University themselves had especially warm feelings towards the student culture. They described how seeing students celebrating and singing was almost like watching a play of their own youth right in front of them and how happy this made them feel: "I grew up here and then I studied here for university, it was such a great time in my life. Sometimes it is almost like I live vicariously through the students I see because it reminds me so much of happy times" (Participant, *76*). In terms of feeling respected as an elderly individual, the only contention was with people riding their bikes on the sidewalks though this was not expressed as an issue exclusive to Lund.

6.7 Social participation

As discussed earlier, a skew in the sample group towards the more socially active and extroverted people is possible since those may be more likely to accept my invitation. Even if this would be the case, the interviews provided great insight into the options available for social engagement in Lund. All participants claimed that they were, in one way or another, socially active before the pandemic. Unfortunately, every single social activity organized by Lund municipality has been cancelled until at least April 2021 (Lund.se 2020). One of these activities that three of the participants attended before the pandemic are the organized walks called "vandringsgrupper" which are primarily attended by the elderly. The participants were all part of different groups which suited their capabilities. One can choose to stick to Lund and join walks around the town or choose the more experienced groups for nature walks with more terrain.

Throughout the interviews, it was said that Lund provides ample opportunities for the elderly to socialize if one makes the effort to seek them out. This could be problematic since

those who are isolated and perhaps in the most dire need of human contact are less likely to reach out. However, the participants who lived in housing that was connected to a tenant owner's association all mentioned that these organizations were a great source for social involvement. Some examples of this were bake sales, book clubs and gardening activities held by the tenants.

6.8 Communication and information

The WHO defines this theme as the availability of some sort of universal broadcasting such as television and radio that can keep the elderly informed about important matters (WHO 2007). Since Sweden is quite a developed country in terms of Internet and media access, this part of the discussion in the interviews turned out quite uneventful. All 12 participants used smartphones and did not tell of any difficulties in using their devices. Two of them used an app called 112 SOS which I had not heard of before. They explained that this app, created by our national emergency service, worked both as a GPS tracker and informed the user of emergency situations nearby such as fires or traffic accidents. However, what was most important to the two participants was the function for reporting emergencies. Should one have a falling accident or sudden health complications, the user can click on the app which will then call emergency services while also sharing the user's exact geographic location with the responders. The participants stated that this made them feel much more safe during walks and likened it to the alarm button worn on the elderly's wrists in retirement homes.

6.9 Community support and health services

The opinions regarding the quality of health services were somewhat divided. One participant, who had lived his whole life in Lund, was of the opinion that quick access to good healthcare is dependent on the individual's contacts. In his case, he had been in contact with the same medical doctor for many years through one of the private clinics available. This meant that he felt very secure and trusted the health services he had access to due to experience. Others in the sample group were less satisfied, the main issue being that they did not have access to one doctor that they could get to know and trust. Instead, they often met new personnel every time they visited the health center. Similarly, the opinion was divided regarding the digitization of healthcare. Some of the participants, mostly those of oldest age, were not able or not willing to use the online services. This created frustration when more and more functions and services were located in apps and on websites. As one of the oldest participants in the sample group expressed it: "You know, I used to be able to walk into the health center (*vårdcentral)* or talk to someone on the phone. Now, they always say log in here or ask for that on your website but I'm not good with all this new technology. It is so difficult" (Participant, 93*).* Put differently, digitization seemed to be a double-edged sword for the elderly in Lund. Those who are willing or able to adapt seemed to enjoy the convenience of managing health services online instead of having to go back and forth. Additionally, during the COVID-19 pandemic it eliminates the risk of

contracting the disease while visiting the doctor. Conversely, those who were not tech savvy enough felt that they were being excluded and fell behind as digitization progressed.

Due to the high standard of living in Sweden and the access to free health care and assistance, some of the topics in the "Community support and health services" chapter of the WHO guide are not particularly relevant. For example, Sweden is fortunate enough to not be in need of volunteers providing food for the retired population. However, the support from neighbors and the community in general during the COVID-19 pandemic was praised by all participants in this study. They repeatedly mentioned how touched and grateful they were by all the people who voluntarily helped out with errands during the quarantine. Both Lunnatöser and Prennegatan had bulletin boards in the shared spaces with telephone numbers to neighbors who offered to help with groceries, medicine and transportation.

7. Discussion

I would like to begin this chapter of the thesis by exploring what was one of the most surprising results of the interview study. Many cities, or areas within them, are perceived as having certain profiles, cultures or industries closely related to them. For example, Los Angeles evokes images of the iconic Hollywood sign, luxurious houses owned by celebrities and movie production. Berlin, at least among the younger generations, is known for its vibrant nightlife with around-the-clock entertainment and rave parties in abandoned warehouses. In Sweden, Lund is often seen as a quaint little town that is dominated by student life. The Lund carnival, student nations and the annual festivities on "Valborg" during the last days of April are all traditions that suggest that Lund is centered around youth. Due to this, I expected Lund to be a town that had, over time, been designed to suit a person between the ages of 18 and 28. In other words, that housing, shops and activities would be primarily catered to this age group. Additionally, I expected to find some degree of animosity from the elderly towards the population of students. It may be nothing more than a stereotype but it is easy to imagine an elderly person bumping into a group of intoxicated, disorderly students and angrily shaking a fist in their direction. However, the interview study found that this preconceived notion was not true. Instead, the presence of lively student activities were in some cases an integral part of what made Lund a pleasant place to live after retirement. The explanation can be summed up in two different feelings depending on the level of familiarity with Lund. Firstly, there were those who had attended Lund University or grown up in the town. For them, the students served as a constant reminder of their youth and conjured up pleasant memories. As Tuan (1974, p. 99) states regarding topophilia - the love of place, "Familiarity breeds affection when it does not breed contempt". The appreciation of Lund's student culture in this group of participants is a clear example of the strong topophilia which stems from familiarity and attachment. Those who had not studied or grown up in Lund appreciated the students for less personal reasons. The perceived "intellectual atmosphere" present in Lund being one of them. Related to this was the local patriotism expressed when talking about Lund as a university town. Those who had moved

to Lund later in life still felt a sense of pride to live in a town associated with higher education, research and achievement.

The results of this interview study can be reviewed through the lens of the press-competence model from the ecological theory of ageing, discussed in 3.3. As mentioned in the analysis, all of the participants, even those between the ages of 85-93 claimed that they made efforts to remain as physically and mentally active as possible. For the oldest individuals in the sample group, the widespread bicycle traffic and uneven ground arguably presented the most environmental press in Lund. This led to what (Lawton 1986, p. 13) called "maladaptive behavior" since these two obstacles resulted in a reluctance to visit the city center and outright avoidance of certain areas with uneven paths and cobblestone. Some of the participants did not experience significant difficulties with the physical environment in Lund. However, the bicycle issue seemed to create some degree of detrimental environmental press for every single participant. The lack of bicycle lanes and the people erratically crossing side-walks and other inappropriate paths on their bicycles created a real sense of fear among the elderly. When the topic of future changes in Lund came up in the interviews, fixing this problem was unequivocally the most popular suggestion.

The overall personal competence in the sample group, referring to matters such as cognitive and physical health, can be interpreted as quite high. Going out for walks was an important part of every participant's life and no assistance was needed beyond the usual walker or cane. However, as discussed earlier, personal competence is also influenced by less tangible aspects like social life and confidence. In this regard, the participants were all fortunate. Though some were widows or widowers, none of them seemed to suffer from the loneliness that is widespread among the elderly. The fact that the participants were socially active, some in close contact with family members and others a part of a friend circle, could be one of the explanations for the seemingly high level of personal competence. Social contact is undoubtedly beneficial for maintaining cognitive ability and mental health. The participants all spoke enthusiastically and lovingly about their friends and the types of activities they enjoyed together. This was further emphasized when talking about the effects of COVID-19 and how the most difficult thing to cope with was the social isolation. Here, it is necessary to again address the possibility of a skew in the sample group which was discussed in the delimitations section. Participation in the study relied on those who decided to reply to the invitation as well as snowball sampling. Consequently, the high level of social participation in the sample group may be partly explained by the fact that they are more likely to be willing to partake in the study.

The idea of designing and changing cities to make them more age-friendly, as in the WHO's guide, presents a dilemma which could be noticed in the interviews. Projects like replacing cobblestone with concrete or installing escalators and elevators can definitely be beneficial for elderly people with limited physical capabilities. However, there is often a trade off between convenience and familiarity taking place in this process. Removing cobblestone and replacing it with concrete makes it more comfortable to walk physically but perhaps not psychologically as the sense of topophilia is decreased. If the elderly could decide, it appears as

though they would rather preserve the old. In the conversations about the proposed construction of "Galten", the general opinion was that the new opportunities for shopping and housing were definitely not worth the cost of tearing down the old buildings that are there. It did not appear as any of the participants had any personal connection to this area, yet the idea of modernizing Lund in terms of architecture was often rejected almost reflexively. This could simply be due to the fact that elderly have spent more time in Lund and thus formed stronger emotional bonds with the space or that one is less keen on changes with age. Though, to some degree, there may be a deeper psychological connection. As one reaches old age, friends may pass away and the ability to engage in certain activities decreases. Add to this a drastic change in physical space, like a very modern apartment complex where the houses you grew up nearby once were, one could imagine that this creates a feeling of the world moving on without you and that you are being replaced. Based on the interviews conducted, I believe that changes in architecture and public places to make them age-friendly, though well intended, often overlook the emotional bonds and nostalgic effects that exist. Put differently, somewhat improving walkability in a public square is seldom worth the change in aesthetic in the minds of the elderly.

There seems to be some ability for the elderly to influence and affect changes in Lund. Much of the civic participation discussed in the interviews concerned efforts to stop or minimize new construction that could be detrimental to Lund's profile. Organizations like "Gamla Lund" that have a say in how the city evolves may be an important factor in making the elderly feel like their voices are heard and that they matter. Being able to be a part of change instead of just seeing it happen outside your window could decrease the feeling of exclusion and alienation that some elderly individuals feel when society is progressing. In closing, I believe that the harmony which seems to exist between different age groups in Lund provides ample opportunities for further action to improve the lives of the elderly. A major obstacle in the way of progress can sometimes be the polarization between groups with different interests. From speaking with the participants in this study, it appears as though they see themselves as included in Lund and not in opposition to another group like the students.

8. Conclusion

This qualitative study has examined the experiences and opinions of the elderly in Lund, primarily related to physical space but also emotions and feelings that are inextricably linked to this. 12 semi-structured interviews were conducted with individuals aged between 67 and 93. Due to the current COVID-19 pandemic, the initial invitations to participate in the study were sent out in envelopes. After establishing contact with the first participants, the snowballing method was used to expand the sample group. The interviews were analyzed using the framework of the World Health Organization's 2007 guide for age-friendly cities. Additionally, M.P. Lawton's theory of ecological ageing and Yi-Fu Tuan's humanistic geography and concept of topophilia served as theoretical frameworks together with the WHO guide. This paper has tried to broaden the concept of age-friendly cities by focusing on the lived experiences of the elderly in contrast to much of the available research which often lacks the personal dimension. The results of this study suggests that the dominance of students in Lund has a positive impact on the elderly rather than causing conflict. Furthermore, plans to change the physical environment to better accommodate the elderly must carefully consider the emotional relation that many have with the spaces. Overall, the participants expressed skepticism toward renovating or changing the architecture of Lund with the exception of actions that could decrease bicycle traffic in central areas.

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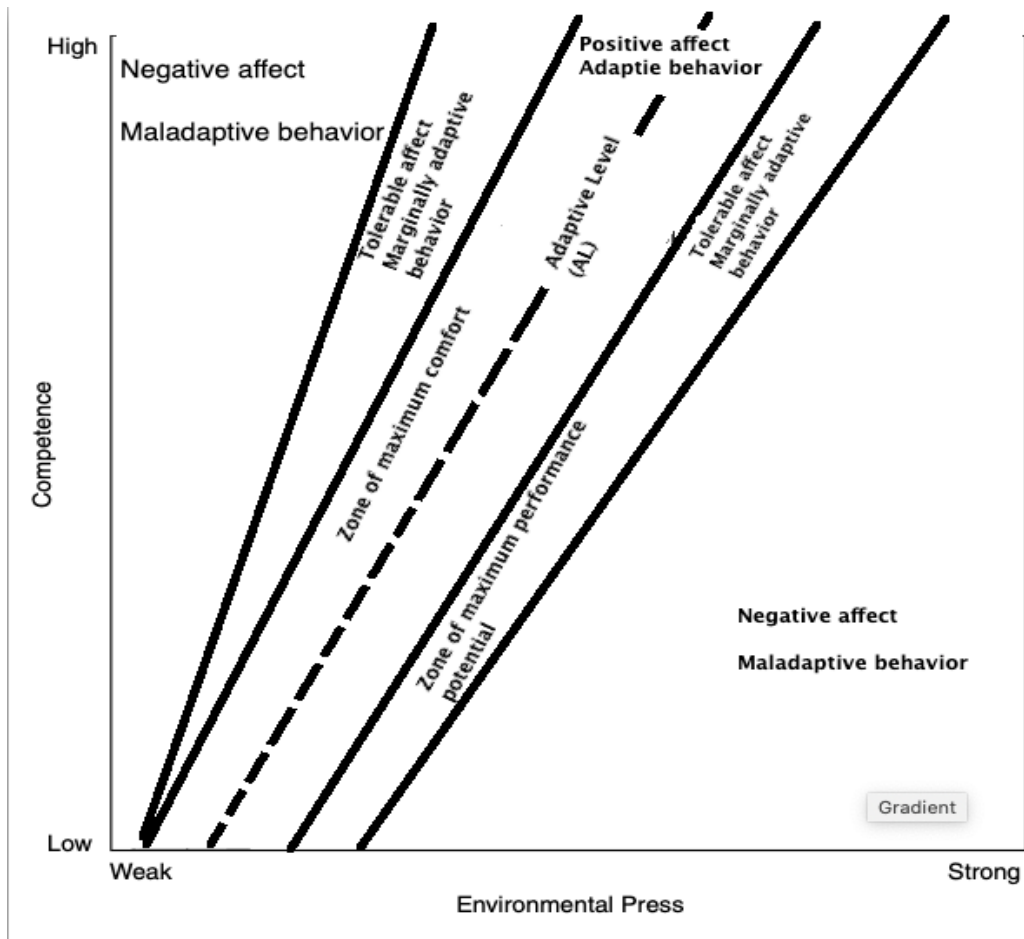WHO (2007). *Global Age-friendly Cities: A Guide.* WHO Press, Geneva. Available at: https://www.who.int/ageing/publications/Global_age_friendly_cities_Guide_English.pdf (Viewed 2020-11-15)

Appendix I
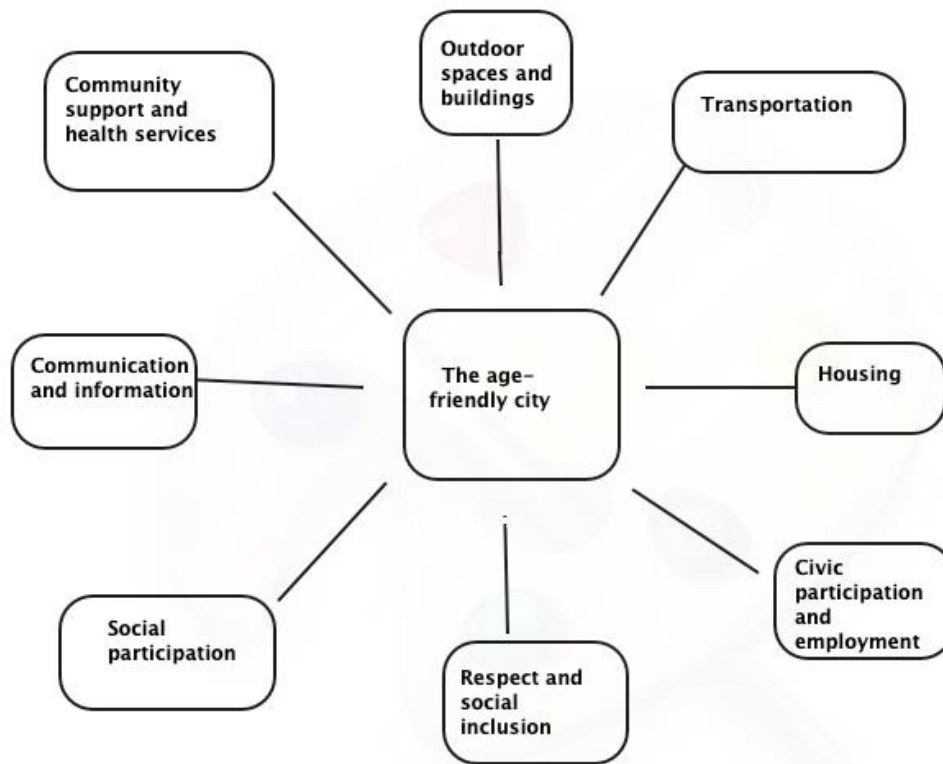
World Health Organization's model for age-friendly cities (after WHO (2007)

Appendix II

M. Powell Lawton's Competence-Press Model (after Lawton (1982)

Appendix III

Intervjuguide

Denna intervju sker som en del av min kandidatuppsats inom samhällsgeografi och ämnar att undersöka hur stadsmiljön i Lund upplevs av personer över 65 år. För att denna studie ska kunna förbli relevant i framtiden är jag intresserad av dina upplevelser och åsikter om staden *innan* COVID-19 och den medförda isoleringen.

Detta samtal kommer att spelas in av mig för att transkriberas och analyseras. Du kommer vara anonym och ditt namn kommer inte att publiceras någonstans. Efter att jag har analyserat de utförda intervjuerna kommer ljudinspelningen att raderas. Om du under eller efter intervjun ändrar dig gällande din medverkan kan du meddela mig så avbryter vi och materialet används inte. Om det är någon enskild du fråga du inte känner dig bekväm med att besvara så kan vi stå över den. Är detta okej med dig?

I de avslutande kapitlen av uppsatsen kan jag komma att använda mig av citat från intervjuer, dessa kommer inte att inkludera namn eller uppgifter som kan identifiera vem som uttalat sig. Är du okej med att låta mig citera dig, anonymt?

Namn, ålder, yrke

Hur länge har du bott i Lund?

Hur skulle du beskriva din nuvarande hälsa? Krämpor, sjukdom.

Vistas du ofta utomhus i staden? Centrum, parker, vägar.

Hur ser en vanlig dag ut för dig?

Vilka vägar brukar du oftast gå i Lund?

Är några av stadens centrala områden jobbiga att röra sig kring?

Vilka typer av fysiska hinder har du stött på i Lund?

Hur är tillgängligheten till affärer, sjukvård och annan handel, för dig?

Känner du dig trygg när du går ut?

Har du tänkt på någon/några platser i centrala Lund som kan göras bättre?

Finns det några platser i Lund som betyder extra mycket för dig?

Hur skulle du säga att Lund är jämfört med andra städer när det gäller att röra sig?

Vilken typ av transport brukar du använda och hur fungerar denna för dig? (Cyklar, kör bil, buss exempel)

Hur är din boendesituation?

Känner du dig inkluderad i staden? (Socialt, utbud, aktiviteter)

Hur tycker du att stadens kommunikation är? (Rekommendationer, varningar, information)

Hur hade din vardag i Lund kunnat förenklas/förbättras?

Appendix IV

Inbjudan
Hej!

Jag heter Christoffer Bodforss och bor på Kastanjegatan här i närheten. Just nu skriver jag en kandidatuppsats där jag undersöker hur det är att leva och röra sig i Lund som senior.

Med detta hoppas jag kunna belysa områden som t.ex. vad kommunen skulle kunna förbättra för den äldre delen av befolkningen. Det kan handla om trottoarer, bänkar och övergångsställen men viktigt är även platser som betyder mycket för er personligen och bör bevaras.

För att ta reda på detta skulle jag gärna vilja prata med er om hur ni som är 65 år eller äldre upplever vårt lilla Lund. Om ni är intresserade av att hjälpa mig med denna uppsats får ni väldigt gärna hör av er på något av följande sätt:

Telefon: 070-573 73 07
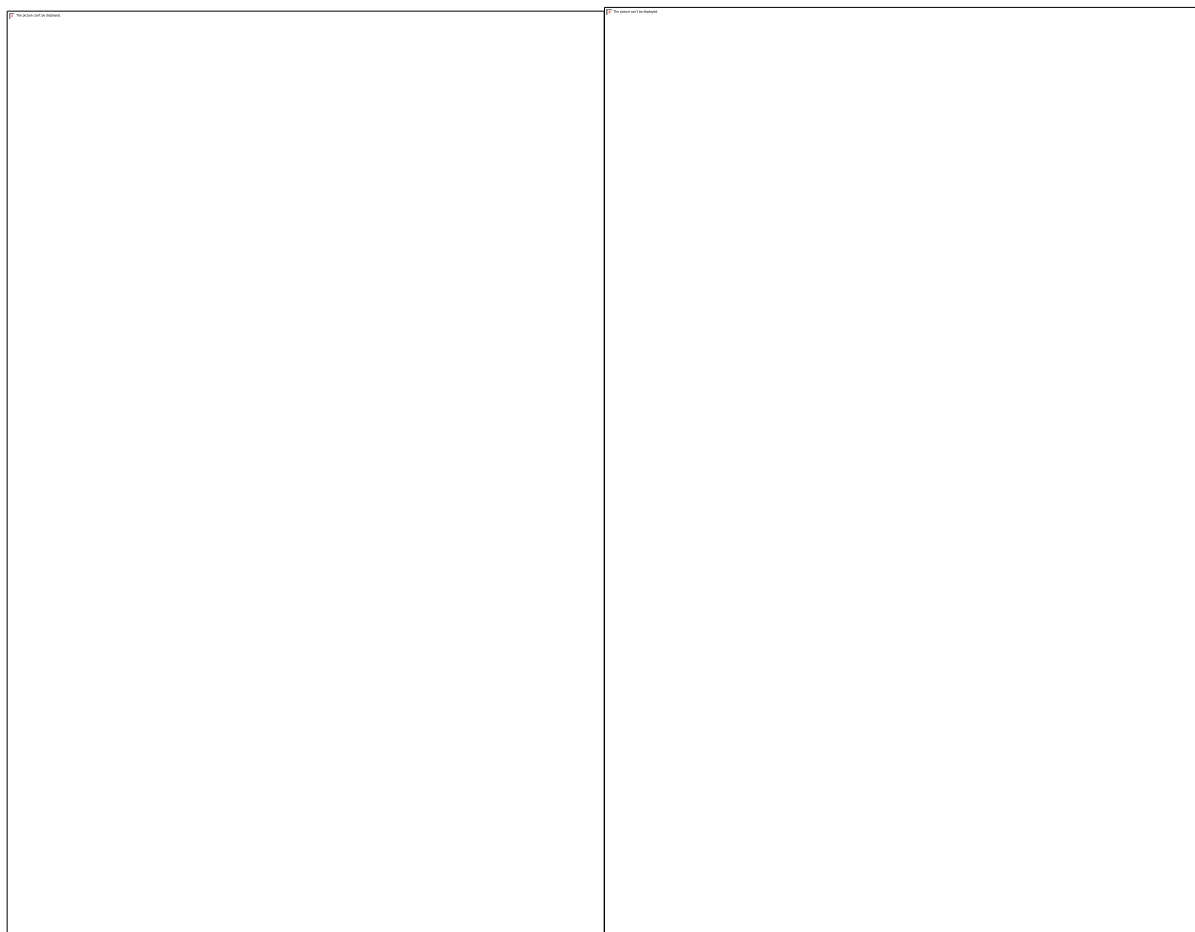Email: christoffer.bodforss@gmail.com

På grund av Covid-19 är det förståeligt om man vill hålla avstånd, det är upp till er om ni vill talas vid per telefon eller i fysiskt möte med några meters avstånd.

Jag kommer inte att ha med några namn eller personuppgifter i undersökningen, ni talar anonymt.
Tack på förhand!

Appendix V

(To the left: The even walking path outside of Lunnatöser. To the right: Cobblestone street on the corner of Mårtenstorget. Elderly woman slowly crosses the street. Pictures taken by Christoffer Bodforss 2020-11-15)