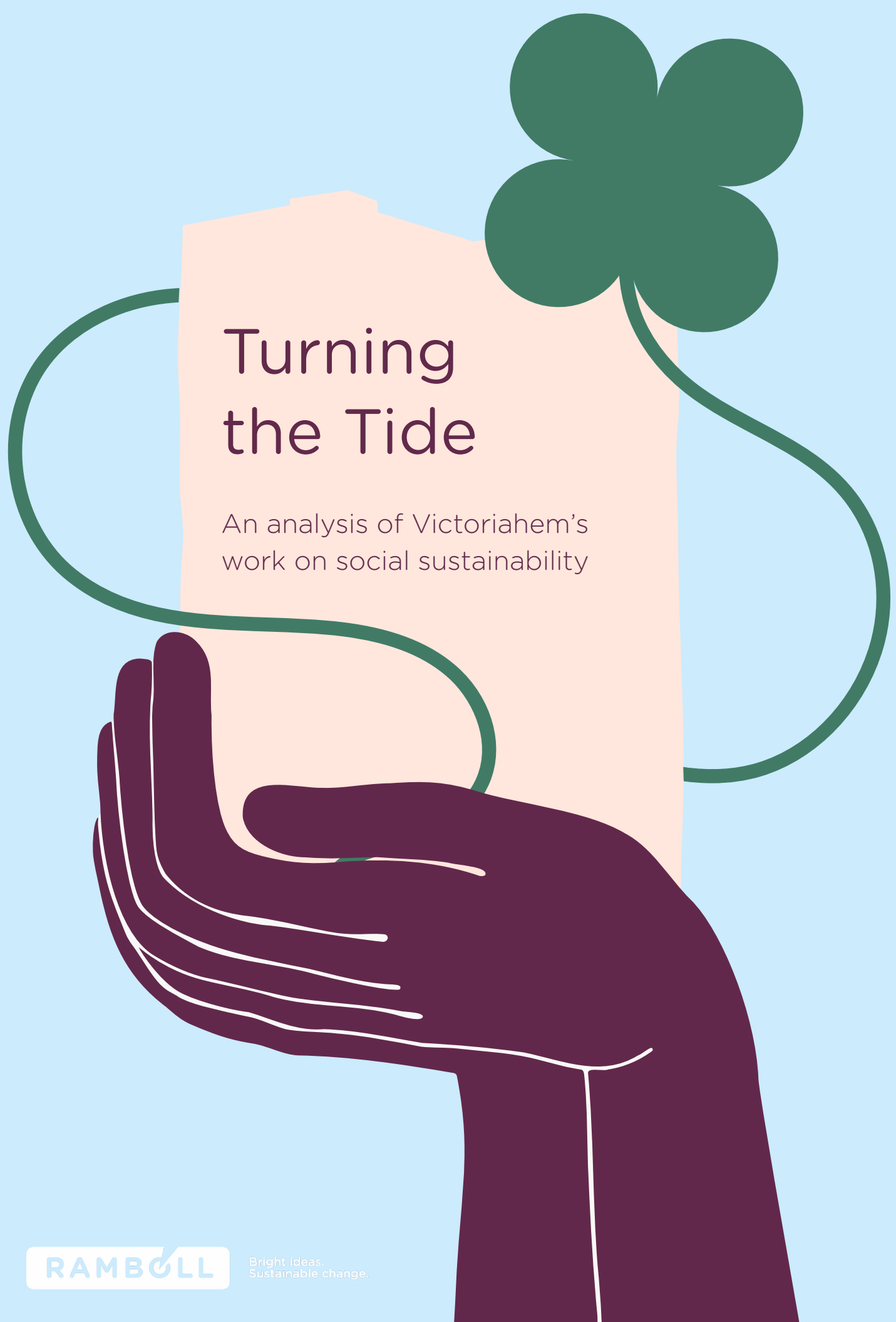


A stylized illustration of a dark purple hand holding a light orange rectangular sign. A green shamrock is positioned at the top right of the sign, with a green line looping around the sign and hand. The background is a solid light blue.

Turning the Tide

An analysis of Victoriahem's
work on social sustainability

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Summary

Ramboll Management Consulting and Infostat have analyzed Victoriahem's work on social sustainability and neighborhood development over the five-year period 2018–2022.

The study shows that Victoriahem has achieved considerable positive development across its property portfolio, particularly in areas with major socioeconomic challenges. According to the analysis, eight out of ten areas in Victoriahem's portfolio have developed positively on key socioeconomic indicators. Improvements are most evident in the labor market and safety, while several challenges related to democracy and participation remain.

Victoriahem's "particularly deprived areas" show stronger development than comparable neighborhoods in Sweden. This is especially true for indicators linked to the labor market and household finances. One such area is Herrgårdén in Malmö, a particularly successful example with the most extensive positive change in the entire portfolio. Although the area still grapples with significant socioeconomic challenges, the development has been remarkable: the share of employed persons has risen from 32% to 49%, the share of households on social assistance has fallen from 33% to 20%, the number of shootings has more than halved, and eligibility for upper secondary school has risen by nearly ten percentage points. The migration-pattern analysis also shows that the area has become more attractive, with an improved balance between employed persons moving in and moving out. Achieving such a change requires coordinated efforts from several societal actors that together create the conditions for positive change, with Victoriahem being one of several important actors.

The study identifies several key factors behind these successes: long-term commitment rather than time-limited, one-off measures; a combination of hands-on management, physical investment, and social initiatives; local

presence through staff with roots in the area; active collaboration with other local actors; and a well-considered letting policy that, over time, shapes the area's socioeconomic composition.

The analysis combines quantitative and qualitative methods, covering some thirty socioeconomic indicators across six areas for all 109 analysis areas (2018–2022), using statistical twin areas, interviews, and a societal economic analysis.

A successful initiative and a central part of Victoriahem's social sustainability work is the Environmental Caretaker Program, which offers fixed-term employment to people who are far from the labor market. The program has produced good results – just over half of participants move on to work or studies after the program ends, generating an annual societal economic value of around SEK 28.5 million. Beyond that, the Environmental Caretakers contribute to greater safety and pride in the neighborhoods concerned.

Despite the documented progress, the report points to continued challenges, above all regarding democracy and participation, where voter turnout has declined. Taken together, the analysis shows that property companies can play a meaningful role in turning around negative trends in socioeconomically deprived areas through persistent, well-planned initiatives.



1 Introduction

Many of Sweden's Million Programme neighborhoods are characterized by a diversity of tenants with varying social and economic conditions from around the world, creating multicultural and lively environments. At the same time, these areas face major societal challenges, with segregation, high unemployment, low education levels, low voter turnout, and insecurity as recurring themes. As the challenges have grown more complex and segregation has increased, it has become clear that more actors need to take greater responsibility for contributing to positive development, especially in these areas.

Property owners – and not least managers – who meet people every day in their living environment have a unique opportunity to be a positive force in societal development. It is not only about managing the physical buildings, but also about helping to create stable, attractive neighborhoods where people thrive and feel safe and hopeful about the future. Especially in socioeconomically deprived areas, where public resources are not always sufficient, property companies can play a decisive, value-creating role – by building local relationships, contributing engagement and an everyday presence, and initiating measures that strengthen individuals as well as community and cohesion.

Victoriahem has a strong focus on contributing to social sustainability and the positive development of the great potential in the Million Programme's neighborhoods. With social-engagement work, Victoriahem works to create safe areas where tenants thrive. The work is carried out close to tenants and is characterized by a long-term perspective, with the aim of achieving more attractive neighborhoods, reducing socioeconomic deprivation, and contributing to greater safety, participation, employment, and hope for the future. In the longer term, Victoriahem's ambition is for its work to have contributed to fewer areas being assessed as having major socioeconomic challenges according to Boverket's (the Swedish National Board of Housing, Building and Planning) Segregation Barometer, and to several areas having been removed from, or moved down a level on, the Police's list of deprived areas. Ultimately, the work should lead to more people wanting to live in Victoriahem's housing. For Victoriahem, this is not just a societal contribution, but a natural part of the business strategy.

Ramboll Management Consulting and Infostat have, on behalf of Victoriahem, analyzed Victoriahem's work on social sustainability and neighborhood development across Victoriahem's portfolio over time. Focusing on indicators that describe the social context, the development between 2018 and 2022 has been studied across Victoriahem's entire property portfolio. The analysis was carried out at a geographic level that reflects the actual living environment from the tenants' perspective. A central part of the method is the comparative approach. By identifying statistical twin areas, a unique model has been developed to assess how the development areas where Victoriahem owns property compares with equivalent comparison areas. This makes it possible to analyze more closely the extent to which the

social-engagement work may have influenced the change.

The report further deepens the understanding of what may have driven the development, with a qualitative analysis of Victoriahem's social initiatives based on interviews with staff. Particular focus is placed on the Environmental Caretaker Program, which is used widely across the portfolio and has proven to have great positive significance for people who are far from the labor market.

The study provides new knowledge and creates a basis for continued dialogue on how property owners can contribute to greater social sustainability in deprived neighborhoods.

1.1 Property companies' sphere of influence in social sustainability

Property companies play a central role in the development of neighborhoods and have the ability to significantly influence the physical and social environment. Through management, safety-enhancing measures, and social initiatives, they can help improve residents' quality of life. At the same time, it is important to understand the limits of their influence, since the socio-economic development of a neighborhood depends on a range of factors, many of which lie outside an individual property owner's responsibility and influence.

Property companies have influence above all over the physical environment in their neighborhoods. By upgrading properties, improving lighting, and creating safe shared outdoor spaces and stairwells, they can have a direct impact on the perceived and actual safety in the area.¹

Beyond physical management, property companies can also influence the social dynamics in their areas. By employing residents, creating opportunities for resident influence, and collaborating with civil society, they can help strengthen social cohesion and create a sense of participation and responsibility among residents.

But despite property companies' ability to influence social sustainability in their neighborhoods, there are significant structural limits to their influence. A neighborhood's socioeconomic development is shaped by broader societal changes, where factors such as the labor market, the education system, and demographic trends are decisive. These factors are influenced by various actors' actions, political decisions, and societal processes; property companies can certainly have a direct impact in some respects but, to a larger extent, play an indirect role.

¹Zeng E, Dong Y, Yan L, Lin A. Perceived Safety in the Neighborhood: Exploring the Role of Built Environment, Social Factors, Physical Activity and Multiple Pathways of Influence. Buildings. 2023; 13(1):2.

Employment and self-sufficiency – important for stable areas

The employment rate in a neighborhood is one of the most decisive factors for its development. Areas where a large share of residents have stable jobs tend to be characterized by lower economic deprivation, greater safety, and a greater willingness to invest from both public and private actors. Conversely, high unemployment can lead to increased economic pressure, social unrest, and a negative spiral of segregation and exclusion.

The labor market is influenced by forces at both the national and global level, such as economic fluctuations and prevailing labor-market policy, but also by structural changes in the economy that alter the skill requirements for establishing oneself in the labor market. A property company has limited ability to influence these macroeconomic trends, but it can nonetheless, through determined initiatives, help improve residents' opportunities to find work, for example by:

- **Offer jobs and summer work in property management**, such as grounds upkeep or stairwell cleaning.
- **Create work placements and apprenticeship programs** in collaboration with companies operating in the area.
- **Social clauses in procurement** of contractors – for example, by requiring that trainee positions be offered in connection with upgrades or renovation in an area.

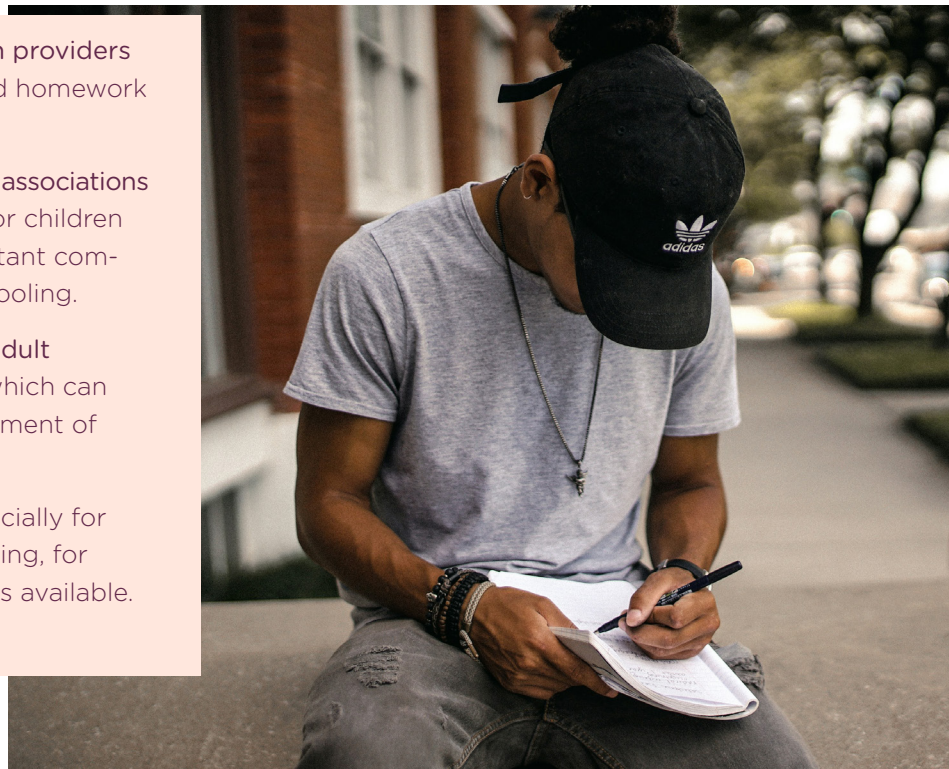
These initiatives can help more residents gain work experience and thereby increase their chances of establishing themselves in the labor market.

Schooling and education – a long-term and decisive factor

The quality of schools and the educational opportunities available to residents in an area are directly decisive for the area's development and future. A neighborhood where children and young people have access to high-quality education often sees positive development over time, since an educated population has greater opportunities to find stable jobs and contribute to the area's social and economic dynamics. This assumes, however, that those who grow up in the area also choose to stay, even after entering the labor market, for example.

The education system is influenced by national school policy and municipal resource allocation, which do not always compensate for or enable the same conditions for schools in socioeconomically deprived areas.² In addition, the family's social and economic conditions play an important role; research shows that students from economically deprived households often have poorer conditions for succeeding in school, which makes the school's compensatory mandate decisive³ A property company cannot change school policy or resource allocation, but it can still play an important role in improving educational opportunities for residents, for example by:

- **Partner with schools and education providers** to enable mentorship programs and homework support in the neighborhood.
- **Partner with civil-society actors and associations** to enable meaningful leisure time for children and young people, as it is an important compensatory factor for successful schooling.
- **Support and enable initiatives for adult education and language courses**, which can strengthen the labor-market attachment of adult residents in the area.
- **Make room for focused study**, especially for children living in overcrowded housing, for example by making shared premises available.



By contributing to improved educational opportunities, property companies can influence residents' conditions here and now, as well as the area's development in the long term.

²See, for example, Skolverket (2020)

³ See, for example, Okuyama, K., Larsson Lönn, S., Khoshnood, A. M. & Sundquist, J. (2025). The study shows that parents' level of education, family income, and the neighborhood's socioeconomic status are strongly associated with school results

Attractive neighborhoods that create opportunities for everyone

A central question in social sustainability is how an area can be improved without leading to the original residents being replaced by a new socioeconomic group. One risk with investing in deprived neighborhoods is that the improvements contribute to gentrification, where rising rents and a changed population composition cause higher-income households to move in while economically weak households are forced out.

Another unintended side effect of initiatives that support individuals in deprived areas is that those who improve their life situation actively choose to move away. This phenomenon is usually called the Success Paradox (Sw. lyckoparadoxen). Even though the initiatives succeed at the individual level – for example, by getting people into work or education – the result at the area level can be that the most resourceful households leave the area. The area's overall deprivation then risks remaining or even deepening.⁴

To avoid this effect, property companies should focus on inclusive development, where existing tenants are given the opportunity to share in the area's improvements while strengthening their own socioeconomic situation. Examples of strategies for this include:

- **Careful renovations** that limit rent increases and allow residents to be involved in decisions about the scope of the improvements made in their own apartment, making it possible to stay.
- **Promote a diversified housing structure** by offering a mix of rent levels and apartment sizes so that more household groups have the opportunity to live in the area.
- **Engage residents in the development** of the neighborhood, by involving them in decisions about upgrades and social initiatives that meet their needs, which at the same time strengthens the area's sense of community and safety.

These initiatives can help create positive neighborhood development that reinforces the diversification of the area's housing structure and includes the households already living there, while also making the area more attractive. In this way, property companies can play an active role in improving living conditions for their tenants, both existing and new.

⁴See, for example, Alm Fjellborg, A. (2021), and Grander, M. et al. (2021). Both studies show that individuals with higher incomes more often leave deprived areas, while households with lower incomes tend to remain. This means that even when individuals improve their situation, the area's overall deprivation risks persisting or deepening – a pattern often described as the Success Paradox

Safety and crime – the greatest challenge of our time

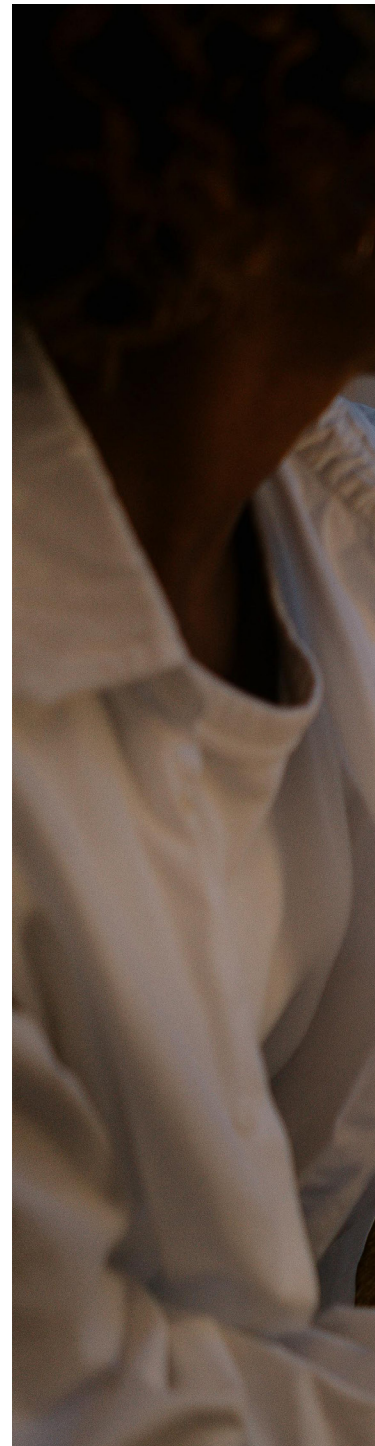
A sense of security is a fundamental precondition for a neighborhood's social sustainability. When people feel safe in their living environment, their willingness to spend time outdoors, take part in shared activities, and take responsibility for their neighborhood increases.

Safety also affects how the area is perceived by the outside world. An area often associated with crime and unrest risks gaining a poor reputation, which in turn affects in-migration, investment, and the ability to attract businesses. At the same time, the stigma can become self-reinforcing and cement social problems over time.

Although a property company cannot solve crime itself, there are great opportunities to influence residents' perceived safety in everyday life. Through targeted initiatives, the risk of insecurity can be reduced and trust strengthened, while the general image of the area improves. Examples of initiatives a property company can carry out:

- **On-site staff in the area** who build relationships with residents and strengthen social presence and safety.
- **Physical improvements to outdoor spaces**, such as good lighting, trimmed shrubbery, and well-kept courtyards, reduce the risk of crime and signal that the area is cared for.
- **A prompt, visible response to incidents**, such as vandalism or emergency-service callouts, showing that the property company takes responsibility and cares.
- **Collaboration with other actors**, such as local associations, youth centers, or social services, creating the conditions for early intervention.
- **Swift restoration after sabotage, damage, or littering**, to prevent insecurity and a sense of vulnerability from taking hold.

This type of safety-enhancing work is rarely the solution in itself, but it is often an important precondition for other positive development to take hold.





1.2 How the study was conducted

To answer the question of whether Victoriahem's social sustainability work functions in practice, the study was carried out with an extensive methodological approach combining quantitative and qualitative analysis. Through several different analytical methods, a solid basis is created for understanding both the development in Victoriahem's neighborhoods and the factors that contributed to this development.

1.2.1 Quantitative analysis

Geographic delimitation and analysis areas

The study's quantitative analysis is based on a geographic analysis model developed specifically to reflect the actual living environment from the tenants' perspective. Through GIS analysis, Victoriahem's 402 properties have been divided into 109 distinct analysis areas, where properties located within a 3-minute walk of one another have been grouped into the same area. This approach takes local geographic conditions into account rather than administrative boundaries and gives a nuanced picture of the entire portfolio, from smaller point initiatives to larger contiguous neighborhoods.

Indicator selection and data sources

To obtain a comprehensive picture of the areas' socioeconomic development, the analysis covers indicators within six main areas:

Within the labor market, indicators studied include the employment rate⁵, the share of employed persons⁶, and young people not in employment, education or training. For household finances, the analysis covers, among other things, the share on social assistance, housing allowance, and low economic standard (Statistics Sweden's measure of relative poverty). For schooling and education, eligibility for upper secondary school, post-secondary education, and children enrolled in preschool are examined.

Housing includes indicators such as overcrowding and forms of tenure, while democracy and participation covers voter turnout in municipal and general elections, as well as passenger cars per household. Finally, safety and crime is analyzed through reported crimes, shootings, and emergency-service callouts.

The analysis is based exclusively on public statistics from Statistics Sweden, the Swedish Election Authority, the Swedish Police Authority, the Swedish National Council for Crime Prevention, and Boverket's Segregation Barometer. This ensures both data quality and the ability to make systematic

⁵ Employment rate (sysselsättningsgrad): share of the working-age population in work, from the Labour Force Survey.

⁶ Share of employed persons (förvärvsarbetande): Statistics Sweden's register-based count of people classified as gainfully employed.

comparisons over time and between different geographic areas. The period 2018–2022 was chosen as the most recent five-year period for which comprehensive data is available from all statistics providers.

Comparative approach

The comparative approach forms the heart of the analytical method and makes it possible to understand the development in areas where Victoriahem owns property in relation to other equivalent neighborhoods. Without this comparison, it would be difficult to assess whether an observed change is strong or weak, typical or atypical for areas with similar conditions.

The comparison is made on several levels. First, the variation within Victoriahem's own portfolio is analyzed to identify which areas have developed most strongly. Then the development is compared with other areas that have similar socioeconomic conditions according to two established classifications.

Boverket's Segregation Barometer divides neighborhoods in Sweden into five area types based on socioeconomic factors such as low economic standard, education level, and long-term benefit dependency. Area type 1 comprises areas with major socioeconomic challenges, area type 2 areas with socioeconomic challenges, while area types 3–5 represent areas with mixed or strong socioeconomic conditions. This classification is often used to track development in the country's most deprived neighborhoods.

The Swedish Police Authority's classification is based on both socioeconomic factors and local assessments of crime and safety. Particularly deprived areas are characterized by social problems and a criminal presence that have led to a widespread reluctance to take part in legal proceedings and difficulties for the police to carry out their work – the situation is considered acute. Deprived areas have socioeconomic challenges where criminal structures have a certain influence, while risk areas are areas at risk of developing into deprived areas.

Twin-area analysis

As a particular methodological contribution, statistical twin areas have been identified for the highest-priority area. By measuring the statistical similarity between the analysis area and all other DeSO (demographic statistical areas – Statistics Sweden's small-area units) areas in Sweden – about 6,000 areas – the most equivalent comparison areas have been identified. The similarity is based on six key variables from 2017: share with a foreign background, unemployment, eligibility for upper secondary school, share of young people not in employment, education or training, share with low economic standard, and share of rental apartments.

This method makes it possible to isolate the effect of local initiatives by comparing the development with areas that had an identical starting point but were managed by other actors. In this way, conclusions can be drawn

about whether the development in areas where Victoriahem owns property deviates from what would be expected given the areas' conditions.

1.2.2 Qualitative analysis of social initiatives

Interviews and document studies

The quantitative analysis shows what has happened, but to understand why and how, a qualitative analysis of Victoriahem's social initiatives was carried out. This is based on in-depth interviews with staff at Victoriahem, including the CEO, area managers, and other key people who work closely with residents. The interviews focused on understanding how different initiatives are carried out in practice, what results have been achieved, and how staff perceive the effects of the work.

In parallel, an analysis was carried out of Victoriahem's description of its work and earlier studies, in order to understand the organization's formal approach to social sustainability. Through this combination of interviews and document studies, a deeper understanding emerges of how the social-engagement work is conducted and what results have been achieved according to both formal guidelines and practical experience.

Theory of change and impact logic

To systematically analyze Victoriahem's social initiatives, a theory of change was developed, specifically for the Environmental Caretaker Program. This spells out what the program is expected to lead to in the short and long term – from direct activities to long-term societal effects. A theory of change serves as a tool for both follow-up and analysis of the program's effects and creates structure for understanding the causal relationships the program is built on.

1.2.3 Societal economic analysis

To quantify the societal economic effects of the Environmental Caretaker Program, an extensive economic analysis was carried out using Ramboll's calculation model for labor-market initiatives. The model was developed within the framework of earlier research and development projects and calculates both reduced costs and increased revenue when an individual moves from unemployment to work or studies.

The calculations take into account effects for different societal actors – the

state, the municipality, the individual, and the employer – and thereby give an overall picture of the program's societal economic value. The analysis is based on the average number of participants during the period 2022–2024 and includes both the direct effects during the program period and the continued effects for participants who move on to work or studies after completing the program.

1.2.4 Methodological limitations and handling of challenges

The study handled several methodological challenges that are typical of this type of area analysis. Time constraints mean that data for some indicators is available only for parts of the measurement period, especially crime data at the block level. The geographic matching between Victoriahem's properties and official statistical areas is not always perfect, which requires methodological adjustments through weighted distributions.

The most central challenge is the question of causality. Although the analysis can demonstrate correlation between Victoriahem's initiatives and neighborhood development, it is difficult to isolate causal relationships, since many factors affect an area's development at the same time. Macroeconomic changes, municipal initiatives, other property owners' initiatives, and demographic trends all play a part.

These challenges were handled through methodological transparency, the use of several different analytical methods to strengthen the validity of the conclusions, and caution in interpreting the results. Above all, the comparative approach and the use of statistical twin areas create strong conditions for understanding Victoriahem's specific contribution to the positive development that is identified. When areas with identical conditions develop differently, conclusions can be drawn about the importance of local initiatives and management models.



The trick is to hold out over the long term. These areas are project-weary. What matters is that people recognize things – that they know who works there and how it works. It's less about trying new things and more about keeping it whole, clean, and tidy. Let time do the work.

– CEO, Victoriahem

2 Victoriahem's work on social sustainability

For Victoriahem, social sustainability is closely tied to the business. The focus is on neighborhoods that are often characterized by socioeconomic challenges but also hold great potential.

Through a hands-on approach and close contact with residents, Victoriahem works to develop neighborhoods where people feel trust and community. The long-term goal is to help fewer areas be classified as deprived or particularly deprived, and to create safe, lively environments where tenants thrive and choose to stay. This creates more secure rental income, reduced turnover, and stronger value in the properties.⁷

Over the years, Victoriahem has implemented a number of different social initiatives, adapted to each area's needs. Among the most common are:

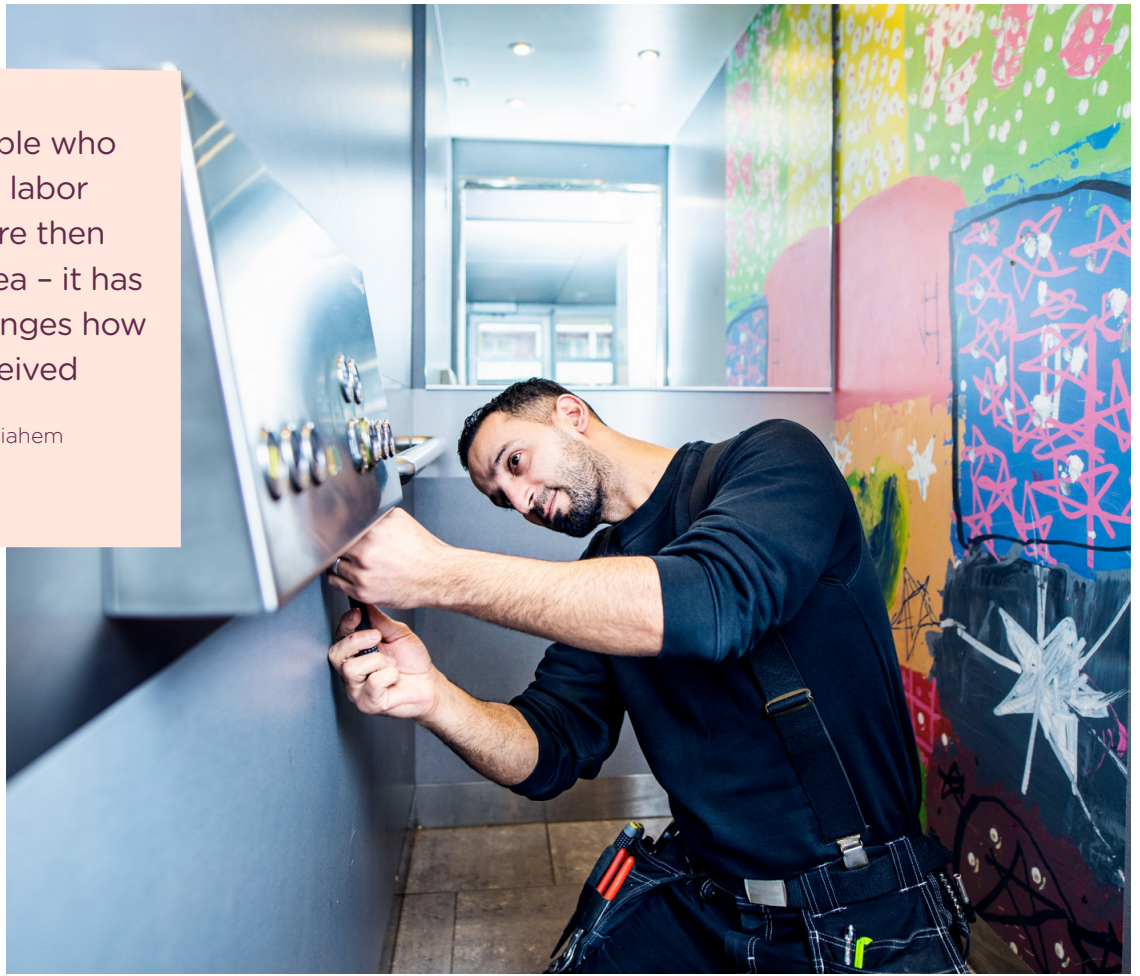
- **Support for recreation and culture:** In many areas, Victoriahem supports local community life, including through partnerships with sports clubs, women's associations, youth projects, and summer activities. In some cases, premises are also made available for community use.
- **Collaboration with municipalities, schools, and community organizations:** In several areas, Victoriahem has agreements or arrangements with municipalities, takes part in safety walks, and works with the police and youth centers, or participates in BID (Business Improvement District – a local area-development partnership) collaborations.
- **Safety-enhancing measures:** Victoriahem works actively on physical measures to increase wellbeing and safety, such as upgraded playgrounds, improved lighting, camera surveillance, and renovated entrances and courtyards.
- **Job-creating activities and summer jobs:** Through partnerships and its own initiatives, Victoriahem creates summer jobs for young people and Entry Jobs (a subsidized entry-level job for people far from the labor market) for adults, contributing to increased employment and better conditions for growing up.

Beyond its direct management initiatives, Victoriahem also influences its contractors to take social responsibility through social clauses in procurement. By requiring suppliers to take part in the social-engagement work – for example, by employing former Environmental Caretakers – Victoriahem helps create long-term employment for residents and ensures that companies operating in the neighborhoods contribute to the area's development.

⁷Victoriahem, Social engagement work, www.victoriahem.se/om-oss/hallbart-foretagsagande/bosocialt-arbete/

Employing people who are far from the labor market – who are then visible in the area – it has an effect! It changes how the area is perceived

– Area Manager, Victoriagem



2.1 The Environmental Caretaker Program – one of Victoriagem's most established social initiatives

One of Victoriagem's most established social initiatives is the Environmental Caretaker Program, offered in just under half of Victoriagem's neighbourhoods. The program has existed in the business for over a decade and has become a concrete expression of Victoriagem's ambition to contribute to both wellbeing and opportunity in its neighborhoods. The aim is twofold:

- » to create jobs for residents in the area
- » and to improve the upkeep of the properties through greater presence and local roots.

The program targets people who are far from the labor market and offers a way into working life. Participants begin the program with four weeks of work placement, where they are introduced to the tasks and receive guidance. They are then offered a fixed-term position for one year, which can be extended to 18 months, as Environmental Caretakers within Victoriagem's portfolio. The goal is for participants, after the program, to be

equipped for employment with a contractor, continued work within Victoriahem, or to take the step into education.

The work ranges from clearing basements, cleaning recycling rooms, collecting bulky waste, and sorting waste to tidying the outdoor environment and being in contact with tenants. It is about creating clean, safe, and pleasant environments, while the Environmental Caretakers gain work experience, references, and vocational skills.

An important success factor for the program is that the Environmental Caretakers are recruited primarily from their own neighborhood. This means they often already have a relationship with both the properties and their neighbors, which creates the conditions to further strengthen the relationships between residents and Victoriahem in the role of Environmental Caretaker. Through their local presence, the Environmental Caretakers become a natural part of everyday life in the area, which also contributes to greater safety.

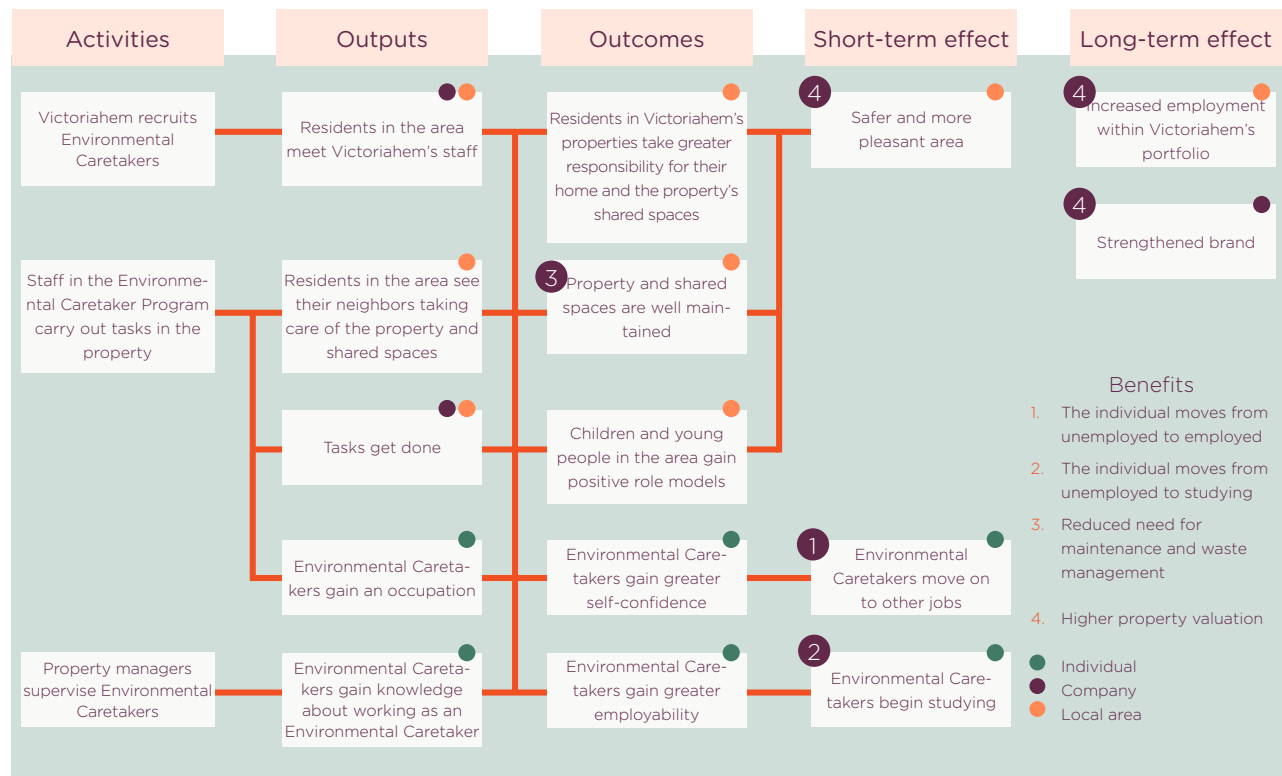
To create long-term effects, Victoriahem also works to connect the Environmental Caretaker Program with the local labor market. A central part of this is the application of social clauses in procurement. This means that the suppliers Victoriahem signs contracts with are encouraged to contribute to the social-engagement work by employing people who have been Environmental Caretakers.

By combining the Environmental Caretaker Program with social clauses, Victoriahem shows how property companies can use their role as procurers to influence social sustainability, not only within their own portfolio but in society at large.

The Environmental Caretaker Program is expected to strengthen both the individual and society

The theory of change in Figure 1 spells out what the Environmental Caretaker Program is expected to lead to, both in the short and long term. The model also serves as a tool for follow-up and learning and clarifies which benefits are assessed as likely to result from successful implementation. The next section describes the results of the Environmental Caretaker Program.

Figure 1: Theory of change for the Environmental Caretaker Program



The Environmental Caretakers gain greater self-confidence and employability

For many of the participants in the Environmental Caretaker Program, the employment has meant a significant change, both professionally and personally. Many of those recruited to the program had previously been far from the labor market, and getting a job with a regular salary, colleagues, and responsibility can be an important piece in building self-confidence and hope for the future. Many of the Environmental Caretakers describe their time in the program as one of the first times they have felt they had a clear role in society.

Many who apply for the role have been unemployed for a long time. Some need more guidance at first. But we see them develop – they become self-reliant and take their own initiative. Their self-confidence grows enormously. The Swedish language can be a challenge, but they practice and take part in meetings.

– Area Manager, Victoriahem

Alongside the professional development, there is also a social dimension. Working as an Environmental Caretaker often means daily contact with both colleagues and residents in the area, creating a context where participants feel needed and included. For some, this means a new social community and a sense of making a difference.

Staff at Victoriahem point out that the strength of the Environmental Caretaker Program lies in its long-term, persistent approach. Over time, the program has proven to deliver clear results, both for participants and for the neighborhoods as a whole. At the same time, the outcome varies for the individual Environmental Caretaker. Factors such as motivation, previous experience, and individual circumstances strongly affect the effect the initiative has for each person.

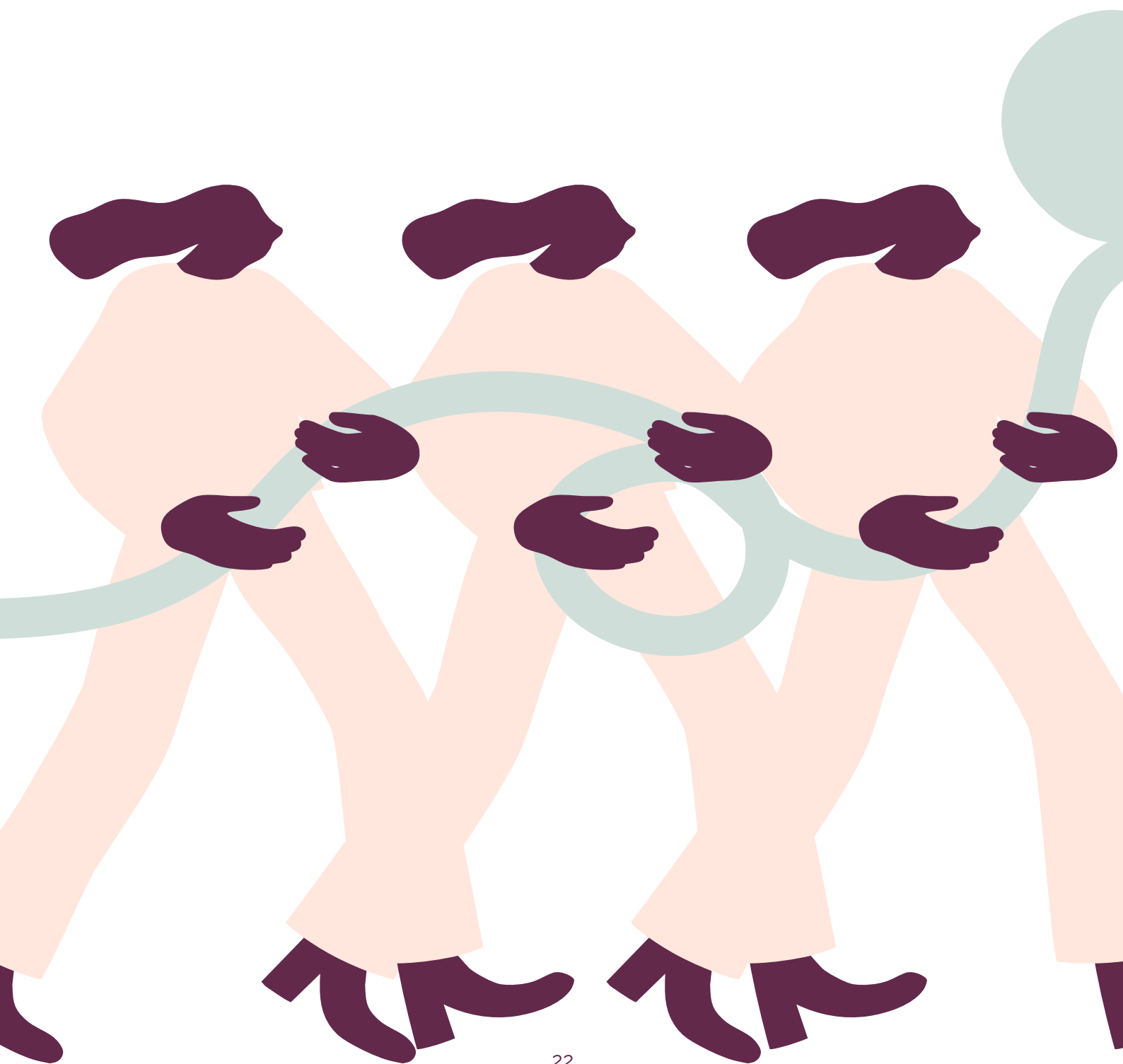
The Environmental Caretakers move on to other jobs or begin studying

A central goal of the Environmental Caretaker Program is for participants to take the step on to work or studies after their participation ends. The program thus functions not only as a temporary job, but as a bridge into the labor market for people who have often been far from employment for a long time.

Since 2013, a total of 294 people have taken part in the Environmental Caretaker Program. Of these, 242 people completed the full program period of up to 18 months, corresponding to 82 percent. In the early years, the target was to employ about 30 new Environmental Caretakers per year. When Victoriahem acquired Hembla, the program was scaled up, and from 2021 the ambition was raised to 60 new Environmental Caretakers annually. The actual number has varied between 20 and 51 depending on resources and local conditions. The program has reached both women and men, but the female participants have been considerably fewer, varying between two and eight per year. In 2018–2022, 120 people took part in the Environmental Caretaker Program, of whom 101 completed the full program period. The share that moved on to work and studies during the years 2018–2022 is 57 percent, of which roughly half gained continued employment with Victoriahem or its subcontractors.

Many have made internal journeys – they've been Environmental Caretakers and become technicians or property caretakers. Others have found jobs with companies we work with. It's a really good system. Victoriahem has done it well. It's a way of contributing to the labor market.

– Area Manager, Victoriahem



Safer and more pleasant areas

A central part of the initiative is that, beyond creating jobs and experience, the program also helps increase wellbeing and safety in the neighborhoods. The hypothesis is that the Environmental Caretakers' presence, their work on the physical environment, and their relationship with neighbors will affect the whole area.

By carrying out tasks such as cleaning, oversight, and simpler maintenance, the Environmental Caretakers contribute to a well-kept, orderly environment around the properties. According to Victoriahem staff, this also has an important indirect effect: when residents see their neighbors working as Environmental Caretakers and taking responsibility for the property and shared spaces, it fosters greater responsibility for those shared areas. This is in turn assumed to reduce littering and vandalism, and ultimately the need for waste management and maintenance. Staff describe that this is noticeable in how the areas are experienced, both by residents and by visitors from outside.

The Environmental Caretakers often serve as positive role models by being visible in everyday life, doing meaningful work, and showing that it is possible to influence one's local environment positively. This is especially important for the areas' children and young people, whose conditions for growing up are strengthened by having more working adults around them.

Strengthened brand

The Environmental Caretaker Program is also considered to help strengthen Victoriahem's brand. Staff point out that it has been important in shaping how the company is perceived – by program participants, by other residents in the areas, and by external actors.

Staff describe the program as an example of the company's commitment to creating jobs in its neighborhoods, which builds a positive relationship between the company and the people employed as Environmental Caretakers. Because the Environmental Caretakers' work is visible to other residents, it also contributes to the perception that the company is present, cares about the areas, and works for the long term – which in turn is assumed to build greater trust and better dialogue between landlord and tenants.

Other external actors, such as other housing companies and public partners, have also taken note of Victoriahem's work. The program is described as a concrete example of social-engagement work, which in some cases has led other actors to consider similar approaches in their own areas. There are even examples of housing companies in the same geographic area becoming aware of the program and expressing curiosity about its design. Taken together, the Environmental Caretaker Program contributes in various ways to strengthening Victoriahem as a brand.

If they're gone for a day, it gets messy – which sends the signal that this is for real.

– CEO, Victoriahem

The Environmental Caretakers become spokespeople – they reach residents in a way that others don't

– Area Manager, Victoriahem

The Environmental Caretaker Program generates SEK 28.5 million in societal economic gains annually

The Environmental Caretaker Program creates significant societal economic value, both during the period participants are employed and through many moving on to work or studies. The total societal economic value over the 18 months of employment is estimated at around SEK 641,000 per person. Over the past three years, 2022–2024, an average of 44 individuals took part in the program per year, of whom 33 completed it. The total societal economic value for those who completed the program amounted to over SEK 21 million annually during the period 2022–2024. The largest economic benefit accrues to the municipality, mainly thanks to reduced payments of income support. The state also makes a smaller gain, even though the positions are subsidized via New Start Jobs (a Swedish state wage subsidy for hiring the long-term unemployed). Tax revenue from wages, along with reduced expenditure on unemployment benefit and housing allowance, outweighs the cost of the subsidies. Victoriahem, as the employer, gains a certain economic surplus because the subsidy lowers the wage cost and the Environmental Caretakers' work is assumed to match this cost in production value. At the same time, the employment entails an additional cost in the form of supervision, as each supervisor is estimated to spend on average five percent of their time per Environmental Caretaker.

One limitation of the analysis is the lack of knowledge about what would have happened to the participants if they had not been employed as Environmental Caretakers. The analysis assumes that the participants would otherwise have remained unemployed. This is a generous assumption, which entails a risk of overestimating the program's effects. At the same time, the calculation is cautious regarding the time perspective. Only the benefits arising during the time participants are in the program and during one year after they leave are included in the calculation. This is likely an underestimate, since the initiative aims to give participants a more lasting foothold in the labor market.

Several of the Environmental Caretakers' tasks were previously done by contractors. We've removed litter-picking from our contracts. That's a significant cost saving

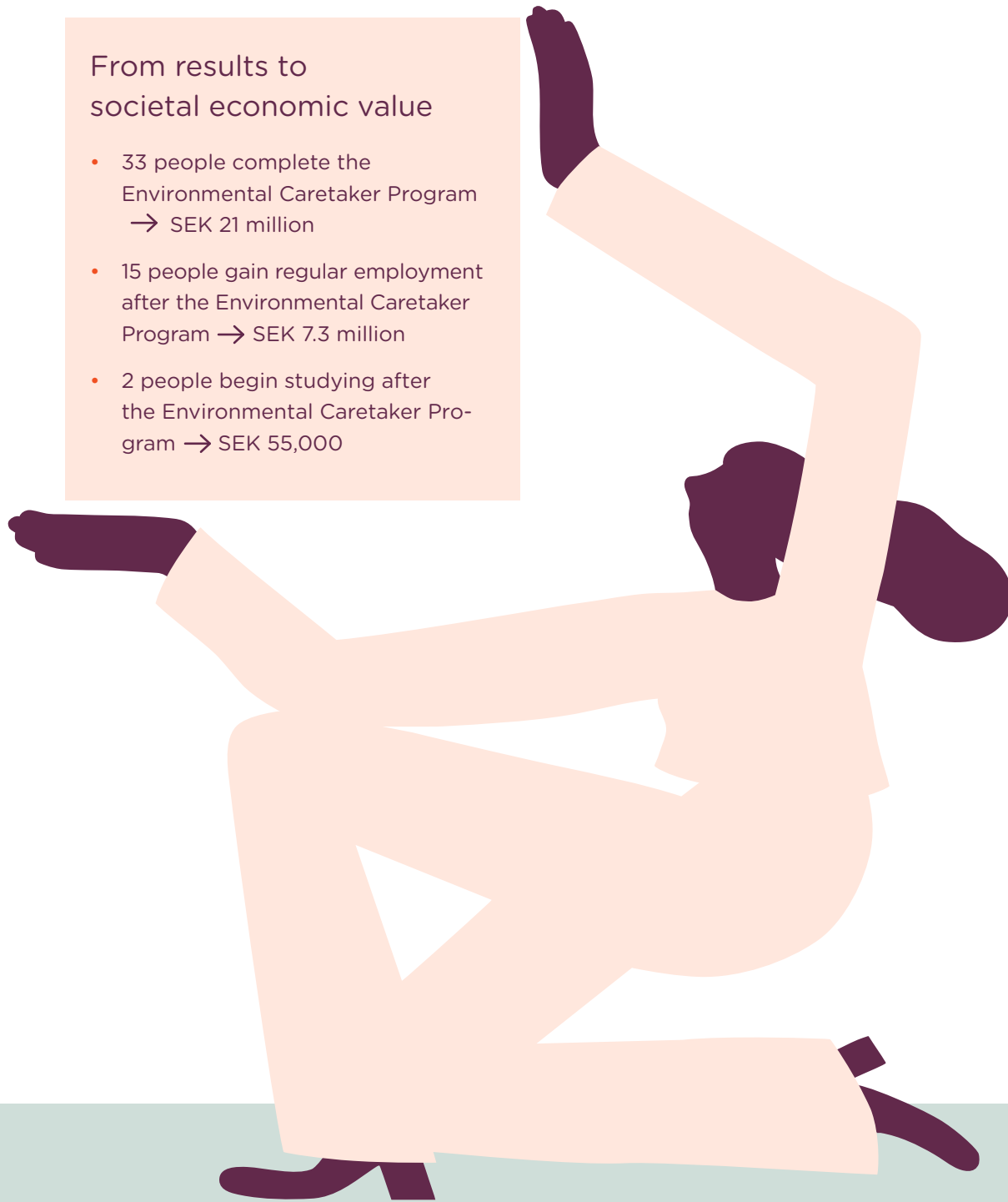
– Area Manager, Victoriahem

The societal economic value increases further if participants move on to other work or studies after completing the program. For the average of 15 individuals per round who gain regular employment after the program ends, the societal economic value is calculated at just over SEK 487,000 per person, corresponding to a total of SEK 7.3 million per year. For the average of two people who move on to studies, the corresponding figure is about SEK 27,900 per person and a total of SEK 55,000 per year. The value arises because benefits are no longer paid, production increases, and tax revenue rises, which benefits both the individual and society.

Beyond the economic benefits at the individual and societal level, the program likely also means reduced costs for Victoriahem's waste management and maintenance. This is both indirect, as residents take greater responsibility for the shared spaces, and direct, as the need to purchase external services for waste management and maintenance decreases because the Environmental Caretakers carry out the tasks instead. How large these savings are has not been possible to determine, however, because too many factors affect the costs, such as variations in municipalities' fees and regulations over the years.

From results to societal economic value

- 33 people complete the Environmental Caretaker Program → SEK 21 million
- 15 people gain regular employment after the Environmental Caretaker Program → SEK 7.3 million
- 2 people begin studying after the Environmental Caretaker Program → SEK 55,000



3 Quantitative analysis of development within Victoriahem's portfolio

Victoriahem's social sustainability work aims to create positive change in socio-economically deprived neighborhoods. But do the initiatives work in practice? And how large is the effect compared with what happens in similar areas where other actors operate?

To answer these questions, a systematic analysis was carried out of the development within Victoriahem's entire portfolio during the period 2018–2022. The results show a predominantly positive picture, but also clear variations between different areas and development areas.

3.1 Positive development in Victoriahem's portfolio

The analysis shows that eight out of ten analysis areas in Victoriahem's portfolio show generally positive development on key socioeconomic indicators during the period 2018–2022. The areas have strengthened most in the labor market, safety, and household finances, while the development for democracy and participation shows significant challenges.

In the labor-market area, a particularly strong positive trend is seen, with a higher employment rate and a markedly reduced share of young people not in employment, education or training, which constitutes the strongest improvement among all the indicators examined. The share of employed persons has also risen clearly over the period. This indicates a stronger labor-market attachment for residents in the areas – something central to breaking socioeconomic deprivation.

Regarding household finances, the analysis shows improvements for all indicators, with particularly clear and positive trends for the shares with housing allowance and social assistance, both of which have fallen. At the same time, the share of residents with wage income has risen, as has gender equality in wage income. This development may partly be linked to the improved labor-market situation for residents in the areas concerned, where more people have had the opportunity for self-sufficiency during the period in question.

Within safety and crime, the statistics show significant improvements in reported crimes and emergency-service callouts, indicating an improved safety situation in the areas. At the same time, however, an increase in the number of shootings is noted during the period, which is a challenge that requires special attention and collaboration with other societal actors.

Regarding schooling and education, a weakly positive development is seen in Victoriahem's portfolio, with improvements mainly in post-secondary education and an increased share of children enrolled in preschool. However, merit values in compulsory school (the sum of a pupil's final compulsory-school grades) show a certain negative trend, indicating continued challenges in the education area.

The most challenging development is seen within democracy and participation, where the analysis shows a clearly lower voter turnout at both the municipal and parliamentary level, as well as fewer passenger cars per household. These indicators can be interpreted as expressions of reduced societal integration and mobility, which is worrying from a social sustainability perspective.

Taken together, the analysis shows that Victoriahem's portfolio underwent predominantly positive development during the period 2018–2022, with particularly strong results in the labor market and safety. However, development is going the wrong way within democracy and participation.

Development compared with similar areas

To put the development in the areas where Victoriahem owns property in perspective, a comparative analysis was carried out. The comparison is based on the Segregation Barometer's area types and the Police's list of deprived areas, in order to identify other neighborhoods with similar conditions. The analysis shows several interesting patterns:

- Victoriahem's portfolio in areas classified as "particularly deprived areas" according to the Police's definition shows stronger development than comparable areas in Sweden. The main improvements are seen in the labor market and household finances, where Victoriahem's portfolio achieves a greater positive change over the measurement period.
- Victoriahem's portfolio in the category "deprived areas" according to the Police's definition also shows stronger development compared with similar areas in the country. Clear positive differences are seen above all in the labor market.
- Victoriahem's portfolio in areas belonging to "Area type 1" according to the Segregation Barometer – that is, areas with major socioeconomic challenges – shows development on par with comparable areas, with somewhat stronger results for the labor market and household finances.
- Victoriahem's portfolio in areas belonging to "Area type 2" according to the Segregation Barometer – that is, areas with socioeconomic challenges – shows development that is somewhat weaker than comparable areas. Here, however, the differences are relatively small.

A particularly interesting observation is that the development within the indicator category of democracy and participation shows greater challenges for Victoriahem's analysis areas than for other equivalent neighborhoods. This is especially true of voter turnout, which shows a more negative development in areas where Victoriahem owns property than in similar areas in Sweden.

Within safety and crime, Victoriahem's holdings in areas classified as "particularly deprived" and "deprived" show more positive development than comparable areas, with especially clear differences in reported crimes and emergency-service callouts.

For areas classified as “risk areas” according to the Police’s definition, however, the trend is the reverse, with weaker development compared with similar areas.

3.2 Variation within the portfolio

When analyzing Victoriahem’s portfolio, a significant variation in development over time emerges between different neighborhoods. The analysis areas that show the strongest movement during the measurement period have achieved improvement in most indicator categories, while in other areas there has been more modest change overall. In some areas, the development for most of the categories has even gone the wrong way. In 18 percent of the analysis areas, four of six categories developed negatively.

The five areas with the greatest positive change in Victoriahem’s portfolio

The analysis identifies the following five areas in Victoriahem’s portfolio as showing the greatest positive change during the measurement period 2018–2022. All areas are Million Programme neighborhoods but show large differences in size, building type, and geographic conditions. This shows that successful neighborhood development is not limited to specific physical structures or geographic contexts, but can be achieved through locally adapted initiatives in different environments. The size ranges from Bergsjön’s just over 500 residents to Herrgårdens nearly 3,000, which underscores the diversity within the portfolio:

1. **Herrgårdens, Rosengård (Malmö)** shows the strongest positive development in the entire portfolio. The area has developed strongly in the labor market, safety, and crime, and also shows improvements in household finances and schooling and education. However, there are challenges within democracy and participation and a weakly negative development within the housing category, owing to a somewhat increased degree of overcrowding.

Herrgårdens is home to nearly 3,000 residents, of whom 38 percent are under 20, spread across about 880 apartments. The area is characterized by tall slab blocks enclosing courtyards with garages below ground level, a typical Million Programme architecture. Geographically, Herrgårdens lies at the far edge of the Rosengård district, next to Malmö’s inner ring road. Connections have improved markedly since the Rosengård train station opened in 2018, improving access to central Malmö as well as to the rest of the country and Copenhagen.

Victoriahem’s social-engagement work in Herrgårdens includes long-term support for local community life, especially the football club Rosengård FC. Physical investments have been made in the form of courtyard and garage upgrades and safety-enhancing measures. The area often comes into focus during societal unrest. Most recently, in September 2023, in connection with Quran burnings in other parts of Malmö, one of Victoriahem’s garages burned down completely, although residents managed to prevent the violence from spreading to the rest of the area.

2. **Tensta (Stockholm)** shows the second-strongest development in the portfolio, with

positive changes in five of six indicator categories. The area stands out above all through strong development in safety and crime and in schooling and education. Clear improvements are also seen in the labor market, while, as in Herrgård, there are challenges within democracy and participation.

The area is home to about 2,400 residents, of whom 30 percent are under 20, spread across 750 apartments in classic Million Programme buildings. Victoriahem's success in Tensta is based on a broad collaboration model that includes the municipality, the police, local associations, and other property owners. Regular safety walks are carried out and activities for children and young people are prioritized. An important success factor is the staff's continuous presence, with employees who have worked in the area for a long time and built deep relationships with tenants. This contributes to low turnover and enables active dialogue with tenants ahead of decisions about projects and other initiatives.

3. **Lövgärdet (Gothenburg)** shows clear positive development in five of six categories, with strong development in the labor market and good improvements in household finances. Weak positive changes are also seen in schooling and education and in housing, while the development in safety and crime is neutral and challenges remain within democracy and participation.

The area, located in the Angered district at the far north of Gothenburg, is home to about 3,200 residents, of whom 28 percent are under 20, spread across just over 1,300 apartments. The buildings consist of long slab blocks of varying heights, some up to nine stories, from the later period of the Million Programme. Victoriahem owns the center at the central square, with commercial premises and shops, as well as about half of the housing in the area.

Since 2020, social-engagement work initiatives have been carried out in collaboration with the public housing (municipally owned housing companies) company Poseidon. Victoriahem contributes just over SEK 1 million annually to joint initiatives that include safety hosts and rent discounts for businesses aimed at parents, as well as a youth center in cooperation with the local school. As a sign of continued development, Victoriahem added 46 new modern rental apartments in two-story buildings in 2021 – an investment that stands in contrast to the public company Poseidon having demolished buildings in the area ten years earlier on the grounds that it was too difficult to attract tenants.

4. **Bergsjön (Gothenburg)** shows positive development in four of six categories, with strong development in household finances and positive changes in the labor market, housing, and schooling and education. Development is neutral in safety and crime, while there are challenges within democracy and participation.

Just over 500 people live in Victoriahem's part of northern Bergsjön, of whom 33 percent are under 20, spread across 176 apartments. The area has a unique building history – originally it consisted of four-story buildings that were partly demolished in the 1990s and converted into row-house-like tenant-owned homes. When the housing cooperative went bankrupt due to financial irregularities, the buildings became rentals again, first under Balder and later under Victoriahem.

Victoriahem's engagement in Bergsjön takes place mainly through the BID association Bergsjön 2031, which drives an ambitious development agenda for the entire district. This exemplifies the importance of collaboration – the positive development is the result of initiatives from several actors, not Victoriahem alone. The

municipality has invested in an award-winning cultural center and upgraded the central Rymdtorget square, while the public company Familjebostäder also reports positive development results in its parts of Bergsjön. This broad collective effort shows that successful neighborhood development requires coordinated initiatives from several societal actors.

5. **Geneta (Södertälje)** shows positive development in five of six categories, with strong development in safety and crime. The area also shows improvements in the labor market, housing, household finances, and schooling and education, while, like the other areas, it has challenges within democracy and participation.

The area is home to just over 1,800 people, of whom 27 percent are under 20, spread across 560 apartments. Geneta lies at the far west of Södertälje, next to the E20 and near the Ronna district. The area differs from the others through its green character, with three-story buildings in a car-free area, crossed by a central avenue that serves as the main pedestrian route. An extensive upgrade was carried out in the 1990s by a previous owner, with additionally insulated facades in apricot-colored brick, balcony renovations, and pitched roofs that gave the area a distinct character. The green park environment with lawns, and the fenced lawns for the ground-floor apartments, creates an almost row-house feel. A small center with a square and the presence of a Syriac Orthodox cathedral add to the area's distinctiveness.

Victoriahem's social-engagement work in Geneta intensified from 2021 with the introduction of Environmental Caretakers and support for the local sports club LEBI Skol-IF, which started its activities in the area that same year.

The analysis of these five areas shows that successful development can be achieved in different types of Million Programme environments, from densely built urban areas to green suburban settings. The areas showing the strongest positive development are spread across different parts of Sweden, from Malmö in the south to Stockholm in the east and Gothenburg in the west. This indicates that successful neighborhood development is not limited to specific geographic regions, but can be achieved through locally adapted initiatives in different contexts.

Notably, all the areas are classified as "particularly deprived areas" according to the Police's definition, reinforcing the picture that areas with the greatest socioeconomic challenges are also those that have shown the greatest positive development during the measurement period. Common to all is the importance of long-term commitment, local adaptation of initiatives, and active cooperation with other local actors. At the same time, the analysis shows that all five areas have challenges within democracy and participation, where development is generally negative. The examples also underscore that success cannot be attributed to a single actor's initiatives alone, but is often the result of coordinated efforts from several societal actors that together create the conditions for positive change.

To better understand what contributes to positive change, an in-depth analysis focused on the area in Victoriahem's portfolio with the greatest positive development during the measurement period. In line with the analysis above, this area is Herrgården in Rosengård, Malmö.

Herrgården – a neighborhood in Rosengård

Herrgården is one of the neighborhoods in Sweden with the greatest socioeconomic challenges. The area is classified by the Police as a particularly deprived area. Herrgården has a relatively young population, with 38 percent of residents aged 0 to 19. About as many men as women live here, along with a high share of families with children, both single-parent (15 percent) and cohabiting (32 percent). Almost everyone living in Herrgården has a foreign background⁸, 95 percent, and just over 64 percent have Swedish citizenship.

Herrgården is a purely rental area where Victoriahem owns large parts of the stock. The area is densely populated. On average, more than three people live per apartment, and almost half of households are overcrowded.

Economically, the area is characterized by low incomes and extensive dependence on public support. Two-thirds of residents have a low economic standard and over 60 percent belong to the lowest national income quartile. Unemployment is high, over 9 percent, while the employment rate is below 50 percent. One-fifth of residents receive social assistance.

The education level in Herrgården is low compared with both Malmö and Sweden as a whole. Just over 60 percent of students are eligible for upper secondary school, and only just over a fifth of adults have a post-secondary education. About 72 percent of children in the area are enrolled in preschool.

When it comes to safety and crime, the picture is mixed. The number of shootings is relatively low, but both emergency-service callouts and reported crimes are at high levels. Voter turnout in Herrgården is also low: just over 51 percent voted in the municipal election and 61 percent in the general election, indicating weak institutional trust and limited participation in the democratic system.

While the challenges are great, active work is under way to strengthen the area. Herrgården is an area where many actors are present and engaged – from property owners and businesses to the municipality, civil society, and nonprofit organizations. A great deal of positive change is happening in Herrgården, and there is a will, among both residents and societal actors, to keep driving development forward.

Herrgården is located in the Rosengård district of Malmö

⁸ Persons with a foreign background are defined as persons born abroad, or born in Sweden with two parents born abroad

Note: All statistics refer to 2022



4 In-depth quantitative analysis of Herrgårdens development

An in-depth quantitative analysis was carried out to describe the development in Herrgården. To better understand the role Victoriahem's work may have played, and at the same time put the development in context, the results were compared with four reference areas. These areas were selected because they resemble Herrgården in terms of socioeconomic conditions. This makes it possible to discern patterns and understand what sets the development in Herrgården apart.

In the following sections, Herrgården's development is analyzed within the six indicator categories, with the results then compared with the four reference groups specified above. The aim is to understand which factors worked together in Herrgården's positive change and what lessons can be drawn for Victoriahem's continued work.

4.1 Labor market

How well individuals are anchored in the labor market affects the entire area's future prospects. The development in the labor market in Herrgårdén is clearly positive during 2018–2022. Overall, the area shows strengthening on several fronts that holds up even against the comparison areas. More residents took the step into work during the period and more young people entered employment. Herrgårdén has had stronger development than all the comparison areas in two variables – migration patterns among working people and the share of employed persons. It has also developed strongly in the employment rate among residents, including young people not in employment, education or training. As for unemployment, Herrgårdén has developed on par with the comparison areas.

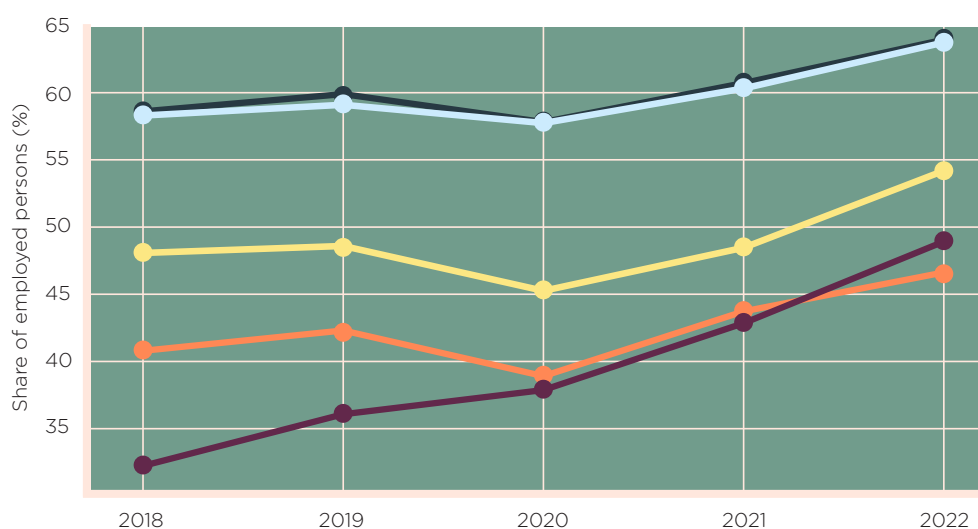
The labor-market indicators comprise five measures that together give a broad picture of how an area is doing: unemployment, migration patterns among working people, share of employed persons, employment rate, and young people not in employment, education or training. Together they capture both the broad strokes of working life and the crucial first steps into the labor market for young people.

In Herrgårdén, progress is visible on several fronts. Especially clear is the increase in the share of employed persons, which climbs from low levels in 2018 to considerably higher in 2022. A deeper analysis of migration patterns reveals that, increasingly, it is people in work who move in – possibly a sign of changing structures in the area. The employment rate has also improved. As for unemployment, Herrgårdén has developed at roughly the same pace as other areas. It is worth noting, however, that this indicator is not always easy to interpret in areas with widespread exclusion. Since the statistics are based on people registered with the Swedish Public Employment Service, there are likely individuals who are even further from the labor market and not registered at all. In such cases, rising unemployment may instead signal that more people are approaching the labor market by taking the first step and registering. We account for this by also using the employment-rate indicator, which includes everyone of working age.

Figure 2. Development of employed persons (share in %)

Note: observe the broken y-axis

- Herrgårdén
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2



The figures showing the development in employment make it clear: in 2018, Herrgårdén had an employment share of 32.2 percent, considerably lower than other comparable areas. But the development curve is steep. By 2022, the share had increased by more than 16 percentage points, up to 48.9 percent. Because of the very low starting point, however, this means that Herrgårdén still has some way to go before reaching the average for areas with similar conditions, but the positive movement is strong.

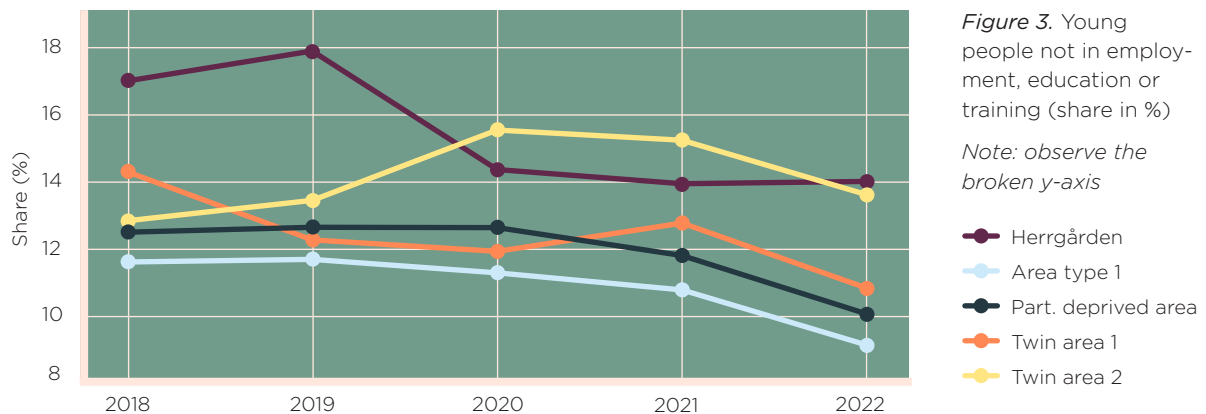


Figure 3. Young people not in employment, education or training (share in %)
Note: observe the broken y-axis

Among young people (aged 18–24), the picture is similar. In 2018, 17.1 percent of young people in Herrgårdén were completely outside work and studies. Over the following years there was a gradual decrease, and by 2022 the share was down to 14.0 percent. This is still higher than in most other comparison areas, but the development is going in the right direction. In comparison, Herrgårdén stands out with a steady improvement, even though Twin area 1 shows an even faster change.

How might Victoriahem have contributed to this development?

It is probably a combination of broader changes in society and local work in the area. Victoriahem's Environmental Caretaker program is one of several examples where residents have been given the chance of employment, often after a long time outside the labor market. The fact that this work is done visibly in the area also makes a difference, by showing other residents that there are routes into the labor market.

Figure 4. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018–2022



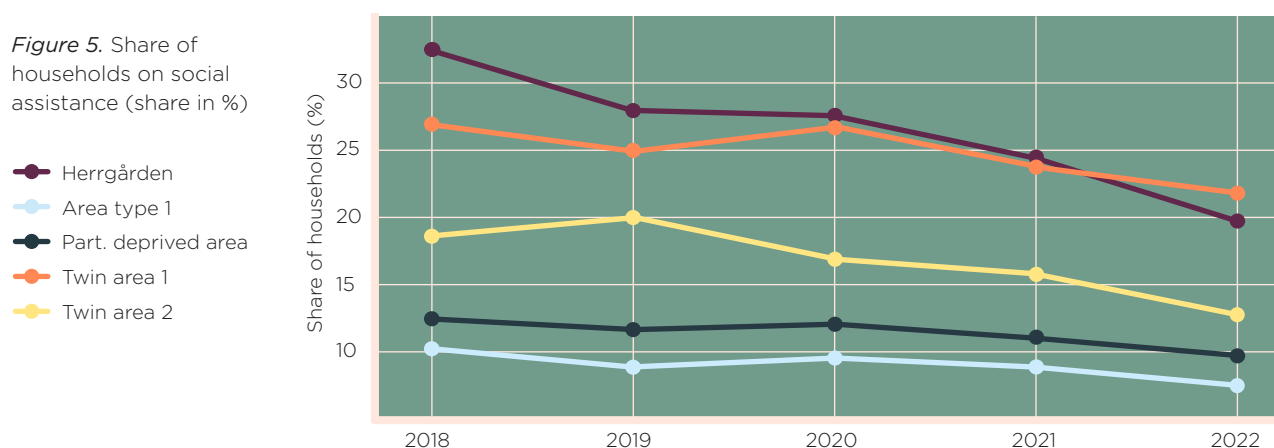
Note: the further to the right the marker, the stronger the development within the indicator category. Note that results cannot be compared between indicator categories.

4.2 Household finances

Stable household finances are a basic precondition for safety, independence, and long-term establishment. In Herrgårdén, the economic conditions for residents improved clearly between 2018 and 2022. Both dependence on income support and income levels in the lower income groups developed positively, in several cases more than in other comparable areas.

In total, the household-finances category comprises nine variables, six of which developed more strongly in Herrgårdén than in all the comparison areas: the share with housing allowance, the share with social assistance, the share with wage income, the share with wage income in quartile 1, average wage income, and gender equality in wage income. Even in variables such as the share with low economic standard, Herrgårdén improved more than most. There are individual exceptions, such as gender equality in parental benefit, but the overall picture shows that many households developed a stronger economic foundation during the analyzed period.

Figure 5. Share of households on social assistance (share in %)



Particularly clear is the decrease in the share of households on social assistance. In 2018, the share was around 33 percent. By 2022 it had fallen to just under 20 percent. This means that nearly four in ten households that were previously dependent on income support no longer are. The decrease is marked, and even when viewed over a five-year interval, it appears both clear and consistent throughout the period. Compared with similar areas, the improvement is strong.

Incomes in the lowest income group have also risen. These are still low levels in absolute terms, but the curve is upward, and Herrgårdén is slowly approaching the levels of the twin areas, even though the gap to the other comparison areas remains large. This change is particularly important, however, since even small improvements can make a big difference in households with tight margins. Victoriahem's letting policy, introduced in connection with the acquisition in 2013, may also have mattered for the positive development during the measurement period.

By requiring income and the absence of payment defaults at new lettings, the company ensures that new tenants have the economic conditions to stay. As income, Victoriahem accepts only income from work or other lasting sources. This has differed from many public housing companies in similar areas, which have often accepted various types of public benefits, such as income support or establishment benefit, as part of income. In addition, the company applies a specific income requirement whereby the household's gross income must amount to at least twice the rent. During the measurement period, this was a more restrictive set of rules than what was applied in the two twin areas, where more flexible models were used.

Taken together, this means that during the period in question it could be harder for people with more uncertain or temporary sources of income to obtain housing within Victoriahem's portfolio, which may be a contributing reason why the share on social assistance trended downward during the measurement period.

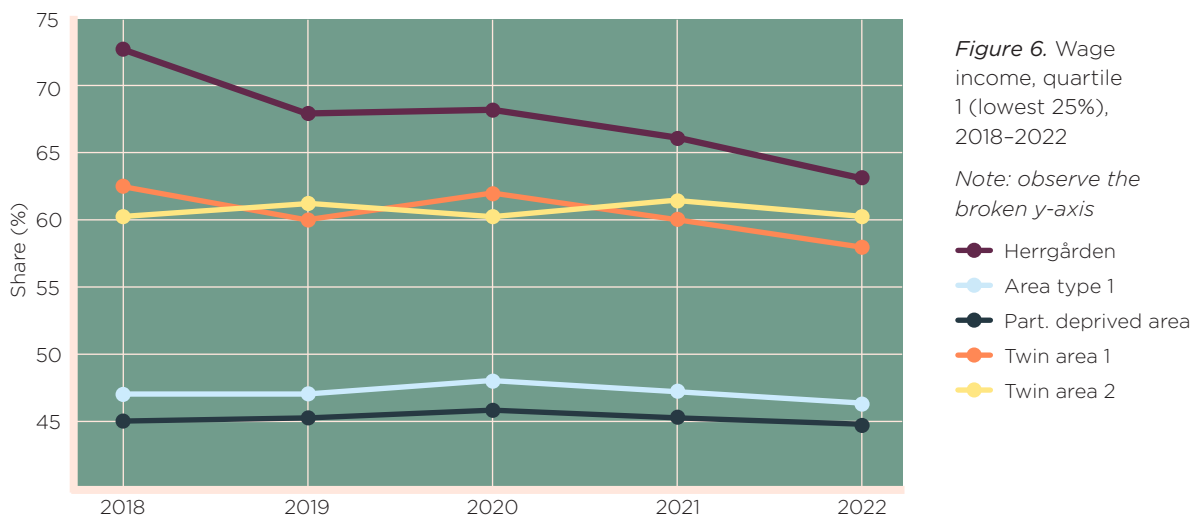


Figure 6. Wage income, quartile 1 (lowest 25%), 2018-2022

Note: observe the broken y-axis

- Herrgård
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2

How might Victoriahem have contributed to this development?

It is possible that part of the improvement is connected to the initiatives undertaken in Herrgård during the period. The Environmental Caretaker Program is one example, where people who had previously been far from the labor market were offered employment in the local area. This has given more people the chance of self-sufficiency, while also reinforcing the sense that work is within reach, even for those who previously struggled to establish themselves in the labor market

Figure 7. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018-2022



Note: the further to the right the marker, the stronger the development within the indicator category. Note that results cannot be compared between indicator categories.



4.3 Housing

Housing and living conditions affect much more than the physical roof over one's head. They shape everyday life, relationships, and the possibility of living a safe, functioning life. In Herrgård, living conditions were largely stable during the period 2018–2022. The forms of tenure in the area are unchanged and still consist exclusively of rental apartments, while overcrowding increased somewhat. The development largely follows the patterns seen in several of the comparison areas and thereby also highlights the limits to possible change when housing structures are fundamentally fixed. As long as there is no new construction or conversion, conditions remain unchanged. Therefore, no changes are seen in this indicator during the period 2018–2022, either in Herrgård or in the comparison areas.

Regarding overcrowding, the analysis shows that Herrgård had a negative development during the years in question. The share of households counted as overcrowded rose from 43.8 percent in 2018 to 46.5 percent in 2022. This means that nearly half of households live in a floor area that, by accepted standards, is too small relative to the number of people. Compared with the other areas in the analysis, the development in Herrgård is somewhat more unfavorable, especially since several of the comparison areas had a more stable level over time, or even a certain decrease in overcrowding.

Figure 8. Overcrowding, 2018–2022

Note: observe the broken y-axis

- Herrgårdén
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2

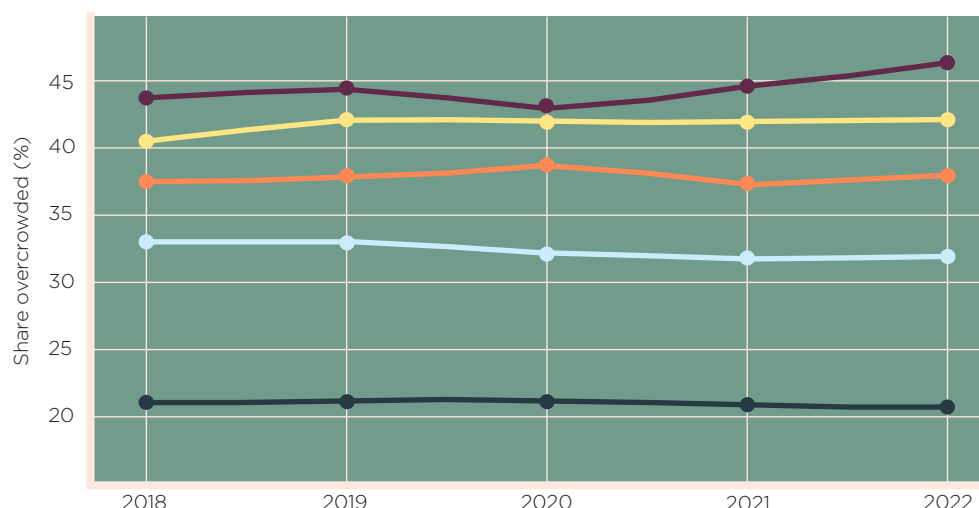


Figure 9. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018–2022



Note: the further to the right the marker, the stronger the development within the indicator category. Note that results cannot be compared between indicator categories.

How might Victoriagem have contributed to this development?

Overcrowding is a slow-moving problem, especially in areas with no new construction and where the housing stock is already fully let. There is also an economic dimension to the problem: families with many children living in socioeconomic hardship, for example, lack the financial means required to live in a larger apartment. In the short term, there are therefore limited ways to influence the trend, even if measures to support households – by encouraging employment and improving living quality through, for example, shared spaces – can make a difference in everyday life.

Beyond working with overcrowding, Victoriagem has worked with physical improvements and with strengthening its relationship with residents. Examples of physical measures are improved lighting and the renovation of entrances and courtyard environments. One example of initiatives to strengthen the relationship with residents is the work against unauthorized subletting. By ensuring that the people living in the apartments are also the ones named on the lease, the company has created better conditions for dialogue, accountability, and safety. In turn, this has also improved the ability to support households when needed. Another example is Victoriagem's investment in Housing Coaches (staff with local roots who visit and support tenants), which serves a similar purpose: people with local roots were hired to visit households and support tenants on questions about housing and daily life. The Housing Coaches acted as a trust-building support – a link between tenant and landlord – with the aim of easing everyday life and strengthening relationships in the area. Although these measures do not affect formal overcrowding, they may have played a role in how the living environment is experienced in practice. As Herrgårdén has become more stable, the Housing Coach role has been gradually phased out.

4.4 Schooling and education

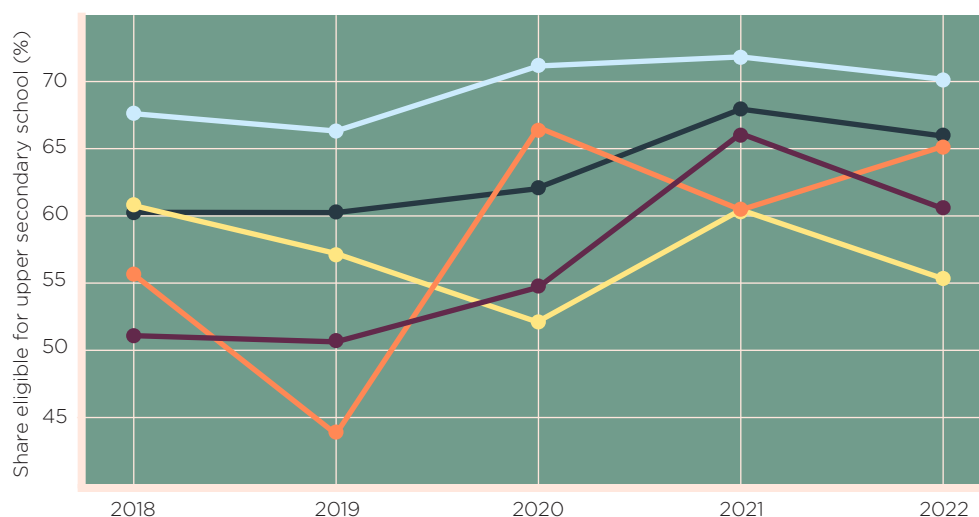
Education is one of the most important keys to future life chances, both for the individual and for the area as a whole. In Herrgårdén, the development within schooling and education during the period 2018–2022 was clearly positive. Especially when it comes to eligibility for upper secondary school, a standout improvement is seen, even compared with other similar areas. At the same time, a weaker development is seen in the share of children enrolled in preschool, an indicator often highlighted as an early and decisive protective factor.

Above all, the share of students leaving compulsory school with eligibility for upper secondary school increased sharply. In 2018, barely 51 percent of students in Herrgårdén were eligible, a level clearly below both the country and most comparison areas. Over the following years, eligibility rose successively to over 65 percent in 2021, before falling back somewhat and landing at 60.5 percent in 2022. This represents a total increase of nearly ten percentage points during the measurement period. Although the share of residents eligible for upper secondary school still lies below the average for all comparison areas, the direction is clear: more young people in Herrgårdén today have the right conditions to take the next step in their education.

Figure 10. Eligibility for upper secondary school, 2018–2022

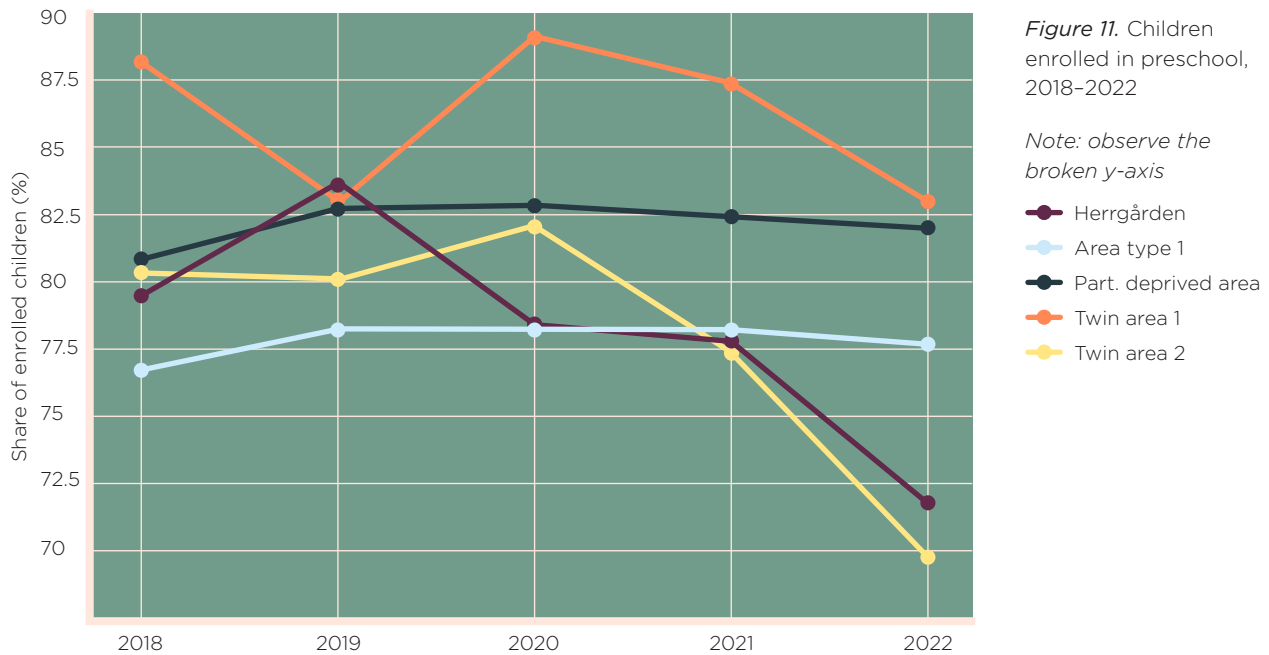
Note: observe the broken y-axis

- Herrgårdén
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2



The development in the share with post-secondary education has also been positive. Herrgårdén has had a stronger increase than all the comparison areas and shows how the area is slowly changing, not only because more children have a successful school experience, but also because more adult residents have pursued further education after upper secondary school. Merit values in compulsory school have also improved, albeit to a lesser extent. In that comparison, it is above all Twin area 1 that stands out with a particularly sharp increase, while Herrgårdén is more in line with the others.

At the same time, the development in preschool shows a different pattern. The share of children in Herrgårdén enrolled in preschool has fallen from 79.3 percent in 2018 to 71.7 percent in 2022. This is a decline that deviates from several of the comparison areas, where levels have been stable or even increased. Given that participation in preschool is often seen as an early protective factor for children's future school results, it is a development important to follow going forward.



How might Victoriahem have contributed to this development?

Although there is no direct link between children's school results and Victoriahem's work, the long-term safety efforts and the relationship between residents and the property company can contribute to an environment where more children have the conditions to succeed in school. Through greater adult presence, renovations and upgrades of the area, partnerships with local associations, and not least the work with Housing Coaches, Victoriahem has strengthened the social structures surrounding children's upbringing. It is about creating stability in everyday life, which is a precondition for success at school.

Figure 12. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018-2022



Note: the further to the right the marker, the stronger the development within the indicator category. Note that results cannot be compared between indicator categories.

4.5 Democracy and participation

Participation in society is about feeling involved and included in important events, but also about experiencing that there are opportunities to influence one's surroundings, to take part in everyday activities, and to have a natural place in the shared community.

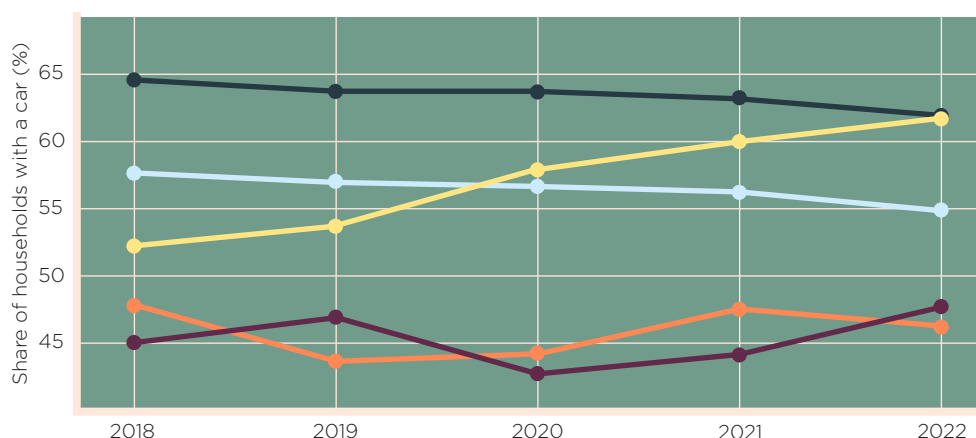
The development within democracy and participation during the period 2018–2022 in Herrgårdén has largely followed the same pattern as in several of the comparison areas. Voter turnout has fallen in both municipal and general elections, but this trend is seen in the other areas as well, and Herrgårdén's voter turnout falls less than in the comparison areas. Access to passenger cars per household has increased somewhat in Herrgårdén, unlike in several of the comparison areas, even though the level is still very low compared with other areas.

Voter turnout in Herrgårdén fell in both elections during the measurement period. In the general election, the share voting fell from 68 percent in 2018 to 61 percent in 2022, and in the municipal election from 59 to 52 percent. This is a clear decline, but it follows a broader pattern found in many areas with similar conditions and is somewhat smaller than in the comparison areas. Voter turnout itself is influenced by many factors, including trust in society's institutions, the ability to understand and engage in societal issues, and not least the sense that one's own vote matters.

Figure 13. Passenger cars per household, 2018–2022

Note: observe the broken y-axis

- Herrgårdén
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2



At the same time, the increase in the share of residents who own a passenger car in Herrgårdén is a signal that more households have gained greater economic room to maneuver, even though the initial levels are very low. Access to a car increases mobility and flexibility in everyday life, which can provide better conditions for taking part in work, education, or leisure activities outside the local area. In several of the comparable areas, the share of households with a car has instead decreased somewhat, which makes the development in Herrgårdén particularly interesting.



How might Victoriagem have contributed to this development?

Victoriagem has no initiatives aimed directly at influencing voter turnout in the area. However, several efforts have been made to build a local presence in order to create a long-term relationship with residents and thereby influence the sense of participation and cohesion. For example, community days are held in the neighborhoods, where representatives from Victoriagem meet residents, share coffee, and provide information. In this way, Victoriagem seeks to build trust, create a forum for dialogue, and contribute to residents' sense of being part of something shared.

Figure 14. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018-2022



Note: The further to the right the marker is, the stronger the development has been within the indicator category. Note that the results cannot be compared between indicator categories.

4.6 Safety and crime

A sense of security is a fundamental precondition for the experience of good quality of life. When the ability to move freely in one's neighborhood is limited by threats, violence, or crime, quality of life is directly affected.

In Herrgårdén, the development within safety and crime between 2018 and 2022 went in the right direction. Although insecurity remains a challenge, the trend points to improvement – both in actual incidents and compared with other similar areas. The development in Herrgårdén has been stronger than in several of the comparison areas. This applies to both the number of emergency-service callouts and shootings. Levels remain high, but the difference from earlier years is clear. Statistics for shootings are available for the entire measurement period, but for emergency-service callouts statistics are available only for the period 2020–2022.

Figure 15. Shootings, 2018–2022

- Herrgårdén
- Area type 1
- Part. deprived area
- Twin area 1
- Twin area 2

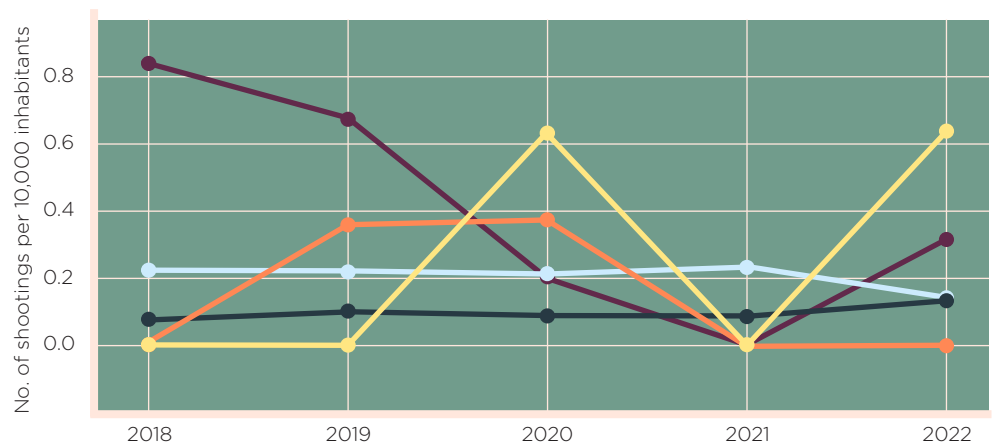
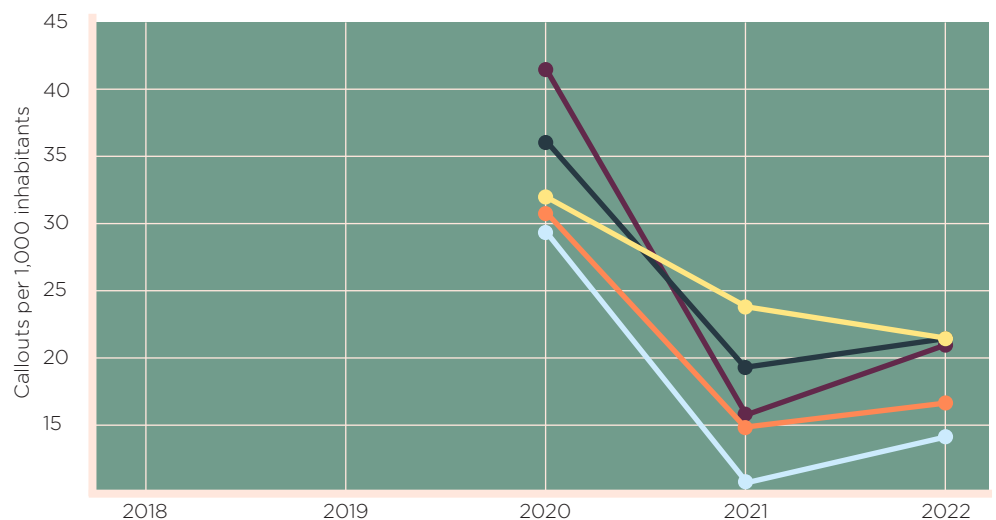


Figure 16. Emergency-service callouts, 2018–2022

Note: observe the broken y-axis



The number of emergency-service callouts decreased from 47 to 26 per 1,000 inhabitants between 2020 and 2022. This is a modest but noticeable improvement, especially in light of the fact that other areas had a more stagnant or even negative development.

The number of shootings has also gone down during the period. In 2018, Herrgårdén had two shootings, corresponding to 0.84 shootings per 10,000 inhabitants. Four years later, that figure had fallen to one shooting, corresponding to 0.32 shootings per 10,000 inhabitants. This means that shootings halved and were few overall during these years, a development that stands out in the comparison.

How might Victoriahem have contributed to this development?

During the period, Victoriahem worked actively to improve both the quality and the safety of the existing stock. Several safety-enhancing initiatives were carried out in the area – including the introduction of modern access systems, strengthened lighting, and upgraded outdoor environments. The work against unauthorized subletting also created better order and control in the properties. But just as important has been the continuous on-site work, with staff who are present and available and who know the area well. Through improved conditions for everyday relationships, trust is built, which in turn contributes to safer neighborhoods.

Figure 17. Development in relation to comparison areas, 2018–2022

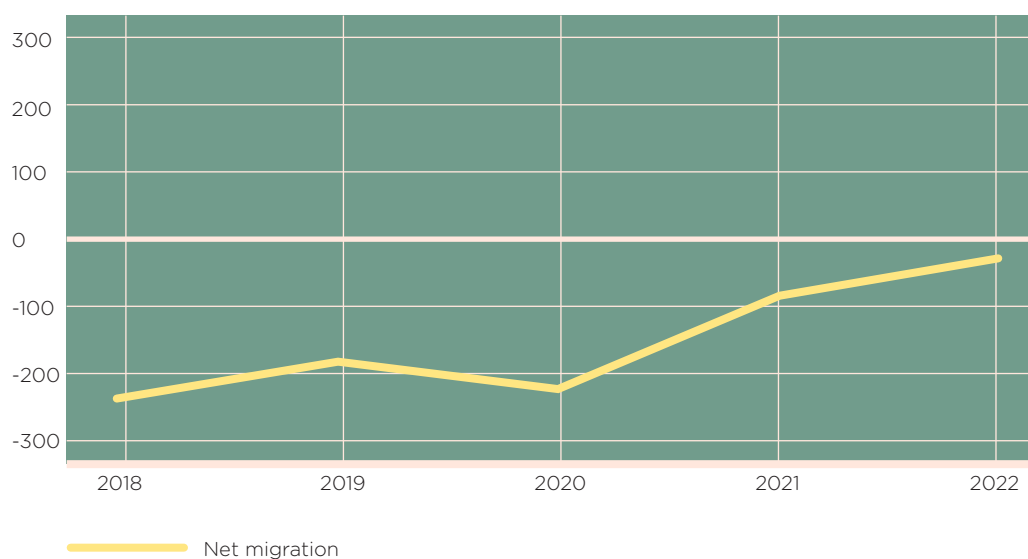


Note: The further to the right the marker is, the stronger the development has been within the indicator category. Note that the results cannot be compared between indicator categories.

4.7 Migration analysis

Migration patterns in Herrgårdén provide important insights into the area's socioeconomic development. The analysis shows a clear positive trend over time. During 2022, 628 people moved to Herrgårdén while 657 people moved away, resulting in a negative net migration of 29 people. This is a marked improvement compared with 2018, when the deficit was 236 people. In-migration to Herrgårdén increased continuously over the period, while out-migration decreased somewhat, which together indicates increased attractiveness for the area.

Figure 18. Migration patterns, 2018-2022



Those who move from Herrgårdén to other districts tend to move to areas that generally have somewhat better socioeconomic conditions – areas with higher income levels, higher education levels, a larger share of owned housing, less overcrowding, and somewhat lower crime. In other words, those who move experience upward social mobility to more prosperous areas. At the same time, the analysis shows that those who move to Herrgårdén also, on average, come from areas with somewhat better socioeconomic conditions than Herrgårdén. A likely explanation is that there are relatively few areas in the region, as well as nationally, with poorer socioeconomic conditions than Herrgårdén.

Particularly significant for the positive development in Herrgårdén is the improvement in the ratio between employed persons moving into and out of the area. In 2018, the situation was such that for every ten employed persons who moved away from Herrgårdén, only five employed persons moved in. By 2022, this ratio had improved considerably – for every ten employed persons who moved out, now almost ten employed persons moved in. This evening-out appears to have contributed to the share of employed persons in the area rising from 32 percent in 2018 to 49 percent in 2022.



How might Victoriahem have contributed to this development?

A contributing factor to the improved migration patterns is likely Victoriahem's letting policy, with specific income requirements where the household's gross income must amount to at least twice the rent and where income support is not accepted as a source of income. This policy differs from what is applied in the twin areas, where more flexible models are used. It should be added, however, that within the twin areas it is primarily public housing companies that operate, and they tend to have a more generous letting policy than private property owners.

The improved migration patterns, with increased in-migration and an especially improved migration ratio for employed persons, are at the same time an important part of the explanation for the positive development in Herrgårdén as a whole. When more employed persons move in and fewer move out, the area's socioeconomic composition changes, which in turn can create positive spirals for the area's attractiveness, safety, and wellbeing.

At the same time, the continued out-migration patterns present a challenge linked to the so-called "Success Paradox," in which people who improve their socioeconomic situation tend to move away from the area. Victoriahem's work to combine clear letting criteria with social initiatives nevertheless appears to have created a balance that gradually strengthens the area's socioeconomic profile. By working both on who moves into the area and on strengthening existing tenants' opportunities for self-sufficiency, the conditions for genuinely positive neighborhood development are created.



5 Conclusions

The analysis shows that eight out of ten neighborhoods in Victoriagem's portfolio developed in a positive direction during the period 2018–2022, and there are signs that Victoriagem's management model contributed to this development. In these areas, it is clear that the success of Victoriagem's social sustainability work is built on a long-term perspective where several initiatives are allowed to take effect over time, rather than short-term, one-off measures, and that the work comprises several components that together create the conditions for change:

- **Social-engagement work** focused on dialogue and relationship-building with residents.
- **Physical investment** in the form of renovations and safety-enhancing measures.
- **Collaboration with others** to create synergies together.
- **Targeted social initiatives** that, for example, stimulate increased employment, such as the Environmental Caretaker Program.
- **Local presence** through staff with roots in the area.
- **A letting policy** that, over time, can shape the area's socioeconomic composition.

By continuing to focus on a long-term perspective, collaboration, and systematic follow-up, there are good conditions to further strengthen Victoriagem's neighborhoods and make a real difference in people's everyday lives.

5.1 Areas with the greatest challenges show the strongest development

Victoriagem's portfolio in areas classified by the Police as "particularly deprived areas" developed somewhat more strongly than corresponding areas in the rest of Sweden. This can be partly explained by the fact that areas with the greatest challenges also have the greatest potential for development, but when compared with other similar areas a particularly interesting pattern emerges:

- Victoriagem's "particularly deprived areas" show stronger development than comparable areas in the same category, mainly in the labor market and household finances.
- Victoriagem's "deprived areas" also show stronger development compared with similar areas nationally.
- Areas in "Area type 1" according to the Segregation Barometer show development on par with comparable areas, with somewhat stronger results for the labor market and household finances.

This comparison confirms the picture that Victoriahem's management of socio-economically deprived areas generally produces results in line with, or somewhat better than, comparable areas nationally, especially in the labor market and household finances. Through the analysis of each indicator category, a clear picture of this pattern emerges:

- **Labor market:** Here the most tangible improvements are seen, with a higher employment rate, a smaller share of young people not in employment, education or training, and changed migration patterns where more working people move in. This positive development is stronger in areas where Victoriahem owns property than in the comparison areas.
- **Safety and crime:** Here too, areas where Victoriahem owns property show stronger positive development than the comparison areas, with fewer reported crimes and fewer emergency-service callouts. At the same time, there are challenges with an increased number of shootings in certain areas.
- **Household finances:** Improvements are seen in a smaller share on social assistance and a larger share with wage income. These improvements are generally stronger in Victoriahem's particularly deprived areas than in similar areas.
- **Schooling and education:** Development is weakly positive but with large variation between areas. Some areas show clear improvements in eligibility for upper secondary school, while others show weaker development.
- **Democracy and participation:** This is the area showing the most negative development, with a significant decline in voter turnout in both municipal and general elections. This pattern is similar in Victoriahem's neighborhoods and the comparison areas, but it nonetheless constitutes a challenge that needs to be addressed.

Democracy and participation shows a clearly negative trend, and measures to increase voter turnout and strengthen citizen influence should be prioritized broadly across Victoriahem's portfolio in order to build on the successes that have been identified.

5.2 Successful development in Herrgård through long-term, persistent work

The quantitative analysis of the development in Herrgård shows that this area, as a whole, developed the most strongly within Victoriahem's portfolio. Here, however, it is important to emphasize that the development that took place in Rosengård during the period is the achievement of many different actors – the municipality, the business community, various authorities, not least the Police, civil society with sports clubs, study associations and nonprofit organizations, and various property owners operating in the area. Several successful projects, financed by the municipality as well as national initiatives and EU funding, have been carried out through broad collaboration in the area, focusing on district renewal, safety, and employment. Together, this

shows the importance of long-term, persistent work where different societal actors contribute with joint efforts. This means that the positive change seen across Rosengård as a whole, achieved by several different actors, has also contributed to the positive development seen within Victoriahem's portfolio. There is no doubt, however, that Victoriahem has been an important actor in the area's development through its dedicated work with various social initiatives. It has also actively contributed to bringing about collaboration, which has proven to be especially significant in areas facing the greatest challenges and where individual actors have limited ability to turn a negative trend around

For the analyzed area of Herrgården within Victoriahem's portfolio, particularly clear improvements emerge in:

- **Labor market**, where the share of employed persons rose markedly from 32 to 49 percent.
- **Household finances**, with a decrease in the share of households on social assistance from 33 percent to 20 percent.
- **Safety and crime**, where the number of emergency-service callouts fell from 47 to 26.
- **Schooling and education**, with an increase in eligibility for upper secondary school from 50 to 60.5 percent.

When compared with the study's statistical twin areas, Herrgården shows stronger development on several key indicators. At the same time, it is important to emphasize that the change occurred from very low levels. The area still has substantial socioeconomic challenges and remains below the national average for most indicators.

Within the household-finances category, the changed letting policy in particular is judged to have mattered for the positive development. It is a more restrictive model than what is applied in the twin areas, which consist primarily of public housing stock. But given the evaluation of the Environmental Caretaker Program, it is also reasonable to assume that Victoriahem's work with targeted social initiatives to increase employment has had its effect, in combination with initiatives carried out by other actors in the area.

A challenge that risks arising in neighborhood development is the so-called "Success Paradox." When areas improve and individuals strengthen their socio-economic situation, the most resourceful households tend to move to other areas. Even though the initiatives succeed at the individual level, the result at the area level can be that the area's overall deprivation remains or even deepens. For Herrgården, however, this phenomenon appears to have been avoided, at least to some extent, which is a particularly interesting result. Despite improved economic conditions for many households, the area as a whole has continued to develop positively, which suggests that Victoriahem has managed to create a living environment where even households with strengthened finances choose to stay.



5.3 The Environmental Caretaker Program creates value for society and the individual

The Environmental Caretaker Program stands out as a unique and particularly successful social initiative within Victoriahem's portfolio. The program, which offers fixed-term employment to people who are far from the labor market, likely has large and significant positive effects for residents in Victoriahem's neighborhoods, both directly and indirectly:

- The program leads to just over half of participants moving on to work or studies after the program ends. This is a significant result, given that the initiative targets a group that is hard to reach and far outside the labor market.
- Through qualitative data collection, the picture emerges that the program contributes to a sense of greater safety, but also pride, in the neighborhoods.
- The effects achieved as a result of the program are distributed among several actors, with the municipality receiving the largest economic saving as a result of reduced income support.
- The societal economic analysis estimates that the program generates an economic benefit equivalent to around SEK 28.5 million annually.

Based on the interviews with the area managers, however, there is reason to believe that the actual societal benefit resulting from the program is even greater. They assess that the Environmental Caretaker Program also brings reduced costs for waste management and maintenance, but these savings could not be quantified due to a lack of data. To fully value the program's societal benefit, a more systematic follow-up of all aspects is therefore needed, including the harder-to-quantify effects such as greater safety, reduced vandalism, and strengthened trust in Victoriahem as a landlord. A clearer structure for data collection would thereby strengthen the ability to measure effects and further develop the Environmental Caretaker Program and the other social initiatives that Victoriahem carries out within its portfolio.

In summary, this study shows that Victoriahem has successfully contributed to turning around the negative trend in several of its neighborhoods through long-term, purposeful work on social sustainability. The improvements in the particularly deprived areas are especially remarkable, where Victoriahem's initiatives have resulted in stronger development compared with similar areas. Herrgården is a clear example, with significant improvements in the labor market, safety, and household finances. These results have been achieved through effective collaboration with various actors and through the implementation of specific initiatives, such as the Environmental Caretaker Program. Long-term commitment and systematic initiatives can have a considerable positive impact when it comes to creating positive change in socioeconomically deprived areas!

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