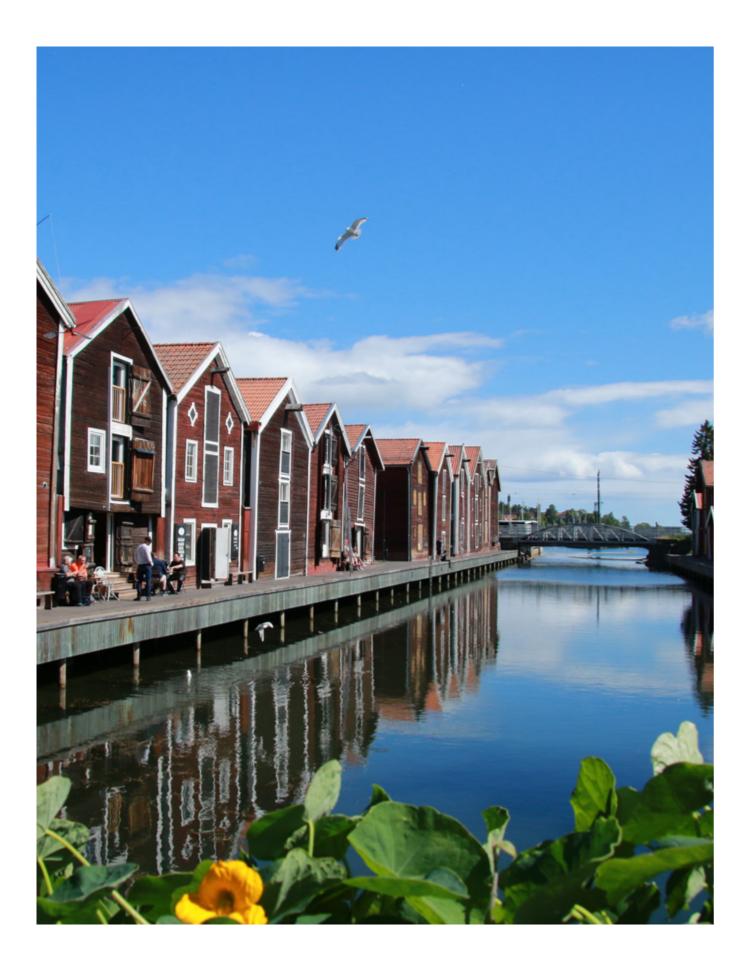
SCENIC EXCURSIONS Hike with beautiful views Magnificent Alvhomsberget Enchanting sandy beaches THE CITY OF THE FUTURE New neighborhoods in coastal Hudik Shaping the hospital of the future Visions that foster growth EXPERIENCES & ACTIVITIES Theater adventures in the forest Play and fun at Mulle Meck Exciting community festivals LIFE BY THE SEA FOR THE WHOLE **FAMILY**





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Glada Hudik

- the place where people make the difference

WHEN YOU VISIT HUDIKSVALL, it's the people you encounter. In shops, restaurants, around town, in various services. If you choose to stay here, you'll meet people in care services, in schools, at workplaces, in associations, in business, and in community life. In short, everywhere. It's also people who shape and develop values, such as proximity and access to the sea and archipelago, or who preserve natural values and make them easy to visit.

When I moved from Mumbai to Delsbo 18 years ago, everything was new to me. Nothing was as I was used to. What made me choose to stay were the people I met, and who met me. They saw me for who I was, and for the potential I had. They saw what I was good at and could contribute – instead of what I couldn't do. It was the people's reception that made me stay and discover the beautiful nature, the good housing, and everything else. I believe that how we treat each other and handle our commitments is what creates our future. When you take a trip, which taxi driver do you remember? The one who found the way or the one who made you feel welcome?

Each of us can choose, every day, to meet other people with kindness, curiosity, and consideration. Perhaps we are teachers guiding young people into the future, or entrepreneurs meeting our customers. Maybe we stop and show a stranger the way, or handle another person's matter. We can all choose to make a difference.

I believe in a society where we build trust and include differences; where we create and nurture relationships. A society where we develop people instead of replacing them, and where we see people as part of the improvement. When every person wants to contribute, improve, and be an ambassador for themselves and their area, then we'll go far.

Mitalee Kotak



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At Hej Aktivitet! It's not athletic performance that matters





Panorama view

The view from the top of Avholmsberget, in Bjuråker, offers a magnificent perspective on the clear blue Dellensjöarna lakes nestled in the deep Hälsinge forests.

THE LANDSCAPE BEARS TRACES of the kilometer-sized meteorite that struck here about 90 million years ago. The Dellen crater is one of the world's best-preserved and most remarkable craters. Even today, you can see the circle formed by the impact. The expansive view is accessible to everyone, as there's a road all the way to the top, where you'll also find a restaurant and café. Avholmsberget is a place that must be experienced. The feeling you get at the top is hard to put into words. We dare say it is one of the country's most beautiful places. ■



Food cooked with love, local craftsmanship, generous play areas for children, and an environment steeped in history. Welcome to Ystegårn – a magnificent Hälsingland farm dating back to the 1600s. Or as they describe it: a rural oasis in a Hälsingland farm setting.







JOSEFIN MÖRK Role: Runs Ystegårn Café & Bistro and Systeryste shop Age: 36 years old Lives in: Hudiksvall

Why should people visit Ystegårn?

We have tried to create a place where everyone feels welcome. Here you'll find culture, crafts, animals, play areas for children, delicious homemade food, shopping, and a museum. Come here to meet the animals or sit on our outdoor patio, have coffee, and solve the Melodikrysset. It's a wonderful place. We have embraced what is already here and tried to make it very genuine and beautiful.

What events do you organize on the farm?

There should be something for everyone. We have Farmer Mondays where we teach children about animals and nature. You might think it's natural for kids to be around animals, but it's not that simple, especially if you live in the city. One of our most popular days of the year is Tractor Day. Up to ten tractors come here, which we display and talk about. The children love it! And the events for kids are always free – it should not be a matter of cost. When we started broadcasting the Melodikrysset with a breakfast buffet, we thought it would be a nice thing for the elderly, but a lot of young people came too. We also have a harvest market, Easter celebrations, Halloween events, and music evenings. The appreciation we've received has driven us to organize even more and even bigger events.

Tell us more about your music evenings?

They have become huge. Moonica Mac has been here two years in a row. Those nights have been incredible, with everyone in high spirits. Janne Schaffer has also visited us twice. The Norén brothers have also performed here, so we've had some fantastic artists.

Can people visit all year round?

Yes, all seasons are very important to us. During the winter months, we have many guests who cross-country ski here, and we have a Christmas market and Christmas dinner. Then we move on to the outdoor season with markets and events. In autumn, we have our popular harvest market and Halloween activities. It's about making the most of what each season has to offer.

Tell us about the food you serve?

It has been very important for us to offer locally produced food. Now we even have a dairy on the farm, which is fantastic. We are always meticulous about the ingredients, because we want the food we serve to be of high quality.

What has it been like to start and run a tourist business here in Hudiksvall?

I think it is an advantage to start such a business in a smaller town. It's simpler, and you have more contacts. You know who to ask and where to turn for help at all hours. On the farms around here, most are self-employed, and it's so easy to get help and support from everyone. So, I would say it's even more flourishing and helpful out here in the countryside.





ELSA JONSSON
Age: 25 years old
Occupation:
CNC operator at
Andritz in Iggesund
Family: Partner Andreas
and children Hilda, 1,
and Freja, 4
Lives in: Idenor

DESPITE BEING ONLY 25 years old, Elsa has already started a family and built her dream house. Life in a spacious home in a child friendly neighborhood close to nature suits Elsa perfectly—she has no plans to study, work, or live anywhere else. Everything she needs is right here in Hudiksvall.

"We have a cozy town center with many cafés and restaurants. There have been a lot of new restaurants opening up recently. We're also close to the mountains and the big city if you want that. And we're near the archipelago. I love being out on the water, and we have a beautiful archipelago here in Hudiksvall," says Elsa.

Along Hudiksvall's 50-km long coastline, there's a beautiful and uncrowded archipelago with many hidden gems to discover. Elsa knows most of them well.

"There are many nice places to go and many small beaches where you can just pull up the boat. Then there are slightly larger places with docks, like Klubbviken. But you can also just go to a rock and be completely alone. We often go to Olmen or Ljus-

grundet. Hölick and Ormsand are also very nice."

But Hudiksvall offers more than just beautiful nature. There are career opportunities in many different professions. Elsa enjoys her job as a CNC operator at Andritz—a world-leading company in the steel industry, among others. And now, friends who chose to leave Hudiksvall are starting to return.

"My friends studied in Umeå, Stockholm, Gothenburg, and various other places. But now they're starting to move back, so that feels good. They've found jobs here and they seem to be happy here too," says Elsa.

In her spare time, Elsa is active in the local community. She has been involved in the dance club Julle United for as long as she can remember. She is now the chairwoman of the board.

"I'm in my third year as chairwoman. It feels good to be able to make a difference. When I was active, there were adults who volunteered for us, so it feels nice to give back. I also have my parents to thank, who always supported me and my siblings and •



"I had such a great time growing up here"

were always involved in community activities during my upbringing," she says.

"There are many great clubs and associations here in Hudiksvall. I think community involvement is super important because it provides an opportunity to integrate into society and feel like you belong."

Elsa is also the leader of her eldest daughter Freja's dance group. Now that her children are young, much of her focus naturally goes to family activities. They often visit playgrounds in Borgarparken and Köpmanberget together.

"I also enjoy the open pre-schools and church groups. They're great because you can meet new people. Even though I've lived here all my life and think I know everyone, I meet new people through my children"

Elsa grew up in Idenor, where her parents still live. After graduating, she moved into an apartment in town. But after meeting her partner Andreas and eventually expecting their first child, she longed to return to Idenor.

"I had such a great time growing up here. It's a quiet and good area for children. It's close to preschool and school, and you can bike into town. When the kids are older, they can take the bus or bike on their own," explains Elsa.

The couple started looking for a house, but quickly realized they would need to renovate to make it how they wanted. Instead, they decided to build a house to their own liking. When a plot in Idenor went up for sale, they didn't hesitate.

"The house is on a hill with a forest behind it, but we still have neighbors around. It's a family house that is perfect during these early years with small children. We have large spaces downstairs where you can run and play. You could almost make a floorball court in the kitchen if you wanted," says Elsa with a smile.

The shared dream home was realized when the family moved into the 200 square-meter, two-story house, built from scratch by local craftsmen, in spring 2021.

"It's a dream house – for now. When the kids move out, we might build another house, closer to the sea. But I have no plans to leave Hudiksvall. I'm happy here. Why would I move if I'm happy?"

A city with big ambitions

Hudiksvall is growing and evolving. To meet the needs of the future, new and modern urban environments are expanding, creating spaces where people can interact with each other and the sea. Alongside investments in a thriving business community and high-quality public services, a vibrant and even more attractive Hudiksvall is taking shape.

Building for the future in Hudiksvall

Havsläge Hudik is a comprehensive urban development project featuring new housing, park areas, playgrounds, and a long seaside promenade that connects the city to the sea.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photo: Philippe Rendu



EMMA NORDEBO SNYGG Occupation: City Architect Age: 46 years old Lives in: Delsbo

AT KATTVIKSKAJEN, red, wood-clad houses face the canal. The architecture is contemporary, yet it nods to Möljen's iconic boathouses, which have become a symbol of Glada Hudik. Waves roll in right next to the door, and you can take your kayak out to sea after your morning coffee. Kattvikskajen is part of Havsläge Hudik, which encompasses the development of three new residential areas along Hudiksvallsfiärden, each with a unique character.

"Kattvikskajen is an extension of the city center, now growing towards the sea. Here, the focus is on creating a dense urban area. Djupestrand features smaller-scale housing in a natural setting. Västra Hamnen is large enough to be its own neighborhood, planned with a pre-school, senior living, a grocery store, and other central amenities. People should be able to live and stay here without needing to go to the city center every day or drive elsewhere," explains city architect Emma Nordebo Snygg.

The three residential areas share one common feature. "The promenade runs like a red thread through all of Havsläge Hudik. Politicians have strongly emphasized that it must not be compromised. It's been very important that the public can walk along the water," Emma explains.

Djupestrand in the eastern harbor area is already completed, while planning is ongoing for Västra Hamnen in the south. At Kattvikskajen in the north, closest to the city center, half of the residential area is finished. Ensuring accessibility for everyone has been crucial.

"At Kattvikskajen, there will be public spaces at street level to avoid it becoming just a residential area. We already have the Swiss café and the Köttbaren restaurant here. So, we already have attractions, whether you live there or not.

The land that Kattvikskajen and Västra Hamnen occupy was previously inaccessible industrial land. Now, one of the most attractive locations in Hudiksvall is being utilized.

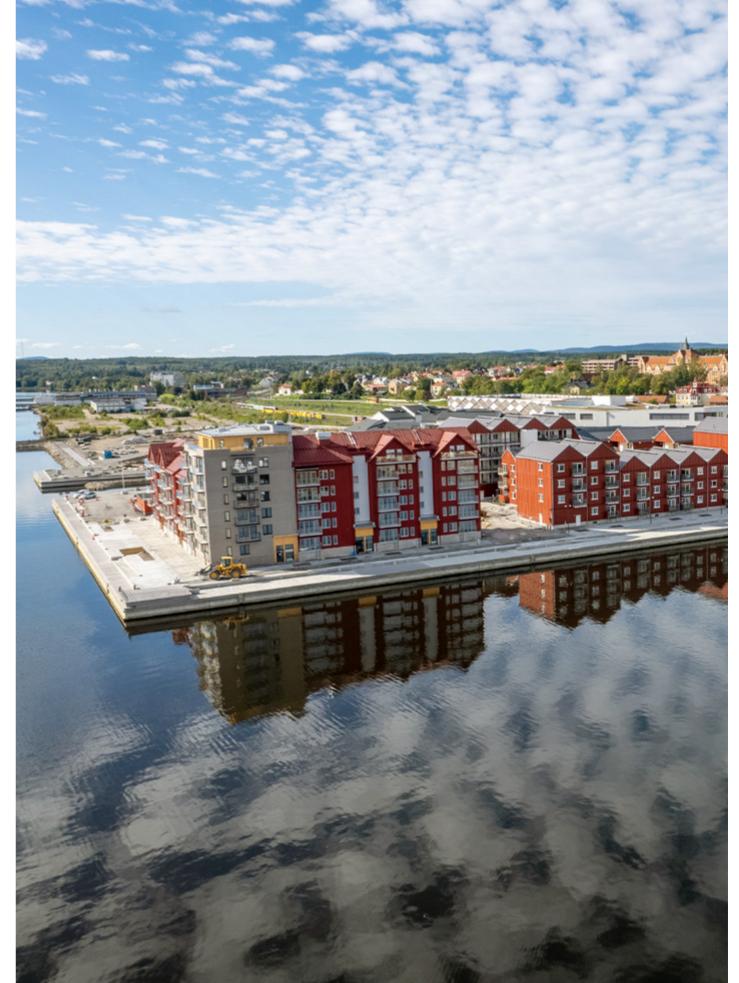
"It's attractive to live in a seaside location. And if we want to work with sustainable thinking for the future, it's good to build housing centrally on unused land. This means ecological sustainability, since we're using already exploited land that lacks natural value. It's economic sustainability because we're building densely, and don't need to extend infrastructure far. And it's social sustainability because we have a mix of rental and owner-occupied apartments, townhouses, and multi-family houses, and we're creating lots of meeting places between the buildings," Emma adds.

At Kattvikskajen, everything you might need in daily life is within walking distance: the city center's shops and restaurants, bus, train, bakery, hairdresser, and grocery store. This is also a key sustainability factor.

"We hope that the residents here will mostly get around on foot. This way, we avoid transports overall. Both at Kattvikskajen and Västra Hamnen, there has been a strong focus on sustainable mobility—primarily walking and cycling. We've also prepared for public transport and already built bus stops," Emma explains.

The new districts are a central piece of the city's development. The municipality's ambition is for Hudiksvall to grow and gain more residents.

"From the municipality's side, we try to stay one step ahead. We're already in the process of procuring consultants to design streets and water and sewage systems, so the infrastructure is in place and the land allocation is done. The groundwork is laid." ■



Where the city meets the sea

For centuries, the city has thrived on its harbor. Now, the old industrial and port area is set to be revitalized with life and activity. A completely new district is emerging, offering quality of life for both young and old.

Text: Emma Danielsson

HUDIKSVALL IS PREPARING for the future. In the heart of the bay around which the city was originally built, a vibrant new district is being developed. What has long been a closed industrial area is now opening up, making the quay and shoreline accessible to everyone. The establishment of the new Västra Hamnen district takes full advantage of the beautiful seaside location which Hudiksvall offers. Space is being made here for promenades, park areas, pre-schools, playgrounds and retail. When everything is completed, the area will be home to nearly 1,000 new residences – with the sea as their closest neighbor.

"Transforming an old industrial area into green, beautiful parks where children can play and maybe even swim in the sea – that has been my vision," explains Jon Larsgården, one of the partners in Västra Hamnen Holding AB.

This development marks a new chapter in Hudiksvall's history. The city will now be linked to the sea through a long promenade lined with inviting green spaces for socializing and recreation.

"The sea means a great deal to Hudiksvall, and our archipelago is truly unique. Having a promenade along the inner harbor will be significant for the residents. The area is now accessible to everyone – not just those who will live there," he adds.

The district stretches from the newly established Kattvikskajen area in the north, through the planned central section, with residences, offices, retail, and a marina with space for about 200 boats, further south to Trädgårdsstaden, which will feature city townhouses with lots of greenery. In Trädgårdsstaden, ten detached villas will be built on prime seaside lots. There are also plans for a wetland park and an activity park, with potential for adventure playgrounds, fitness trails, skateboard

ramps, BMX tracks, or sledding hills.

"The entire Västra Hamnen is intended to cater to all ages, from cradle to grave. Here, your one year old can attend pre-school while there's also elderly care – and everything in between," Larsgården says.

Urban development and optimism for the future go hand in hand. New and attractive housing is essential for Hudiksvall's goal to grow to 50,000 inhabitants by 2050. Through this initiative, the hope is to attract more people to the city.

"Hudiksvall has tremendous potential. We have such wonderful qualities, and the business community serves as the city's engine. If we also have jobs and nice places to live, we can compete with other cities. Here, you don't have to stress yourself to death, commute long distances, or sit in traffic jams, while also having more money left in your pocket. I believe both the interest-rate level and the pandemic have made people think," he adds.

Access to attractive housing can also contribute to workforce availability, while the initiative is strategically important for Hudiksvall to be considered for establishment of future business.

"When looking at major establishments, two things are crucial: electricity supply and housing. Infrastructure is important. If there is no zoning plan in Hudiksvall that allows people to move here, these kinds of setups won't happen. Now, we're no longer counted out," Jon says, eagerly anticipating the future

"Imagine when the people of Hudiksvall can walk along the sea, all the way down to the new green park and back. This industrial area has been inaccessible for over a hundred years. No one has been able to walk here. No children have been able to play here. When Hudiksvall's jewel opens up for everyone, I'll be pinching myself!"



JON LARSGÅRDEN
Occupation:
Property Developer
Age: 48
Residence: Hudiksvall

A place on the rise

Hudiksvall aims to grow to 50,000 residents by 2050. Municipal Director Lena Högback discusses the work to realize this vision, and how she fell in love with the city from her very first visit.

Text: Emma Danielsson



DURING A ROAD TRIP from Stockholm to Umeå, Lena Högback's husband suggested they stop halfway to see a beautiful place. This was Lena's first encounter with Hudiksvall, and the city's atmosphere left a lasting impression.

"I thought the expression 'Happy Hudik' was fitting here. There was an openness and friendliness in people's eyes that made me interested in the city. When we left, I told my husband, 'I could see myself living here.' That was four years before I applied for the job as Municipal Director. So we shouldn't underestimate that what we do today can matter in the years to come," says Lena Högback.

Several visits to Hudiksvall followed, and when the Municipal Director position was advertised, Lena decided to apply; and she got the job. Today, she leads the effort to realize the municipality's overarching vision: the best municipality in Sweden to live and work in, with 50,000 residents in the municipality, including 25,000 in the city, by 2050. The population growth they are strategically working to achieve will generate increased tax revenues and create better opportunities to develop positive welfare. And since population growth and housing needs go hand in hand, extensive housing projects have been launched.

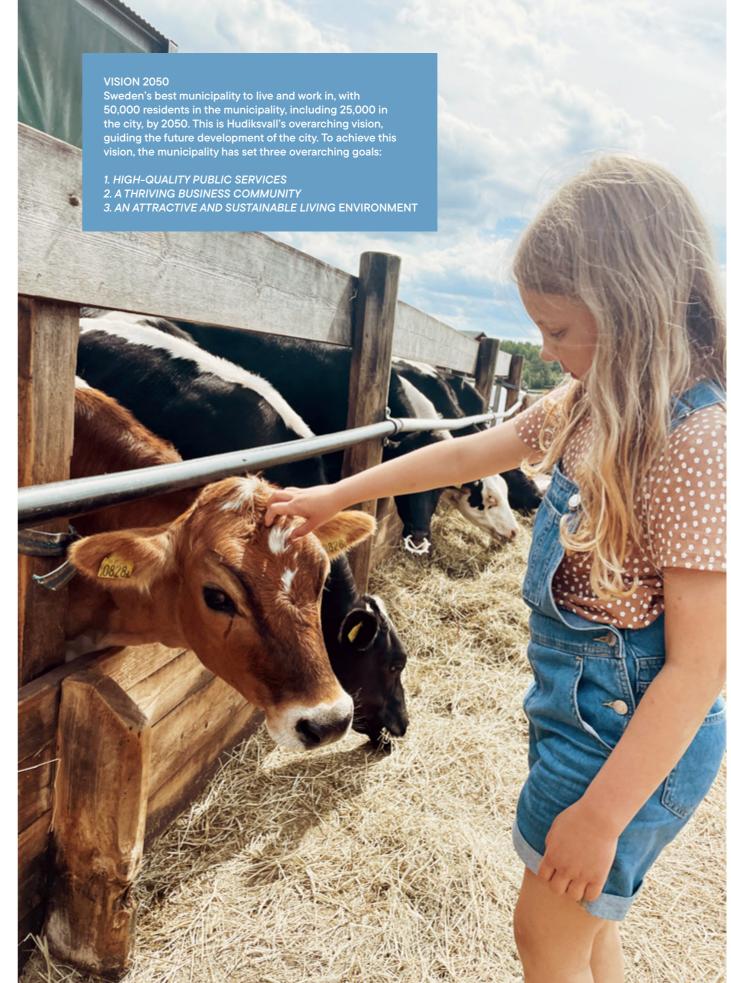
"We must build the society we want in the future. We can't just preserve things; we need to develop and dare to make changes too. The current construction boom is an example of that. At places like Kattvikskajen, there are both condominiums and rental apartments, creating a diverse living environment. The thinking around social sustainability is very clear, and we actively work to avoid segregated residential areas," explains Lena.

But stimulating population growth requires more than just new housing. The municipality is also investing in developing public transport and traffic infrastructure, as well as building and renovating pre-schools and schools. Moreover, more jobs are needed to ensure employment with population growth. Therefore, the municipality is making a strategic investment in urban planning to enable larger business establishments. The local business community already includes many leading companies in areas such as hydraulics, cardboard, fiber optics, and other ICT-related fields.

"We have low unemployment in Hudiksvall, especially compared to Gävleborg County. We are very proud of that. We have many successful companies providing jobs, and that's exactly what we need to increase the population. I also think it's fantastic that a municipality the size of Hudiksvall has an emergency hospital, which is being invested in. It's a major employer and provides security in many ways," says Lena.

When Lena accepted the job as Municipal Director in Hudiksvall, she was working as the Head of Staff at Umeå University. Before that, she had been a high school principal and held leading roles within the Swedish Schools Inspectorate. With a solid background in education, it's not surprising that school issues are close to Lena's heart. She was pleasantly surprised by the educational opportunities in Hudiksvall. At Cul—the Center for Education and Learning—adults have the opportunity to pursue further studies, obtain vocational training, qualify for higher education, or learn Swedish.

"There's a lot of investment in education, and the job market is actively monitored to tailor education to meet needs. We introduce technology at a young age—from Mulle Meck to KomTek, which reaches all students in grades 6–9. The idea is that all students graduating in Hudiksvall should understand what hydraulics is. This is a conscious effort, because there are so many companies in that sector here. I'm also impressed with the high school. I was proud of the school where I was the high school principal, but the fact is, this high school is better." ■



There is an explicit goal that both the

Play& have fun

IN GLADA HUDIK





Draw and craft in Sam Scribbler's newspaper workshop, tinker with Mulle's electric car in Daisy Diesel's workshop, or enjoy a snack at Café Gyllene Grodan in Djupforsen Square. At Mulle Meck in Glada Hudik, the youngest family members can play and tinker in a creative fairytale world.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photos: Magda Lindblom

AT MULLE MECK in Glada Hudik, only your imagination sets the limits. Here, children can be creative, use their curiosity, and develop their problem-solving skills. Come and play with Mulle's airplane and his fine yellow car, or take a trip to the moon with the rocket and explore the moon cave. In the carpenter's workshop, you can tinker with real gadgets and gizmos. These are what Mulle Meck calls things you can tinker, build, fix, and fiddle with. You can also visit Sam Scribbler's newspaper workshop and paint a beautiful picture.

Mulle Meck has been inspiring young and old readers with his inventions for over 30 years. In Glada Hudik, the beloved children's books have been transformed into a fairytale world where you can visit Mulle's surroundings. The Hudiksvall-based artist Jens Ahlbom, who has also illustrated the books, has painted the imaginative play areas, which have gradually been expanded and complemented with new vehicles. For example, when a Mulle Meck book about space was published, the large space rocket was added. In preparation for the summer of 2023, the premises have been expanded to provide even more space for playful children. Nowadays, you enter Mulle's fairytale world via a new entrance on Storgatan.

"It's an exciting development. By the new entrance, you will find Djupforsen Square with the new café called Gyllene Grodan – just like in the book. Several of Mulle's friends will also make appearances there," Jens Ahlbom explains. And the café isn't the only new addition.

"The carpenter's workshop has been expanded with more workbenches, and you can now tinker with things like gears and Mulle's electric car in Daisy Diesel's workshop. We've also added Buffa's hut," Jens says. ■

MORE FAVORITES FOR CHILDREN

Joy of movement at KÖPMANBERGET NATURE PLAYGROUND

At Köpmanberget's strolling area, there is an urban playground that invites children to enjoy movement in nature. Kids can climb and jump on stumps and logs, or on the snake made of painted boulders that winds its way up the hill towards the forest.

Do a kickflip in THE SKATE PARK Sportparken in Hudiksvall and Björnparken in Delsbo are central gathering spots where young and old meet to socialize and ride skateboards, inline skates, or BMX bikes. The whole family can enjoy an action-packed day together here.

Pedal a railbike on the DELLEN RAILWAY

On the Dellen Railway, the whole family can pedal along shimmering lakes, over dizzying bridges, and through dark tunnels. Railbikes can be rented at Delsbo Station, where you can also pre-order picnic baskets during the high summer season.

PUMPTRACK – Fun on wheels
The word Pumptrack comes
from propelling yourself on a
bike by "pumping" your body up
and down instead of pedaling.
A trip to the Pumptrack course
at Öster's exercise area offers
a thrilling experience which is
usually appreciated by both
young and old.

Challenge each other in MINIGOLF

Minigolf is an activity that most people enjoy – and in Glada Hudik, there are many courses to choose from. At Hudiksvalls Äventyrsgolf, for example, you can enjoy homemade donuts, soft serve ice cream, and other treats after your round.



In Hudiksvall Municipality, more young people are involved in clubs and organizations than the national average. Hej Aktivitet! has taken the lead in paving the way for a more equal leisure time on equal terms. With them, all recreational activities are completely free of charge.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photo: Magda Lindblom

WITH THE SEA at your doorstep, deep forests, countless lakes, and blue mountains, Hudiksvall offers endless opportunities for an active lifestyle in beautiful nature. The prospect of a rich recreational life becomes even more tangible when you add a ski slope, illuminated trails, a city beach, a golf course, an equestrian center, and a swimming pool. But the vibrant community life in the city plays perhaps the most crucial role in promoting the health and well-being of children and young people. At Hej Aktivitet!, however, the focus is not on athletic performance.

"The common thread in all our ten activities is that we have fun together in an environment where everyone is kind to each other. It doesn't matter how good you are at something. It's about feeling seen, being part of a community, and having a meaningful leisure time. And it doesn't cost participants a single penny," says Patrik Hedman, the initiator of Hej Aktivitet!.

Their largest activity is the Activity Club, where



children who no longer attend after-school care can try different sports, play board games, or get help with their homework after school, instead of sitting at home in front of a screen until their parents come home from work.

"Many people who have moved here are amazed by this opportunity for their children. They can come here in the afternoon, have a good snack, put away their phones, have fun, and feel safe. And they want to come back—nobody has to nag them."

The various activities are designed to grow with the children. When they start to outgrow the Activity Club, there are other activities that might suit them better.

"Then we have, for example, Football Friday. It's a fantastic venue where children and young people between 10 and 25 years old come from Iggesund, Delsbo, Näsviken, Forsa, and Hudiksvall. They get something meaningful to do on Friday evenings. It has to be a safe arena with structure, order, and sobriety. Everyone should feel safe, but with a lot of energy and joy," adds Patrik.

The heart of the activities is the Leisure Bank, where everyone can borrow sports and leisure equipment for free. In 2023, 15,000 items were loaned to more than 2,000 people.

"It's about lowering the barriers to being physically active and having meaningful leisure time. We have 300 pairs of skates that we lend out for free—that's lowering the barrier. Then we can pack our bus, take the young people out to skate, and drink hot juice," says Patrik.

The ambition is to create security in society and contribute to the public good.

"When children from different backgrounds with different home conditions meet several times a week, they get to know each other, and preconceptions are broken. We can laugh and meet on the badminton court, for example. Sport has no language barriers. A ball bounces the same in Serbia as it does in Swedish,", Patrik says.

"In Hudiksvall, we have attractive workplaces and wonderful nature on our doorstep. We have a simplicity in everyday life and proximity to everything. And we still stand out in terms of safety, compared to many other cities. Hudiksvall should be a place where we can let our children out without worry. And in that area, I see us as some kind of community builders. I strongly believe in this. It is my driving force."

Multicultural meeting place

Hej Aktivitet! is a meeting place for children and young people, regardless of background and culture. But it's also an arena where young adults get to train their leadership skills and develop as individuals. Rahel Medhanie is one of the young leaders who children meet after school.

Text and photo: Emma Danielsson

RAHEL MEDHANIE.
Occupation: Student and
leader at Hej Aktivitet!
Age: 19 years old
Lives in: Hudiksvall

RAHEL MEDHANIE CAME TO SWEDEN from Eritrea when she was four years old and ended up with a foster family in Hudiksvall. She is now in her final year at Bromangymnasiet, where she studies hotel and tourism management. But her dream is to become a social worker.

"Then I can also change people's lives for the better," she explains.

Even now, she helps inspire children and young people through her work as a leader at Hej Aktivitet!. In addition to having snacks with the children and accompanying them on activities such as soccer, jujutsu, or skiing, much of the work is about being there as an adult role model.

"We make sure they're doing well. If someone feels left out, we talk to them and make sure they're seen. And if any problems arise, we show them what's okay and what's not okay. It's pretty logical when you think about it; you should treat others as you want to be treated yourself. That's what we try to teach children at a young age."

In her role at Hej Aktivitet!, she encounters children from different backgrounds and cultures every day.

"There are children from different countries, but also Swedish children. I find that children from different backgrounds have a very easy time becoming friends. Some may feel a bit shy at first, but then we try to make them more comfortable. And I notice that they usually become comfortable over time because they become best friends with both Swedes and children from other backgrounds," Rahel says.

Community life is often considered an integrative force in society. Building bridges between people from different backgrounds can be easier when they can gather around common interests.

"I think this helps them feel more comfortable

with new people. They get to come here, try out activities, and become part of the community. So I actually think it has a positive impact. And the more you hear the language and learn, the more you know. It's like everything in life."

At Hej Aktivitet!, they also aim to contribute to society by being an alternative to crime and drugs.

"The children I meet are in middle school, and not all of them participate in after-school activities or have the opportunity to do so. We make sure they're in a good environment so they don't roam the streets doing foolish things instead," says Rahel, who finds the atmosphere among the children fun and playful.

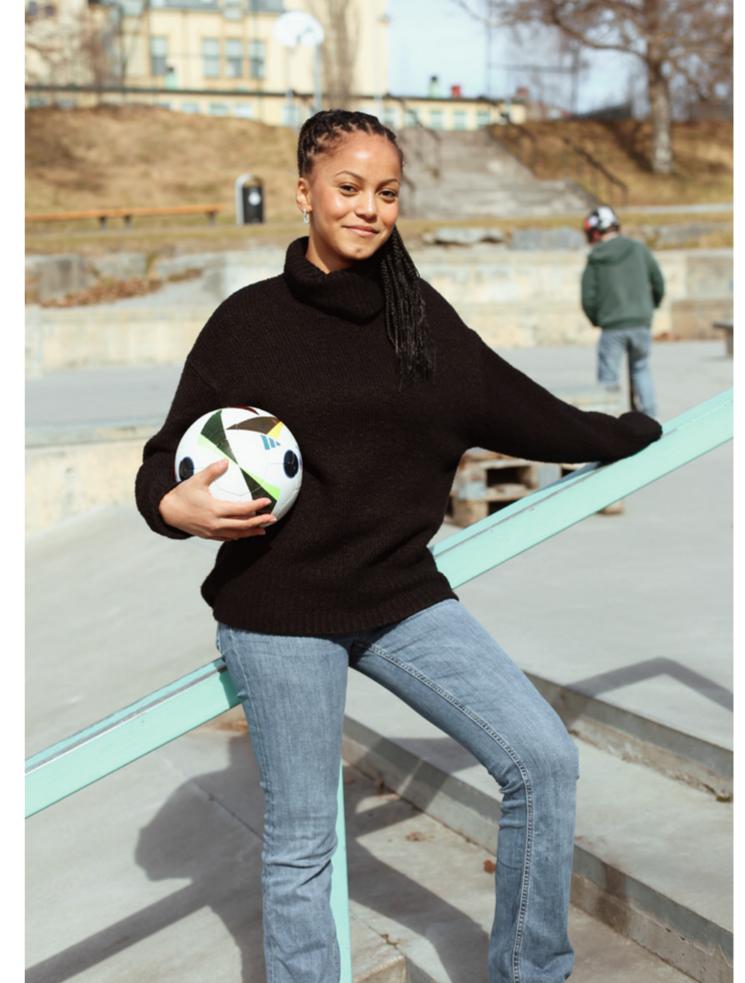
"The children are so talkative, so it's never awkward or anything. They're assertive. And I think they appreciate the snack times more than you might think. They have fun there and they talk to each other. It's during those times that they get to know new people too."

Rahel partly agrees that she is a role model for the children she meets.

"For some of the girls, perhaps. Some of them may see me more as a leader and a friend. That I listen to them and that they have someone who pays attention to them when maybe none of their friends do."

The plan for the future is to study social work in Stockholm. But for now, Rahel enjoys being in Hudiksvall and at Hej Aktivitet!.

"I like Hudiksvall. I probably wouldn't have wanted to grow up anywhere else because not much dangerous stuff happens here, which I'm very grateful for. If you had grown up in Stockholm, you might have grown up to be someone you don't want to be. So I think Hudiksvall is a very good city. And this is a job that I've never found it difficult to get to."



Rahel takes the kids to activitive such as soccer, jujitsu, or skiin



For nearly three decades, Pär Johansson has been tirelessly working to give people with intellectual disabilities the opportunity to become an integral part of society. Today, his dedication has taken Glada Hudik Theater far beyond Sweden's borders.

Text: Emma Danielsson

WHEN PÄR JOHANSSON SAW that people with disabilities were being sent to courses to learn how to tie their shoelaces, he became frustrated. Pär bought them shoes with Velcro, and instead suggested they start acting in theater. It's now been 28 years since he founded Glada Hudik Theater.

"After 28 years of thinking, I've concluded that it's not the duty of the disabled to understand society; it's the exact opposite. It's society's duty to understand them. And when Mats Melin, who plays Ica-Jerry, gets stopped on the street every few meters because everyone wants to take a picture with him – then we've come a long way."

On the pedestrian street in Hudiksvall stands a statue of Bosse, the theater's first member. Bosse was involved in starting one of the theater's biggest initiatives: Children aren't Born with Prejudice.

"Bosse said early on that he wanted to go out to schools and tell the kids that he's a person too. So we started going around and giving talks in schools together. And today, we can see a significant effect from that work. What is now called Catwalk in Schools is one of Sweden's largest school projects ever," says Pär Johansson.

Together is another project that Glada Hudik



Theater has started up, to show both children and adults that prejudice can be overcome. It all began when Västra School in Hudiksvall contacted Pär Johansson because they'd experienced difficulties integrating the mainstream school with the adapted school. The result was a theater project in which children from both schools took part together. What started locally in Hudiksvall then led to a tour around Sweden. Reaching out to children and young people is a heartfelt cause for Pär Johansson.

"It's with children that our society is shaped. Many prejudices come from the kitchen table; from the adults. It's our duty to give children a platform where they feel safe, and where they can integrate. That's why we address issues of exclusion and bullying. And we really get through to them. Our approach is not to pity them; it's to believe in them, and to challenge them. When you challenge people and give them that little push, you can also see it yield results."

The film How Many Lingonberries are there in the World? gave Glada Hudik Theater national exposure, while their international breakthrough came with the exhibition Icons, which has now toured worldwide.

"It's constantly rented out. Icons has been to South Korea, Oslo, Berlin, Washington ... And no matter where in the world we go, everyone listens when our actors start talking. We get incredibly positive feedback, and it's not thanks to us 'normals'. It's our actors who leave a mark. They break norms and affect people emotionally. They are themselves, and it's incredibly liberating," adds Pär, whose heart beats a little extra for Hudiksvall. "Hudiksvall is my home and my history. Hudiksvall has made it possible for us to work here and grow with Glada Hudik Theater. It's so incredibly genuine."

Glada Hudik Theater has now moved into one of the boathouses in Hudiksvall, giving the artistic director Pär Johansson a new idea.

"My dream is to open a café there, called Hillberg. The boathouses are the finest we have in Hudiksvall, and Niklas Hillberg is one of the theater's most popular actors. A reel of Niklas can get over 40 million views on Instagram. He's an influencer – but in a way that he's just being himself."

When asked if he'll work with Glada Hudik Theater forever, Pär's response is immediate.

"Yes. It's my whole life. This is my life's work. And the work is never done." \blacksquare





01 Hornslandet

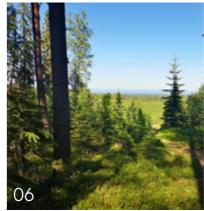
Ekopark Hornslandet offers something for everyone – from cheerful joggers and nature lovers to dedicated hiking enthusiasts. Here you'll find up to 13 hiking trails ranging from 0.5 km to 7 km, all winding through beautiful coastal nature near the sea. Along the way you'll pass through pebble fields, burial grounds, shipwreck remains, caves, and leafy groves. Be sure to combine your hike with a swim in the sea at Hölick's beautiful sandy beaches.

02 Njupfats Trail

The 8 km long hiking trail takes you up to Njupfatet – a beautiful, high-altitude fishing lake with clear water, where both trout and char swim. A fishing license is required. The lake is situated roughly halfway along the trail and is an excellent spot to rest and enjoy the lovely surroundings. The trail is a circular route that, despite the ascent, is easy to hike and offers a fantastic view even on the way down.











5 ACTIVE NATURE EXPERIENCES

Would you rather combine your nature experience with an activity? Here are five tips on outdoor activities that are well worth experiencing.

Cave crawling in Bodagrottorna Explore the 2,900-meter long Bodagrottorna - one of the world's longest known cave systems.

Canoeing on Svågan Glide quietly along the water

surface past the sandbanks and winding leafy groves of the River Svågan.

Plav a round at Hudiksvall's Golf Course

Hudiksvall's golf course offers a beautiful view over Hudiksvallsfjärden. Here, there is a varied park and forest course with 18 holes in scenic surroundings.

Cycle around Dellen During a bike ride around Northern Dellen, vou can admire both beautiful nature and magnificent Hälsingland farms. Bicycles are available for rent at Northern Dellen's family campsite.

Try your luck at fishing In Glada Hudik there are plenty of great spots for fishing - whether you're a beginner or a pro. Here you'll find the sea, flowing waters, forest tarns, larger and smaller lakes.

04 Delsbosvängen

Hike between the summer pastures along Delsbosvängen, which with its 19 km makes a perfect route for a full-day hike. The trail follows old paths used by dairymaids to move between the pastures during the summer pasture farming era. Råbergsvallen is a well-preserved, beautiful pasture lane built after the year 1700. If you continue from Råbergsvallen towards Klövsvallen, the trail mostly ascends and offers a fine view.

05 Kraterstigen

Kraterstigen winds its way across Avholmsberget, offering an enchanting view over the legendary Dellensjöarna and Dellenbygden's blue mountains. Along the way, you'll pass two lakes where you can see traces of the meteorite impact, the Ice Age, the land uplift period, trapping pits, and mine holes. The trail is 6.1 km long, and starts from Avholmsberget's parking lot, where there is also a restaurant, if you want to combine your hike with lunch or coffee with a stunning view.

06 Siuvallsleden

With its 31 km, Sjuvallsleden runs through seven summer pastures, offering beautiful and varied nature with lakes and viewpoints. The trail also takes you to the top of Blacksås, a legendary and majestic mountain that rises 457 meters above sea level. The hike is worth the effort, as the feeling at the top is breathtaking. The reward is a vast view over deep forests with Hälsingland's blue mountains as a backdrop. Sjuvallsleden is hilly, and best suited for a full-day hike or split over several days. Several overnight cabins are available along the way.

07 Norrboleden

During the 13 km long hike, you'll pass both the northern and southern shores of the Dellen lakes. In other words, there are plenty of swimming opportunities along the way. The loop trail also passes the beautifully located heritage farm in Norrbo and the Josefsberg viewpoint, where you can enjoy a beautiful view over southern Dellen and Norrbonäset.

From the metropolis of Karachi to Delsbo

She moved from one of the world's largest cities to the scenic village of Delsbo. Afifa found her dream job at Senseair and embraced an entirely new lifestyle.

Text: Emma Danielsson

AFIFA RAHATULAIN Occupation:

Production Engineering Manager at Senseair Age: 40 years old Lives in: Hudiksvall AFIFA RAHATULAIN was born and raised in Karachi, which, with over 20 million inhabitants, is the largest city in Pakistan and one of the largest cities in the world. Today, she works at Senseair in the picturesque village of Delsbo, which has just over 2,000 residents. The lifestyle change has been quite dramatic.

"I thought it was a big difference just moving to Stockholm, where there are far fewer people. Karachi is one of the largest cities in the world. There are people and cars everywhere," Afifa explains.

Initially she moved to Stockholm, where her husband Tahir was studying at KTH Royal Institute of Technology. When he later got a job as a systems engineer at HIAB, the family moved to Hudiksvall.

"It was February, in the middle of winter. Everything was white! It was a big difference. The sea was white; and you could walk on it," Afifa says, laughing.

At that time, Afifa was on parental leave but continued to study Swedish in Hudiksvall.

"Then I got a job at Senseair. There, I learned a lot about Hudiksvall and Delsbo. And I learned a lot of

Swedish; not just from my colleagues but from people everywhere. I have also tried to learn many Delsbo dialect words, but I always forget them," she laughs.

Afifa has a background as a civil engineer in industrial electronics, and later earned a doctorate in production technology at KTH. Today, she works as the production engineering manager at Senseair, a world-leading company in the manufacture of sensors for climate control, energy optimization, and alcohol measurement.

"I am responsible for daily operations in production. From designing the product concept or starting to build the product to delivery, I ensure everything runs smoothly and that we deliver high-quality products. Regarding efficiency, we also look at how we can improve and automate processes," she explains.

Senseair has its headquarters with development, production, research, and sales in Delsbo, but since 2018, the company has had Japanese owners.

"The strategy has changed significantly. Before, there wasn't much focus on digitalization because the need wasn't there. Now the vision is entirely different. We are focusing more on mass production and reaching new markets, where digitalization can help a lot. For example, machine vision, where cameras can detect errors better than our eyes can. We also work a lot with sustainability. We now have our own sustainability department, which I am part of," Afifa adds.

The company may have Japanese owners, but the knowledge and technology are based in Delsbo. "Senseair's founder, Hans Martin, still works at the company, and it's incredibly inspiring to talk to him. Our technology is cutting-edge. The knowledge here in Delsbo is unmatched anywhere else in the world," Afifa says, who views the company's future positively.

"Our research department is developing new ideas. It's very important to have a research department that is not entirely independent. Collaboration with











Sixten's world of fairytales

Meet Sixten Eriksson, the creative entrepreneur crafting imaginative adventures for the whole family. At just 16 years old, he has already started his own production company and organized public theater performances for four years.

Text: Emma Danielsson

SIXTEN ERIKSSON'S theater productions invite families with children into a magical world of fantasy; often with the forest as a backdrop. The performances stimulate children's curiosity and imagination, while contributing to vibrant and accessible theater in rural areas. Today, his productions are a much-loved and integral part of Hudiksvall's cultural scene.

"We create a wide range of events that cater to the whole family. Using the forest as a stage is an experience in itself. It has really been appreciated. Overall, we've received very positive feedback, and I feel that the people of Hudiksvall enjoy what we do," says Sixten.

Sixten has always been creatively inclined. He started acting at the age of six, and at 13, he organized his first public fairy tale walk. Three years later, he started his own production company alongside his high school studies.

"It has been important that people believed in me. When you're 13 and want to organize something, many might be skeptical. But I've received a lot of support from both individuals and companies. It's been an important confirmation that I've actually done something good," Sixten explains.

Initially, there were no large marketing efforts. Word about Sixten's imaginative theater adventures spread by word of mouth, leading to a growing audience. As interest grew and ticket sales increased, Sixten was able to expand his team and further develop his plays. The next step was to start his own production company. In addition to several actors,

the latest fairytale walk includes a costume designer, set designer, and songwriter.

"In the beginning, we were happy if a hundred people came. Now it has grown and become much bigger, and we want to put in the time needed to make the project really good. I manage most of the work, but we are a large team working together," Sixten explains.

Sixten has also organized ghost walks for children and horror walks for an older audience at the old Linspinneriet in Forsa. His dedication as an artistic director is unmistakable. Even though he is in the midst of preparations for the next fairytale walk in the forest, he is already brimming with new ideas.

"There are many ideas and thoughts for upcoming productions, but you have to pace yourself. I'm the one in the team with many new ideas, arriving the most energized in the morning and ready to try new things. It's good to have others who can slow me down a bit. You need to finish one project and think it through first."

As long as the interest remains, Sixten hopes to continue creating new productions. At the same time, he wants to enhance the audience experience.

"Our audience is what allows us to continue. We see that many customers return multiple times, which is great. Now that we've grown so much, we want to make the experiences more grand. We want to try something new with each project, while I also want to try new things as an individual and continue expanding my skills. And there is a lot of potential here in Hudiksvall."



SIXTEN ERIKSSON
Occupation: Project Manager,
Sixten Eriksson Production
Age: 16 years old
Lives in: Hög

"Using the forest as a stage is an experience in itself."



The theater walk "The Time Riddle" was Sixten Eriksson's latest production.









PRIDE HUDIK

Glada Hudik is adorned in rainbow colors during the annual Pride Week in August. Previous Pride Weeks have included rainbow picnics, poster-making workshops, after-pride parties, Rainbow Color Run, seminars, and a love fair. The week concludes festively with the traditional Pride Parade, which marches through the central parts of the city. It is a joyful and colorful celebration of everyone's equal worth, everyone's right to be who they are, and everyone's right to love whom they choose.

HUDIK CUP

Hudiksvall buzzes with life and activity when Hudik Cup takes place in June. The cup is a meeting place for soccer-loving children and teenagers aged 10–15. The event is organized by Strands IF, a local sports club that hosted the first tournament in 1979. Since then, it has grown to become one of Sweden's largest soccer tournaments, with over 300 participating teams and many on the waiting list. The cup attracts a total of 16,000 visitors to Glada Hudik.

"We've grown tremendously in recent years. This is a huge event for the entire city. Campsites are fully booked, and many hotel rooms are reserved years in advance. Restaurants, grocery stores, and hotels all experience a boost," says Fredrik Sundfors, coordinator for Hudik Cup.

During the cup weekend, para football is also organized. Hudik Cup Paratrophy is a mixed class held in collaboration with Hälsinglands Sportklubb to promote sports diversity and provide opportunities for people with disabilities to participate in an active and fun sports environment.

"It's both fun and important. And it's something we hope to develop further in the future," says Sundfors.

Teams from all over Sweden participate in the cup, and the feedback is generally very positive.

"When we conduct the cup survey each year, we usually hear: well-organized, friendly people, and a fantastic city."

HÄLSINGE MARKNAD

Hälsinge Marknad takes place on the first weekend of September, and has become Hälsingland's largest annual public event over the years. Calling it a festival for the people is no exaggeration, as the market weekend attracts more than 60,000 visitors. The tradition dates back a long time. In fact, markets have been held in the area since the early 1500s, when people walked astonishingly long distances to reach the market places. The sale of goods was early on accompanied by a plethora of amusements and games – a tradition that continues to this day. In addition to the offerings from numerous vendors, the amusement park area at Glysisvallen is a popular destination for many young people and families during the market weekend.

Shaping the future of healthcare

The Building the Future project represents a significant investment in new and modernized hospital facilities in Hudiksvall. The goal is to prepare healthcare for the future, ensure that patients continue to receive high-quality care, and provide staff with a safe and efficient working environment.



Supporting mothers throughout the entire birthing process and afterward, in the maternity ward is what midwife Karin Engholm loves most about her job. She welcomes the investments now being made in Hudiksvall Hospital.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photo: Per Lindberg

TO ENSURE safe and secure care of the highest quality in the future, major renovations and new constructions are currently underway at Hudiksvall Hospital. This initiative is part of Region Gävleborg's Building the Future project and involves a comprehensive modernization of the hospital. The new facilities will offer greater flexibility and be better adapted to modern healthcare and future technological developments.

For midwife Karin Engholm, this means she will be working in a completely new, nine-story healthcare building – the largest on the hospital grounds. The new main entrance will also be located there.

"I think it's very positive, of course. In the maternity ward, we rely on being close to the operating room, which is a high priority. It will also facilitate collaboration with the neonatal department. We will be closer to each other and work more together. We are working towards 'family-centered care' which means there should be no separation in the family if the baby needs to be cared for in the neonatal unit. They should still be able to stay together. We strive for that now as well, but the opportunities will be better in the new facilities. So, it's very exciting that there are investments being made."

After working as a nurse in the maternity ward and gynecology department for a few years, Karin furthered her education to become a midwife, and now works at Hudiksvall Hospital.

"The hospital is incredibly important for Hudiks-vall – and that there are investments being made in it. A hospital provides many job opportunities. And to attract potential new residents, I think many feel reassured knowing they can give birth in their own town. Additionally, there are many small surrounding communities that depend on our hospital. Many people travel very far to give birth here. The maternity ward in Bollnäs was previously closed, so they also come here," explains Karin.

Although extensive construction is currently taking place on the hospital grounds, Karin thinks the working environment in the maternity ward is good.

"Of course, it can be stressful at times and a lot happens quickly because it's an acute flow. But we have such clear routines for how we work in those

KARIN ENGHOLM Position: Midwife Age: 34 Lives: In Hudiksvall

"It's very exciting that there are investments being made"

situations, so it usually works well. And sometimes it's almost empty here. This means we have to be quite flexible, which I think everyone is good at. We help each other, and our managers support us in this. So, I would say the working environment is good."

Karin herself gave birth to both of her children at Hudiksvall Hospital and had positive experiences in the maternity ward. She believes most people feel the same way.

"My experience is that mothers feel safe here. It's not often we receive negative feedback about it being unsafe or stressful," she says.

Giving birth is, for many women, the most life-changing experience. Therefore, it is important that patients in the maternity ward receive good care and feel secure.

"We try to work so that each midwife cares for one mother throughout the entire process. This way, we can provide a lot of attention and spend a lot of time in the room – if they want that. I think this provides a great sense of security for the mothers. Here, it's rare to have multiple births happening at the same time, so I feel we have time for the mothers. I can imagine it's different in big cities where many are giving birth simultaneously," says Karin.

Karin completed her studies in January 2024, after furthering her education to become a midwife for a year and a half. She was offered the opportunity to further her education through her employer. Region Gävleborg offers educational positions to increase the opportunities for more people to continue their studies. This benefit means that you keep your base salary during the study period.

"My further education was paid for. I was employed in the maternity ward and was able to keep my salary while studying to become a midwife. This is something that is heavily invested in here. It has been very positive to have the opportunity to continue studying without having to take a pay cut," explains Karin.

As a newly graduated midwife, she enjoys her work.

"Supporting mothers throughout the entire birth process and afterward, in the maternity ward, is incredibly rewarding. And the teamwork we have in the maternity ward, I believe, is quite unique. As soon as someone is the slightest bit uncertain, we discuss things together, think out loud, and help each other. It feels very secure. It's also exciting to have variety; not knowing what the day will bring. Sometimes we have a lot to do and sometimes it's calm. I think it's both nice and exciting not to know."

When Karin and her husband were expecting their first child, they decided to move back to Hudiksvall, as they are both from the area. Proximity to family was one of the reasons for the move.

"We wanted our children to grow up with their grandparents, and for us to get support from our families. But it was also because it's much easier here. We both grew up in houses and wanted to live that way, and that was difficult in Stockholm. So, the housing situation definitely played a role. We save a lot of time living close to the hospital and having everything nearby in our daily lives. It's a simple life, and we have more time for each other as a family.

Healthcare of the future Region Gävleborg is making a significant investment into renewing and developing Hudiksvall Hospital. The aim is to prepare healthcare for the future, ensure patients continue to receive high-quality care, and provide employees with a secure and efficient work environment. Text: Region Gävleborg

Hudiksvall Hospital: Future plans for a better healthcare environment

REGION GÄVLEBORG is heavily investing in renewing and developing the hospitals in Gävle and Hudiksvall. The goal is to prepare healthcare for the future, ensure high-quality care, and provide patients with a secure and efficient healthcare environment.

What's happening at Hudiksvall Hospital?

Extensive renovations are underway, with old buildings either being rebuilt or replaced with new, modern facilities. These changes will create a hospital environment tailored to future healthcare needs.

Development of the emergency department:

To improve safety for both patients and staff, the emergency department has been redesigned. Modern facilities will meet current and future healthcare requirements, improving conditions for patients to receive the best possible care.

New technology and larger operating rooms:

In spring 2024, Hudiksvall Hospital will open its new central operating department. This features larger operating rooms, advanced ventilation systems, and other modern technologies that will enhance the care of the approximately 6,000 patients operated on here annually.

Robust and reliable buildings:

Hospitals are complex, and require reliable technical systems that operate around the clock. The new technical building is a crucial part of this area, and is essential for implementing all planned construction projects.

New care building for pediatric and women's healthcare:

A new, nine-story care building will be constructed, making it the tallest building on the hospital grounds. The new main entrance will also be located here.

What does this mean for patients and visitors?

Patient safety, accessibility, and a good working environment are always prioritized during construction. That said, you may notice certain disturbances, such as noise, increased construction traffic, changed parking options, and new routes while visiting or staying at Hudiksvall Hospital.

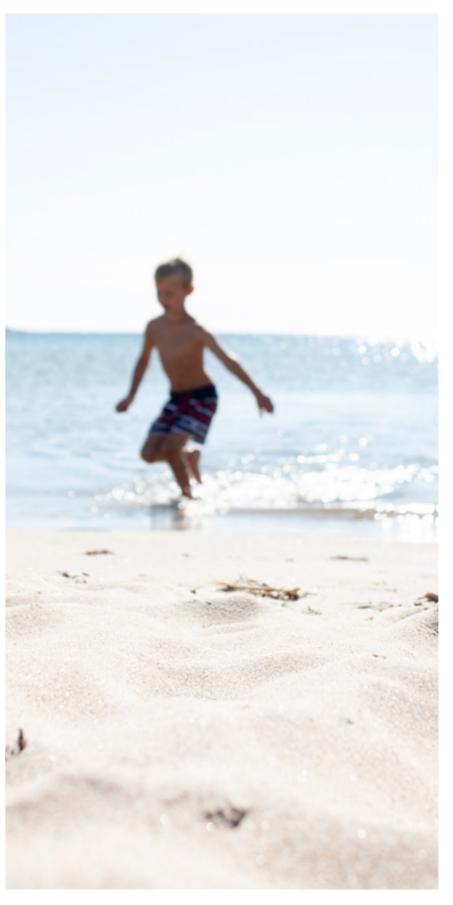
Your patience and understanding are crucial during this exciting time of change and development. For more information on ongoing and upcoming construction projects at Hudiksvall Hospital, visit Region Gävleborg's website: regiongavleborg.se.

Fun by the water

Take a dip in the blue, feel the soft sand between your toes, and listen to the rolling waves hitting the shore. In Glada Hudik, you're always close to the sea and lakes. If you're lucky, you might even have an entire sandy beach to yourself.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photo: Ida Zetterquist, Svart Pist Publishing





Hölick

At the far end of Hornslandet, surrounded by the sea and an eco-park with ancient forest, you'll find Hölick's beautiful sandy beaches nestled in sparse pine forests. The two largest beaches are Ystan, which faces the open sea, and Storsand, which is more sheltered. in a bay. Both offer light, fine-grained sand in scenic surroundings. The expansive sand dunes make it a perfect excursion destination for both the young, and the young at heart with lots of energy. It's easy to pass the time at Hölick. After a few dips in the blue, you can stroll through the charming fishing village or go on a longer hike along one of the fine trails. From the beach, you're also close to a restaurant, volleyball court, outdoor gym. outdoor padel courts, and adventure golf at Hölick Havsresort.

Malnbaden

Malnbaden is a fine sandy beach nearby the city, which you can quickly and easily reach from the city center by bus or bicycle. The fine-grained sandy beach is also home to piers, playgrounds and swings, a beach volleyball court and a restaurant.

Ankarmon

Take a refreshing dip at Ankarmon - a broad, fine-grained sandy beach located by Iggsjön, in Iggesund. The beach lies nearby Ankarmons Camping site, which hosts an outdoor gym, indoor golf, tennis court, exercise track and promenade in scenic surroundings.

Fönebo

Fönebo is beautifully located near Norrdellen, or the Hälsingland Riviera, which the beach is known as locally. The drive here itself is something special, featuring fantastic views over the lake on Norrdellsvägen.

Blodmyra

Blodmyra is a beautiful site near Norra Dellen's south beach, with a lovely view over the water. It is a perfect bathing area which also offers nice evening sun – perfect for a refreshing dip in the blue during warm summer evenings.

Klacks

In central Delsbo you'll find this fine gem where you just have to go for a swim. This is a perfect family swimming pool, located at Delsbo Camping campsite, with a changing room and ice cream stall close to hand.

For a vibrant countryside and active town

Across Hudiksvall, there is significant local engagement in supporting the countryside. By harnessing local initiatives and efforts, we create favorable conditions for thriving villages. Together, we lay the foundation for a vibrant rural life.

Text: Emma Danielsson



As part of the BID initiative, the square in Delsbo is set to become a vibrant location where people can gather.



THE EXPRESSION "GLADA HUDIK" (Happy Hudik) has been in use for a long time; at least since the early 1800s, when Hudiksvall's residents were reputed to be exceptionally cheerful and hospitable. When people are asked what they associate with Glada Hudik, two themes consistently emerge. One is the place itself, and the other is the unique spirit that many believe exists here.

Among the residents, there is a strong drive and commitment to develop and preserve the place they live or work in. This enthusiasm has been channeled into developing various areas in the municipality using the BID model. Business Improvement Districts are a collaboration model between public and private actors to develop an area. The work began in Hudiksvall in May 2021, and has since resulted in numerous positive changes. The town's utility boxes have been transformed into artworks, summer streets have been created, winter parks have been organized, and much more—all thanks to the collaboration between different stakeholders.

"We started with the town, and being nominated for City Center of the Year 2024 is a great validation that we are on the right track. It's thanks to the co-

"There's tremendous enthusiasm in the villages, fostering a great community spirit."

operation between businesses, the municipality, and associations, as well as the strong engagement here, that we've come this far," says urban and rural strategist Stefan Barenfeld.

Stefan, who is passionate about collaboration and a driving force in the BID process, saw additional opportunities with the cooperation model. This led to it being tested in rural areas, resulting in several exciting projects across the municipality. Currently, development projects are underway in Delsbo, Iggesund, Näsviken, and Forsa, all sharing several common features.

"There's tremendous enthusiasm in the villages, with a great community spirit. The ongoing projects focus on making the place more pleasant and creating meeting spaces. It's about developing what we have. For example, in Delsbo, there's a square with untapped potential. Now, it's being revitalized with a performance stage, and by organizing market days and other activities to create a lively place where people can meet."



MARIA FLÖJT HAS MADE a steady career climb at home – from Iggesund Paperboard, through Monitor, to a CEO position at another global company in Hudiksvall. When HSP Gripen's Chairman Johan Hedin called to offer her the CEO position, there was no hesitation.

"I've worked hard to get an opportunity like this eventually. Everything I've done in my career and every decision I've made has been to gather valuable knowledge to take the next step. In every situation, I thought about what I could learn that might be useful if I ever became a CEO in the future," says Maria.

After completing her economics studies, her career began with a summer job at Iggesund Paperboard, which later turned into a permanent position as team leader for the Amsterdam office, responsible for the Nordic and Benelux markets. After 11 years at Iggesund Paperboard, a desire for new challenges led her to Monitor, where she took a position as a business development project manager responsible for starting the company's operations in Germany.

"There are many global companies in Hudiksvall. I've really gotten to see the world – both at Iggesund Paperboard and at Monitor. It's been great working at companies based in Hudiksvall but still having a global workplace."

Maria has a positive outlook on career opportunities in a relatively small town like Hudiksvall.

"If you do a good job, it spreads quickly. It's an advantage compared to big cities where competition is much higher, and you're really one among many. At the same time, new skills are needed here in Hudik, and if you come from outside, you can get opportunities here that you might not have gotten in larger cities."

Like Maria's previous employers, HSP Gripen is also a global company, with customers worldwide.

"I will never be a stereotypical CEO"

The fact that Maria is a young woman in a CEO position in the traditionally male-dominated manufacturing industry has surprised international customers. However, she has been well received by both colleagues and the board at HSP Gripen.

"They've been brave enough to go against the norm. They are at the fore-front, and have been open to change and new ideas, so it's been very positive. I will never be a stereotypical CEO, so naturally, I have many eyes on me. But I'm motivated by that. I want to show that it's possible."

Today, HSP Gripen has a turnover of approximately 100 million SEK – a figure Maria has been tasked with doubling.

"It's a big responsibility. But I think it's a fun challenge – especially when I have the board's trust to do it my way. It's 200 million SEK that's the goal, and I have a blank slate. That makes it even more motivating," explains Maria.

To lead HSP Gripen into the future and towards increased growth, Maria has initiated a transformation spanning several areas. Developing sustainability efforts is high on the priority list.

"Sustainability is super important to me. In our industry, progress hasn't been significant, but it's important to me that we address this and start early. Already in the design stage, we look at how to design a grip with as little environmental impact as possible. We've also started breaking down our grips to see what emissions are generated for each individual component – from the steel and hose to a small nut. From this, we can place demands on our supply chain, and at the same time, see if we can move the supply chain closer to home," Maria says.

Maria also wants to find new circular business models that can generate new revenue streams. At the same time, the company will undergo a digitalization process.

"We are experiencing a generational shift in the workforce with many younger, newly graduated individuals demanding digitalization and modern working methods. Being able to offer more modern methods becomes a way to compete for labor," explains Maria.

Digitalization, electrification, and sustainability are also areas of focus within the Hudiksvall Hydraulics Cluster (HHK), where HSP Gripen is a member along with other local hydraulics companies such as Hiab, Sunfab, and Huddig. The idea is that collaboration, knowledge exchange, and research projects will allow the companies within HHK to find solutions to common problems.

"The clusters here offer an opportunity to exchange experiences. I feel that companies are very generous with each other. There's a good sense of cohesion, and we work together. Overall, there are many different networks and forums that provide support here in Hudik. If you reach out, there's a lot of help to get."

MARIA FLÖJT Position: CEO of HSP Gripen Age: 39 Lives: In Hudiksvall



"There is a kind of fearlessness mixed with quiet confidence in Hudiksvall, which is very cool."

companies at different levels to quickly increase the pace so that we could research and collaborate at the forefront of innovation. Of course, we had hiccups along the way, but we were surprisingly successful. And now ... we continue to forge industrial history in Hudiksvall," says Paul Bogatir, HHK's cluster manager.

The idea that a cluster of hydraulic companies could join forces and do research was not a given. But actually, the dramatic progress that followed positioned the companies in the cluster as innovation leaders.

"In Hudiksvall, we are way ahead of the curve when it comes to electrification. A local success, Huddig, has been super integral to this—for a company of their size, they were way ahead in launching an electrified machine. There is a kind of fearlessness mixed with quiet confidence in Hudiksvall, which is very cool. The cultural factor is really important, because it's at the core of our creativity and entrepreneurship." says Paul.

Disruptive technological shifts, like the green transition, drive the development of new processes and business models. Within HHK, a platform has been created for collaboration across company boundaries to allow research and innovation to be conducted, as some companies might not have the time or capacity to pursue these independently.

"HHK acts as a sandbox for talented individuals. If you take a group of engineers, put them in a creative atmosphere without daily worries, and give them an 'unsolvable' problem, things happen. In our sandbox, we have developed tools for creating innovation across company boundaries; super creative exercises that inspire. The results deliver patents, innovations, and solutions—these can be worth millions."

The hydraulics cluster was aiming to scale up when Paul Bogatir took over as cluster manager in 2016, beginning years of hard work. With an unwavering conviction that collaboration is the way forward, he reached out to other organizations, such as Linköping University and Region Gävleborg. This collective effort resulted in technology shared between companies, which in turn increased competitiveness.

The success has put HHK on the map, far beyond Sweden's borders.

"Our work has spread as far as Brazil, where academics are now studying the 'HHK model' to see how it can be replicated locally. It's amazing," Paul says. The success of the collaboration between companies that would traditionally be seen as competitors is due to several factors, such as trust, combined with Hudiksvall's long history of entrepreneurship and innovation.

"We wanted to harness this industrial creativity to make it scalable and repeatable, so that you can actually make money from it. Opportunities are created and problems disappear with a quick phone call to another member company's R&D team. Fantastic innovation at HHK is underwritten by this fundamental trust, where you can rely on each other. This is such a small community that it's the perfect place to succeed. You don't deceive the person you're standing behind in the queue at the local supermarket. You can't afford to," says Bogatir.

Building the Hudiksvall Hydraulic Cluster took time. Now, Paul is gearing up to

build the next project, called EVDArena (Electrification Value Discovery Arena). The project aims to develop a framework for collaboration between public and private actors, with the hope that the results will benefit society as a whole.

"We know we have created something special within HHK, but in order to create whole-of-system solutions, we need to start including much larger and broader groups of society. We need to involve the municipality more, so that they can increase sustainable procurement. Decisions must begin to be made amongst politicians that connect with what the companies are doing, so that industry's significant investments in sustainable technologies can make a difference. We need to align everything so that what we have done in HHK actually impacts society."

The hope is to develop tools and methods for system solutions that can potentially address major societal problems. And according to Paul, the perfect conditions for doing precisely this exist in Hudiksvall.

"Hudiksvall is in pole position. This city is like a microcosm. There are short decision-making paths, lines of communication are open, companies have come a long way in their development, and there is already established collaboration. It's very difficult to change the world, but you can definitely change Hudiksvall. At the last board meeting, municipal head Lena Högback was present. This would be difficult to replicate in a larger city. Meet our big advantage! She can attend a board meeting, meet all industrial companies, talk about restructuring; and then we can immediately take collective action. And if you change Hudiksvall, it's a pretty good starting point for the whole of Sweden."

Now, two years of exploratory work await, trying to crack the code for scaling up the collaboration and solutions that have been developed. This will be followed by another two years of work to roll out the results.

"Now we are trying to understand what kind of tools we are going to build, and how they can be replicated so that we can formalize the successful work we have done within HHK. When the results can be replicated, the ambition is to roll it out at EU level. Hudiksvall really will become the 'Centre of Excellence for Electrification of Working Machines'! And if we're lucky, we will find ways and tools along the way to solve other sustainability challenges," Paul adds.

"If we succeed, we will have done something that, as far as I know, does not exist anywhere else. Then we, here in Hudiksvall, will have created ways to really contribute to solving the climate crisis. And that's really awesome!"

PAUL BOGATIR

Role: Cluster manager for HHK and project manager for EVDArena Age: 49 years old Residence: Delsbo





Localflavors

The local pantry is brimming with locally produced products. Among Hudiksvall's culinary masters, everything from sweet candy to gourmet cheeses and locally brewed beer is crafted. Here is a selection of the region's delicacies.

Text: Emma Danielsson | Photo: Stéphanie Lombard

FORSA GÅRDSMEJERI

At Forsa Gårdsmejeri, cheesecake has been produced for sale for three generations. The recipe has been handed down from housewife to housewife since the 1500s.

"I am basically the only and largest producer in Hälsingland making Hälsinge cheesecake in a traditional way. So it feels like an important mission. I produce six tons of cheesecake every year. I buy the milk locally in Hälsingland," says Johanna Hildingsson, who runs Forsa Gårdsmeieri.

With that expertise, it's no surprise that her cheese-cake has won multiple awards at the Swedish Championships in food craftsmanship. Besides cheesecake, she mostly makes grilling cheese. But they also produce gourmet cheeses like brie, soft fresh cheese, and hard cheese.

FAGERSTRÖMS KARAMELLFABRIK

At Fagerströms Karamellfabrik, the candy is made from the same good recipes developed over 100 years ago. Here, anyone with a sweet tooth can find satisfaction. The family business is now run by the third and fourth generations of candy makers. This is genuine craftmanship, with flavors from the past.

"We have been in the same family for 102 years. It was my great-grandmother who started making candy in an attic apartment here in Hudiksvall. What we specialize in is traditional old-fashioned candy. But our single largest product is the Santa Clause Iollipop. The recipes don't change over time. You might change the process – but the base and the recipes are the same," says Johan Fagerström, who belongs to the fourth generation of candy makers in Hudiksvall.

In Fagerström's candy shop in central Hudiksvall, you can find the entire range – directly from the factory. Here, you can also occasionally watch candy being made up close.

STEAM BREW

At Steam Brew, you can taste locally produced beers brewed with great love for the craft. Tina Hansback and

David Smith opened the brewery in Västra Hamnen in January 2024.

"Beer is a passion for David. He comes from England and previously ran the pub, the Bell, in Hudiksvall." says Tina.

At Steam Brew, about 3,000 liters of beer are brewed each month. The brewery is located next to their tap room, where you can taste fresh beer directly from the tap.

"We also offer brewery tours, and accept bookings for private parties and corporate events," says Tina.

Simple dishes are also served at Steam Brew, although it is the delicious drinks that are the main attraction.

BERGLOCKS FÅRGÅRD & ATELJÉ

Around Hudiksvall, there are many cozy farmshops in rural settings where you can buy fresh products directly from the farm. One of them is Berglocks Fårgård & Ateljé, located in Forsa parish. The farm is run by Helena Persson Ovcina, who took over the farm from her parents in 2002. KRAV-certified lamb meat is available to order in the fall, and frozen lamb cuts can be bought all year round in the farmshop, where you will also find lambskins, soft pillows, sheepskin slippers, and cuddly teddy bears from the farm's own Gotland sheep.

TROGSTA HONUNG

Trogsta Honung operates beekeeping and sales in their own farmshop, which is beautifully situated by Kyrksjön in Forsa. Here you can buy KRAV-certified honey in various flavored varieties, made with a strong focus on organic production. They also collaborate with other local producers, meaning you can buy items like mustard, cheese cake, cloudberry jam, and smoked lamb sausage in the farm shop.

FRÄGSTA MEJER

Hälsingland meets Italy at Frägsta Mejeri. How about mozzarella, ricotta, and burratina – all made from milk from farms in Hälsingland? The delicious cheeses have won several gold medals at the Swedish Championships in food craftsmanship.

COLUMN: FINDING HOME IN A NEW PLACE

It's been almost *three years* since Emma Danielsson moved from downtown Stockholm to start a whole *new chapter* of her life in Hudiksvall.

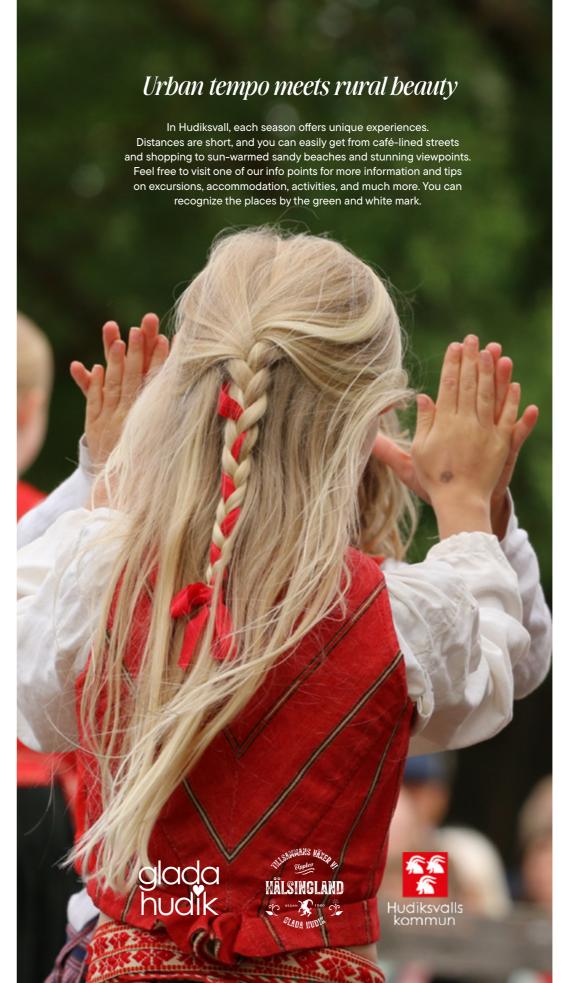


I CAN ADMIT that I felt like a grain of sand in a tsunami before the move, which meant leaving everything that felt safe and familiar and throwing ourselves into the unknown. The housing situation was not yet resolved, I had no job, and not a single friend in Hudiksvall. The questions were infinitely more numerous than the answers. But somehow, everything worked out for the best. Maybe I was lucky. But maybe the Glada Hudik mentality had something to do with it. Because I find that the people here in Hudiksvall are welcoming, curious, and willing to help if they can.

Looking back, I'm glad we dared to take the leap, because it's easy to get stuck in that familiar hamster wheel. But fortunately, life sometimes comes to a halt. Allow me to swear in church, but the pandemic actually brought something good with it too. It gave me time for reflection – just when I was in a situation where I needed to shake up my routine life. There I was, with a lot of dreams and thoughts about what life could look like if not for the stressful everyday life. For surely, there must be more to life than a full-time job and longing for the weekend.

You can fantasize yourself blue without benefit. It's only when you take the leap and actually do something different that change can happen. For me, I wanted to put down roots in a place. Make an impact on my children's lives. I wanted to create adventures in everyday life, go on explorations, take them out to sea, into the deepest forest, grill sausages on top of a mountain ... or just play Yahtzee in the garden together and laugh at bad jokes. Because it is everyday life that is life itself. Not that wonderful foreign vacation or that fancy apartment in Stockholm – which you obviously have to work overtime to afford. The mentality of having the most assets when you die is actually quite unpleasant. No expensive car will hug you when life hurts.

I feel like we've drawn the simple-life puzzle ticket from the life lottery with the move. Sure, the morning chaos at home is the same in Stockholm as in Hudiksvall when two adults and two children need to get to work, school, and daycare. But after that, a walk along the sea awaits instead of the subway crowds on the way to work. Here, I don't have to compromise between leisure, work, children, and housing. Now we have time to take a trip to the ski slope after school, and within five minutes, we can be at the swimming pool or the stable. On spring and summer evenings, we usually take a trip to the beach after dinner. There, the kids can play and splash their feet in the sea before it's time to head home. I can promise that they fall asleep both tired and happy. Trying to make the most of life is an ongoing project without a dead-line. But nowadays, I succeed much better at it. For after three years in Hudiksvall, I am still newly in love with the city – and with my new life.





HUDIKSVALL

ICA MAXI

Blockvägen 1, 824 34 Hudiksvall

Best Western, Hotell Hudik

Norra Kyrkogatan 11, 824 30, Hudiksvall

Hotell Strandpiren

Sjötullsgatan 15, 824 50 Hudiksvall

Servicecenter Hudiksvall

Trädgårdsgatan 4, 824 30 Hudiksvall

Hälsinglands Museum

Storgatan 31, 820 40 Hudiksvall

Kontorshuset Skeppet

Magasinsgatan 10, 824 45 Hudiksvall

FORSA

Ystegårn Café & Bistro (summer) Hillsta 8, 820 65 Forsa Forsa Handelsträdgård Lundvägen 65, 824 61 Forsa

SVÅGADALEN

Handlarn, Svågadalen Ängebo 83 A, 820 62 Bjuråker

ENÅNGER

STF hotell och vandrarhem Hudiksvall Kungsgården Långvind Kungsgården Långvind, Enånger COOP Nära, Enånger Enångersvägen 33. Enånger

DELLENBYGDEN

Delsbo Forngård
Ås 106, 820 60 Delsbo
Bjuråkers Forngård
Tå 110, 820 62 Bjuråker
Capricorn
Storgatan 13, 820 60 Delsbo
Dellenbanan
Stationsgatan 9, 820 60 Delsbo
Servicecenter Delsbo
Torggatan 1, Delsbo
Avholmsberget
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