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Article

High Neighbor! Residents' Social Practices in New Danish High-Rises

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Abstract
Historically, Denmark—like the other Nordic countries—has had relatively few, and relatively low residential high-rise buildings compared to other urbanized countries. Inspired by an international vertical urban turn, however, multiple high-rises have now been planned and built. This has refueled the debate on whether living in high-rises is compatible with Danish housing culture and our high standard of social life. From this local perspective, the article wishes to contribute to the emerging scholarship using an ethnographic approach to social life in high-rises while drawing on theories of practice and concepts of home. As part of the project "Vertical Residential Living: Updated Knowledge on Housing Culture and Social Life in Danish Residential High-Rises" (2020–2021), the article analyses more than 50 semi-structured interviews with residents and field observations of various social spaces in eight new high-rises in Denmark. Reflecting on the complex links between residents' homes, social practices, and shared spaces, the article presents three findings: First, vertical social life starts horizontally at the front door, outside one's home. Second, the character of social life taking place at the floor level is pivotal for entering the vertical community, and architecture, design, and interior are important here. Third, the article indicates that Danish home culture is echoed in residents' social practices in high-rises. Against this background, the article suggests that researchers also incorporate a more local and home-centered perspective on social practices, while studying—and planning—vertical neighborhoods.

Keywords
Denmark; high-rise; home; neighborhoods; social life; vertical practices

Issue
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1. Introduction

The vertical turn in global cities and urban development around the world (Harris, 2015; Kearns, 2012; Modi, 2014; Shilon & Eizenberg, 2021) has also affected Denmark (Council on Tall Buildings and Urban Habitat, 2022). Like many other Nordic countries, Denmark has relatively few and relatively low residential buildings compared to other urbanized countries (Drozdz et al., 2017; Lilius, 2021). Normally these only have 12 to 15 stories, while skyscrapers of up to 30, 40, or 50 stories are rare; however, some exist, and more are planned. This vertical turn has reinvigorated a historically rooted skepticism in the ability of high-rises to facilitate a satisfying social life, especially for children, which explains why Denmark never fully accepted the idea of residential high-rises.

Like most European countries, Denmark experimented with tall housing blocks during the 1950s and 1960s. However, several Danish architects criticized these high-rises for conflicting with the low-rise Danish housing culture and deemed them unfit for families with children (Nygaard, 1984). In 1969, the Danish Building Research Institute (now BUILD, Aalborg University) conducted a study that had a major effect on the debate (Morville, 1969). The report showed that children in high-rise buildings were less likely to spend time in common outdoor spaces and playgrounds than were children in low-rise buildings. Access to an outdoor social life also decreased with each increasing floor. The study concluded that high-rises were an unhealthy place for children to grow up:

> Now that all the mentioned negative factors of high-rise buildings for children's outdoor play have

> been revealed, one may ask why families with children choose this particular type of dwelling; it turns out that no one is motivated to make such a choice based on a consideration of the children. (Morville, 1969, p. 9)

The study was disseminated to the Danish public media. As a national newspaper headline summarized, high-rises amounted to "Seven Years of Prison for Children" ("Syv år i fængsel for Børn," 1968), connoting the age at which children in high-rises, according to the study, finally gained normalized access to social life on the ground level. The institute instead recommended low-rise housing and initiated a national architectural competition for experimental low-density housing in 1971, which added to the decline of Danish high-rises.

This critical attitude is not a uniquely Danish phenomenon. International studies often focus on residents' lack of social inclusion (Moser, 1981; Reid et al., 2017) and low level of social life (Fullagar et al., 2013; Haarhoff et al., 2016), underscoring the premise that sociality is challenged when you stack homes on top of each other (Hayden, 2002). For example, while recognizing social ties on each floor in a high-rise, Gifford (2007, p. 13) concludes that "social interaction is more difficult for residents to regulate. This can lead to withdrawal, and consequently, to the loss of community and social support" (Gifford, 2007, p. 13). In addition, examinations of safety and crime (Lees & Baxter, 2011) and a focus on deprived social housing estates (Kearns, 2012; Modi, 2014) also dominate international studies. This has led some researchers to conclude that the psychological and social critique is part of an inherited discourse (Kearns, 2012; Shilon & Eizenberg, 2021). However, an emerging body of ethnographic studies indicates the need for a more in-depth and thorough investigation of people's everyday practices in new urban high-rises (Baxter, 2017; Harris, 2015).

Based on the national Danish applied science project "Vertical Residential Living: Updated Knowledge on Housing Culture and Social Life in Danish Residential High-Rises" (2020–2021), whose results were published in 2021 (Mechlenborg & Hauxner, 2021), this article looks at social practices among residents in eight Danish high-rises. The broader social and cultural attention to home and social life has important implications, including decisions regarding major material alterations to buildings, infrastructure, and spaces, so the article wishes to contribute an ethnographic approach to research on high-rise living. The thesis is that practice theory (Schatzki, 2016; Shove et al., 2012) and a more home-oriented approach enable a better understanding of local housing traditions and social practices and therefore more effective planning of shared facilities, spaces, and functions.

2. New Approaches to High-Rises and Social Life in Planning and Research

Over the past 15–20 years, high-rise planning has seen a shift in target groups. Some studies argue that high-end buildings for the upper middle class and upper class with amenities that support community-building dominate the market (Fincher, 2007; Nethercote & Horne, 2016). Another study claims that planning favors occupants without families and children (Graham, 2016), while another comparative study of high-rise buildings in London and Melbourne shows how new high-end buildings have contributed to the gentrification of residential areas (Yuen et al., 2006). Fullagar et al. (2013) examine how various high-rise buildings in Brisbane target different groups with different housing preferences. However, Fincher points out, there is a mismatch between the intended target group and the real residents, because many of these high-end high-rise buildings are inhabited by students affected by housing shortages, which has consequences for housing quality and social life (2007). Also, Nethercote and Horne (2016, p. 1582) claim that urban practitioners are wrongly focused on high-end apartments for "young professionals and 'empty-nesters,' " therefore neglecting the many families and children that also inhabit the vertical city. Similarly, Whitzman and Mizrachi (2012) argue that the housing industry is not sufficiently aware of "vertical living kids," and therefore does not attend to children's need for shared spaces and safe pathways in high-rise planning.

However, the re-emergence of residential high-rises in global cities is also an introduction to new building typologies (Graham, 2016) and building techniques different from the earlier tall "black boxes" (Jacobs et al., 2007). Investigating these new typologies, Modi (2014) presents new, different kinds of high-rises that have added social spaces to the more conventional typology. While emphasizing the need for architects to facilitate social life in tall buildings, Modi (2014, p. 24) recommends transferring the "benefits of horizontal neighborhood communities that have for decades been the preferred environment for raising families" into vertical neighborhoods through the inclusion of semi-private spaces and shared facilities. Others suggest integrating elements from the city, arguing that social mix and mixed-use strategies can help to overcome the alleged lack of social life (Generalova & Generalov, 2020; Muhuri & Basu, 2021).

The "extraordinary vertical extension of built space" (Graham & Hewitt, 2013, p. 74) around the globe has also fueled an interest in ethnographic studies on the everyday lives of the new city dwellers (Graham, 2016; Whitzman & Mizrachi, 2012; Yuen et al., 2006). As Harris (2015, p. 609) argues, most research "across urban and political geography has tended to lack an engagement with these multiple everyday worlds," resulting in what he defines as a "hollowing out." According to Harris (2015, p. 607), "research on urban verticality risks replicating the panopticism of the omniscient and heroic downward gaze on the future city embodied by the modernist planner and architect," as described in Michel de Certeau's omnipotent view looking down from the World Trade Center.

In her work, Jacobs (2006) argues for a shift in perspective away from the building site as a firm entity and toward residential high-rises in their complexity of diverse networks of engagement, always in the making. Looking at vertical living as an ongoing "event" allows different individual experiences to exist mutually in the same space (Jacobs et al., 2007). This is the case in Arrigoitia's (2014) study of lifts, stairs, and walkways in a deprived high-rise in Puerto Rico. Drawing on "emotional geographies," Arrigoitia shows how building technologies can be seen as active mediators of the way personal and communal life are negotiated and remembered. The emotional aspects of space and everyday life are also at play in Nethercote and Horne's (2016) concept of "ordinary vertical urbanisms." Drawing on Harker's (2014, p. 323, as cited in Nethercote & Horne, 2016, p. 1584) similar work in Ramallah, Nethercote and Horne look at how families in high-rises in Melbourne are carriers of "complex and undervalued practices of what are thought to be normal (but not static) and common within and across intensive spatio-temporal relations." They conclude that families live in different "intimate geographies" that either enable or constrain sociality depending on their ability to create comfortable, mentally manageable spaces of everyday life. Shilon and Eizenberg (2021, p. 121) also emphasize the need for a "conceptual shift toward research on city users' experiences" by looking at how balconies and social media are entangled in and co-produce practices and emotional ties among vertical dwellers. They argue that material culture also embeds and produces emotional and cultural aspects of everyday life.

The point is that ordinariness is a window into how these geographies are constructed. As Baxter (2017) shows in his liminal work on the Aylesbury Estate in London, these studies are challenging the dominant "horizontal" perspective of high-rise living studies. Thus, Baxter argues that residents perform practices up and down, not only using lifts and stairs but via windows and balconies, when talking to neighbors on the street or actively participating in city life by gazing out, for example. The emerging interest in everyday life in high-rises by centralizing practices in high-rise studies is thus a turn towards the homelife of residents.

3. Practice Theory and Ideas of (Vertical) Homes

Practice theory has proven to be a useful tool for analyzing the ordinary due in part to its inclusion of materiality (spaces, facilities, technologies) and its focus on the routinized aspects of human conduct. Instead of focusing on structure, discourse, and individuality, it puts practice at the center of the social world (Schatzki, 1996, 2016). The aim is, first, to discover how various practices are performed and how they are interlinked (Shove et al., 2012). Of course, practices are performed by individuals, but practice theory looks at how individuals contribute to the maintenance of a complex network of practices. Thus, the individual can be considered a carrier of practices and the unique crossing point of many different practices in the individual's everyday life. As Reckwitz (2002, p. 249) explains:

> A "practice" is a routinized type of behaviour which consists of several elements, interconnected to one other: forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, "things" and their use, a background knowledge in the form of understanding, know-how, states of emotion and motivational knowledge.

Second, by introducing the concept of "general understandings," practice theory also studies how shared beliefs, concerns, fate, and collective values spread through practices (Schatzki, 1996). According to Welch and Warde (2017), general understandings are formulated both in sayings (the stories we tell each other and ourselves) and in doings (carried by practices). Third, practice theory has recently also started to include concepts of home and homemaking. According to Gram-Hanssen and Darby (2018), materiality in the dwelling can never be fully grasped without understanding home and the vision of the ideal home (or the general understandings) that forms our practices. Home implies emotions, memories, routines, intimacy, and questions of belonging (Blunt & Dowling, 2006). It involves placemaking, social status, and aspects of personal identity (Easthope, 2004). Home is the center of everyday life (Gullestad, 1989), but is not in itself a fixed entity (Douglas, 1991). Referring to "vertical practices," Baxter (2017, p. 350) explains how vertical living implies new aspects of home:

> If verticality as practice argues that verticality is not something that takes place in vertical landscapes but is actively constructed through action, then this foregrounds how verticality is engrained onto the body, memory and identity over time. This means that verticality does not just matter to residents, but can be central in their "being" at home, in the phenomenological sense.

By focusing on general understandings and practices, this article investigates how residents' social life reflects, conflict with, or is even encouraged by the shared spaces, functions, and facilities in eight high-rise buildings.

4. Introducing Eight Case Studies and Methods

The eight Danish high-rises in the study are the Silouette, in a small village outside Aarhus in Jutland; one tower from the Five Sisters buildings in Vejle, a town in Jutland; Campus College at South Danish University in Odense, Fyn; Bohr's Tower in the high-end district of Carlsberg in Copenhagen; the House of Amaryllis in an urban suburb of Copenhagen; the Silo by the harbor in Aalborg, the third biggest city in Denmark; Nordbro in the borough of

Norrebro, Copenhagen; and AARhus in the new district near the harbor of Aarhus in Jutland (see Figure 1). They were chosen from a longer list of new Danish high-rises. The first selection criterion was that residents had to be living there for at least six months, up to a maximum of 10 years. All the buildings are at least 12 stories tall, but, as noted above, Denmark—like the other Nordic countries—does not have a long tradition of tall buildings. Five of the eight buildings are 12 to 15 stories tall, two are 29 and 30 stories, respectively, while one is a mountain-shaped courtyard building with two towers, one 12 and the other 20 stories tall. All eight buildings vary in terms of architecture, context, ownership, and target group, as well as shared spaces and social facilities (see Figure 1).

Some of the high-rises were initially intended for a relatively narrow target group: Campus College for students only, Nordbro primarily for students and young people, Siloetten for local retired citizens, and Bohr's Tower for upper-middle class empty nesters. In all these cases except for Campus College, the residents' profiles ended up being much more diverse than planned. In other cases, greater variety in housing type and size was part of the planning: AARhus and Amaryllis Hus include dwellings for families with children, singles, and couples without children. The Silo in Aalborg combines social family housing, social youth housing, and exclusive owner-occupied penthouses of various sizes. In general, residents from low-income groups are less represented in the high-rises that are built in Denmark.

4.1. Analytical Concepts: Social Ideals and Three Types of Social Spaces

To some extent, all the high-rises in our study fulfill Modi's (2014) vision of socially sustainable high-rises by adding social spaces to their fabric. Except for the Five Sisters in Vejle, whose residents have access to an external social room within walking distance of their building, all eight high-rises offer shared spaces within the building structure: lobbies with furniture to sit in, shared facilities with workshops, guest rooms, kitchens and bar areas, rooftop facilities, and public cafés. As variation in shared spaces emerged as key to the investigation of social practice, we recognized the need to define the different types of shared spaces, functions, and facilities.

Name, and year		*Facts*	*Shared spaces*
The Silouette, the village of Løgten, 2010 C.F. Møller for Løgten Midt A/S	 © Julian Weyer, C.F. Møller Architects.	Detached high-rise / 12 estores / 21 units / suburban	Workshops for DYI, communal rooms for metings and private parties. Guestroom. Roof top terrase.
The Five Sisters, city of Vejle, 2013 Arkitema Architects for NCC and Domea Vejle-Børkop	 © Arkitema Architects	Detached high-rise / 13 stores /60 units / suburban	None
Campus college, Odense, 2015 C.F. Møller for A. P. Møller Fond/ Fonden Campus Kollegiet	 © C. F. Møller, Torben Eskerod.	Deatached high-rise / 14 stores / 250 units / open land	Each floor has shared kitchen/ living room. Roof top terrasses, meeting- and social room. Laundry facility and bike rent in the basement. Cafe and lounge area at ground floor.
Bohr's Tower, Copenhagen, 2016 RUBOW, Wilhelm Lauritzen Architects, Christensen & Co. Arkitekter A/S, Cobe Arkitekter, EFFEKT I/S and Nord Arkitekter	 © Vilhelm Lauritzen Arkitekter, CCO, Cobe, EFFEKT og Nord Architects / Rasmus Hjortshøj	Highrise on base / 29 stores / 88 units / urban context	Lounge area at the entrance

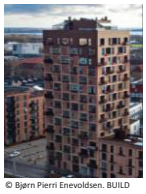
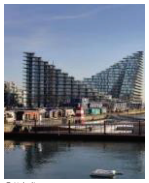
Name, and year		*Facts*	*Shared spaces*
Amaryllis Hus (the House of Amaryllis), The borrough of Valby, 2018 LOKAL, Mangor & Nagel for FB Gruppen	 © Bjørn Pierri Enevoldsen. BUILD	Courtyard with tower / 15 stores / 53 units/ suburban context	Shared courtyard garden and roof top terasse (buildings next to). Shared communal house for the area.
The Silo, city of Aalborg, 2018 C.F Møller Architects for A. Enggaard A/S, Østre Havnepromenade A/S and Himmerland Boligforening	 © Julian Weyer, C.F. Møller Architects.	Tall housing block / 13 stores/ 114 unites/ urban-open (harbour)	Laundry facility and postal area for residents at the social housing part of the building.
Nordbro, Copenhagen, 2019 © Arkitema Architects – Jens Lindhe.		Courtyard with tall tower / 30 stores /217 units / urban	Fitness, landry, work spaces, multispace with kitchen, shared inner coartyard with grills and tables, and a communal house with bar facilites
AARhus, Habour in Arhus East, 2019 BIG, 1:1 Landskab for Kilden & Mortensen	 © Nybolig	Mountainshaped courtyard building / 12 and 20 stores/ 255 units / urban-open context (harbour)	Shared inner courtyard, accesseble from hallways and private front yards. Communual house only for residents that have bought a share

Figure 1. Description of the eight case studies. This article is based on more than 50 interviews with residents in eight newly built Danish high-rises with various kinds of shared spaces, functions, and facilities. Source: Translated and edited from Mechlenborg and Hauxner (2021, pp. 24–25).

Based on expert interviews, not included here, we categorized the shared spaces into three types:

- Necessary shared spaces such as corridors, lifts, stairs, and entrances. These shared spaces are needed either for safety reasons (like fire stairs) or as part of the building infrastructure (distribution halls, corridors, etc.).
- Housing support facilities offering amenities that would otherwise have been included in the dwelling or purchased outside, such as laundry facilities, guestrooms, open offices, and workshops.
- Social spaces related to facilities which are used for community activities and social events. In this category, we find shared living rooms, rooftop terraces, cafés, and communal spaces. These spaces are often organized by groups or residents or facilitated by housing organizations.

These three categories allow us to compare social practices across the eight high-rises and across households based on the type of ownership, age, gender, and socio-economic differences, though we recognize that all of these factors are dimensions of the production and consumption of social life (Kearns, 2012). Moreover, people have divergent perceptions of social life, and access to shared facilities does not necessarily indicate a high level of social life (Costello, 2005). To recognize this complexity, the study introduces two concepts related to social ideals in high-rises: "the hotel" and "the vertical village." These are treated as ideals in which residents' expectations of—and satisfaction with the level of social life in their building—are seen (see also Llewellyn, 2004).

At a hotel, comfort, privacy, and service are key concepts. This means that a dwelling in a high-rise building primarily functions as a place—a comfortable oasis—to which one can retreat and recharge—that is, to rest, sleep, and be oneself (Yuen et al., 2006). The concept of the retreat is linked to the idea that active social life takes place outside the building (Costello, 2005). It also means that the perception of one's neighbors is colored accordingly. In a hotel, guests respect each other's need for privacy and tranquility. Shared areas and facilities are experienced as representing the hotel's socio-economic status rather than as potential spaces for use (Costello, 2005). Hence, hotels are primarily a site for private activities and not a space for social contact between residents. Our understanding of the hotel typology draws from exclusive, high-end buildings in the US, Australia, and Asia (Gifford, 2007; Graham, 2016).

The vertical village as an ideal is historically rooted in modernist buildings exemplified by the Mark Twain Village in Chicago, in the US, from the 1930s, which contained common facilities such as an outdoor swimming pool, tennis court, supermarket, small shops on the ground floor, a bar and a sunroof at the top, laundry facilities, an indoor garage, and a welcome lobby (see, among others, Wekerle & Hall, 1972). The intention of the building was to enable residents to live together as in a village, without having to leave the premises for shopping, social activities, or cultural input (Llewellyn, 2004; Wekerle & Hall, 1972). In our interpretation, the vertical village is designed for residents who seek an active social life and strong community ties.

The hotel and the vertical village are both social ideals, and none of our high-rise cases is a pure example. However, we identified features of each type based on the way our cases had been developed and in relation to target groups, programming, accommodation, layout of common areas, and—not least—branding. We recognize the same features in residents' descriptions of their housing preferences and expectations in their descriptions of social satisfaction (Mechlenborg & Hauxner, 2021).

4.2. Interviews, Recruitment, and Thick Description

While this article focuses on more than 50 semi-structured interviews (between five and eight interviews in each building), the interviews are part of a much larger data set, including desk research of plans, visuals, diagrams, and marketing material (i.e., the building's brand); architectural analysis; and on-site observation of practices in shared spaces and facilities. In each case, we also interviewed between three and five professionals, including architects, contractors, planners, advisors, real estate agents, building operators, and people working in municipalities. However, in addition to the more than 50 interviews, only our observation notes and photos of the shared spaces in the buildings are considered here. Finally, this article only addresses social life and not the other themes that were part of the project.

All interviews were conducted as semi-structured interviews based on the same interview guide. Initially, a series of pilot interviews were conducted to test questions, structure, and themes. The interview guide included questions such as: What was your motivation for moving to a high-rise building? What are the advantages of living here? What are the disadvantages of living here? Do you use shared facilities and spaces, and if so, how? To better understand the links between residents' practices and expectations for social life, we initially asked them to rate their satisfaction with social life from 1 (the worst) to 5 (the best). We also added a question asking residents to describe their movements through the building—from their dwelling down to the ground level and outside—and what happens during their daily routines of leaving and arriving home, socially. This question turned out to be central to our understanding of how social practices and social spaces are linked, individually and collectively (see also Latham, 2012).

Although we strived for a representative recruitment of informants, our interviews were predominated by "case ambassadors"—that is, informants presenting their buildings in a positive light—most likely, because they as residents had invested time and resources in their dwelling and thus automatically attributed positive

properties to it (Blunt & Dowling, 2006; Després, 1991). Also, we found that living in a Danish high-rise is to a large extent an active housing choice for residents. This is especially true for buyers of owner-occupied homes in high-rise buildings, who also see it as an investment. However, we also heard from critical voices among the residents. An important task was to look beyond biased and subjective attitudes to identify general perceptions.

All interviews were subject to "thick description" (Ponterotto, 2006), through which a general narrative was produced and central quotes were selected and later categorized into themes and sub-themes. This means that quotes presented in the article are representatives of a larger data set. All informants in this article have been anonymized.

5. Findings: Residents' Social Lives in Danish High-Rises

5.1. Basic Social Recognition Is a Stepping-Stone

In the stories, residents told us, the physical space in front of their private doors was an intimate starting point for—or a barrier to—social contact. For some residents, greetings and small talk were enough, while others were keen to establish more personal relations. But being able to recognize one's close neighbors by face, name, and family form was generally described as an important part of one's housing quality. As a woman in the Five Sisters explained: "Of course, you need to know your neighbors—at least by face recognition. I mean, if anything happens, and you would be in need of help." Also, we talked to some residents who felt socially estranged when they left their dwellings. Their close neighbors were unfamiliar to them, and they did not exchange greetings when they passed each other, which—in some cases—had an effect not only on home attachment but on a fundamental feeling of belonging. A student in the Silo in Aalborg living on a floor with only youth housing told us: "I thought that living together with so many young people would automatically lead to a social life. But I only see somebody once or twice a week. I try to say hi but it's rarely somebody I know." Now she considered whether the comfort of her dwelling was enough to make her stay. Another example was a single, middle-aged woman living in Nordbro who had moved in as one of the first residents and had been looking forward to being part of a building that, according to the marketing material, was programmed for social life. She explained:

> In the beginning, we only lived five in the house. I first met someone around my age. I could well imagine doing something with her. We talked about that a bit. But I have not seen her since. I do not know where [which door] I should go and knock.

A few months after our interview, she told us that she had chosen to move. Neither of these two residents were able to create a suitable "intimate geography" that was comfortable and mentally manageable for enabling social contacts (Nethercote & Horne, 2016).

By contrast, residents that knew and talked to their neighbors and regularly met them in and outside the building were more likely to express satisfaction with their social life. The social ties on one's floor were also a natural steppingstone to practical, neighborly help, dialogue, and social activities, if desired. The following is from an interview with an older couple in the Silouette in Vejle: "We have a fantastic neighborhood on our floor. We know everybody. For Christmas, all our neighbors from the entire staircase are invited to our floor for Christmas fun. It's nice and everyone thinks it's nice." This indicates that social activities in the intimate space close to one's dwelling work as an entrance into social activities across floors. Conversely, not knowing your close neighbors and not having a regular routine with people that you recognize—and who recognize you—may prevent you from entering the larger community. As a young woman in Nordbro, Copenhagen, told us, she was not able to identify her neighbors, and this lack of social recognition was something she carried with her down the elevator and through the building with all the social facilities: "[I think] the reason why I haven't thrown myself into social activities is that I don't have any sense of who the others are."

We also met residents who did not express an interest in being part of social life, either on their floor or in the building. Based on our concept of "the hotel" as a social ideal, these residents mostly perceived their homes as private sites where they could withdraw from their work/the city/public life and be on their own (Després, 1991). In general, they rated their satisfaction with their social life in the building as high and told us they did not need more interaction. Some would make fun of neighbors who had asked them to join collective dinners or suggested social activities. One man living in Bohr's Tower joked about his neighbors, whom he claimed wished to "take their suburban lifestyle into the building." These residents felt it was good for the social life in the building that others had a social life, as long as they did not have to participate themselves. Also, their favorite kind of shared spaces tended to fall within the category of housing support facilities, such as fitness centers and guest rooms, which would increase their comfort level and quality of life rather than their social interaction (see Section 4.1).

However, several of these hotel-oriented residents also knew who was living on their floor, and they were able to recall their names and families and would greet them if they met them in the hall or the lift. In these cases, the social recognition was there, but mostly in relation to potential encounters to be avoided, as this quote from a father in Bohr's Tower suggests: "My son and I always joke when we take the elevator down. We hope it will not stop at any floors, so we can go down alone. But of course, if it does stop, we will be friendly." The point is that hotel-like residents do not seek anonymity

or total withdrawal from social encounters when living in high-rises in Denmark; they just avoid—deliberately or unintentionally—progressing from social recognition to social activities. Social recognition close to one's home is seen as an important aspect of home comfort.

5.2. Programming of Intimate Social Spaces

The establishment of basic social recognition shows how subtle material culture and social behavior are co-produced. As Modi (2014, p. 30) suggests, conventional tall buildings lack "semi-private spaces" that could "extend from the movement spines, such as corridors and elevator lobbies, forming a hierarchy of interactional spaces." Such spaces, she argues, would serve as alternatives to the front gardens of low-rise suburban areas. While recognizing the argument, our study also found that—especially in tall buildings with a high social density—the need for semi-private spaces is not only a matter of size, but a matter of texture, design, and residents' ability to personalize and domesticate these spaces (Després, 1991). In our study, some distribution areas were seen as impersonal, uninviting spaces with no reason to stay. These were described, variously, as "anonymous long hallways" with "heavy safety doors" made using "industrial materials" and having "no daylight" or personal attributes that indicated who lived behind the doors (from interviews with residents in Nordbro and AARhus). A resident of Nordbro tried to explain why she did not talk to her neighbors: "I think it has to do with the doors. There are so many doors that need to be opened and closed. It is difficult to find your way. I think we need more open spaces, where we are more likely to bump into each other." In the Silo, residents complained to the housing association because they did not like the interior design of the corridors. As one resident put it: "It was really bad in the beginning. Pure concrete and a cold expression. When they put carpet [on the floor], it helped. Now it is cozy."

Based on residents' stories, we identified several factors that affected their experience of the necessarily shared spaces close to their dwellings: (a) the number of dwellings on the floor or hallway, (b) residents' attitude toward the architectural style, (c) the size and accommodation of the room, and (d) the possibility of personal adaptation.

Personal adaptation was mentioned often as a sign of social invitation. For example, a sign with a family name on the door or benches, posters, and plants made the areas familiar. In some high-rises, residents were allowed to leave their strollers, shoes, and umbrellas in the hallways, which helped turn anonymous neighbors into lived lives with familiar faces. Families with children would recognize dwellings that also had children, and then knock on the door or wait to meet them in the lift, as a mother in Amaryllis House told us.

In the Five Sisters, several residents highlighted the small, square-shaped distribution room between their dwellings as the most important social space. The room had the same wooden floor with heating as in their own apartments, and only four apartments faced the room, making it warm, inviting, and pleasant to stay in. Many residents hung pictures on the walls and placed benches, plants, sculptures, or personal belongings here; these objects represented personal symbols of who they are while also creating a space for dialogue. As formulated by one resident, "It is warm here, the light is good, and the floor material is the same as in the homes—wooden floors. The hallway is like a living room." Several residents in the Five Sisters had also taken the initiative to decorate the entrance hall and corridors with plants, art, and information for residents to make it "homey," as one woman put it (see Figure 2).

Figure 2. Hallway, Five Sisters. Scale, material, and design can enable or hinder social interaction. Residents who are allowed to put personal stuff in the hallways find it socially inviting. Source: Mechlenborg and Hauxner (2021, p. 40).

According to Després (1991), an important dimension of homemaking is the ability to materialize one's personal values in one's surroundings, either in a phenomenological sense by maintenance, changing, adjusting, or renovating the physical setting (for example, DIY) or by adding personal attributes like photos, personal belongings, or children's drawings. While these practices are mostly linked to the study of private space, our study shows that residents in some high-rises conduct some of the same homey practices (Després, 1991).

5.3. Social Practices in Social Spaces and Housing Support Facilities

Based on our initial findings regarding a home-centered social life in our cases, we also investigated what effect this had on additional shared spaces, such as housing support facilities and social spaces (Figure 3).

According to our interviews and observations, housing support facilities were generally used individually and were often embedded in residents' daily routines. In general, such spaces were present both in high-rises branded as "vertical villages" for residents with high social expectations (such as AARhus, Nordbro, and Campus College) and in "hotels" for residents with low social expectations (such as Bohr's Tower).

In both cases, we found that these spaces were important mediators for informal social interactions between residents. Standing together in the postal area, spending time in the workspace, doing the laundry, or working in the shared open office encouraged people to interact. As we have seen with social interaction on the floor and in the infrastructure of the high-rises, however, this interaction involves an embedded ambiguity: For some residents, going to the shared parking lot or laundry facility was an exercise in avoiding social contact, without being unfriendly, however. For others, these spaces were potential platforms for conversations and social interaction, rather than mere workspaces. As a woman from the Silhouette told us, going to the laundry facility had a double purpose for her and her husband: "We go there to do our laundry, but also to meet people and to talk to those who are up for it." Quotes like these also indicate that it is socially accepted not to interact at a housing support facility, which underscores its potentiality.

Spaces for social activities and community events were mostly available in residential buildings branded as vertical villages. This was particularly the case in Nordbro and Campus College, two different high-rises with shared social spaces and facilities and branded as prioritizing social life and community commitment (see Figure 1). In Campus College, applicants were asked to submit a motivation application outlining how they wished to contribute to the community. In contrast to housing support facilities, we observed that social spaces generally did not appeal to individuals but were used by small groups—neighbors that already knew each other, households, or groups of friends. Alternatively, they were used by social committees or self-organized groups that planned events, social traditions, and activities for residents in the building, like carnivals, parties, communal dinners, and Christmas gatherings.

In some cases, the architects had worked strategically to break down the scale of the building into smaller social units by distributing the social spaces and housing support functions more evenly and even combining them. This was the case at Campus College, where a kitchen and living room were established on each floor in the common area by the elevator. This solution created several more intimate social spaces in which neighborhood contacts and housing support facilities were limited and horizontally organized. Residents at Campus College also told us that these horizontal social spaces meant that the building—despite more than 250 housing units—felt socially welcoming (Figure 4).

Compared to the social potentials of housing support facilities, we observed that organized social spaces were often organized or branded for specific target groups or lifestyles. Like the rooftop garden project in Amaryllis

Figure 3. Housing support functions. A fitness room in Nordbro, Copenhagen (left) and a workshop for senior residents at the Silhouette, Løgten (right). Housing support facilities can be used individually, but they also invite residents to interact due to the need for common usage guidelines. Source: Mechlenborg and Hauxner (2021, p. 129).

Figure 4. Horizontal social spaces. Floor plan of the Campus College's sixth floor. At Campus College, every floor has a shared kitchen and living room located in the distribution area next to the elevator in the core of the three residential areas with a total of 21 units. Source: Mechlenborg and Hauxner (2021, p. 45), with the courtesy of C. F. Møller Architects.

House, or the bar facilities at Nordbro, Copenhagen (Figure 5).

In Nordbro, the students and young people we spoke to were very happy with the bar facility, while the older residents did not feel it was for them and had stopped going there. One woman with a steady job, aged 30, told us she was very keen on having a social life; however, she felt that the facilities were not for her but for a younger age group. In AARhus, a high-rise with 255 units, planners had deliberately worked on creating a committed community for the few, rather than appealing to everyone, by offering residents to become shared owners of a common house. With this model, AARhus succeeded in getting those interested to take responsibility for the

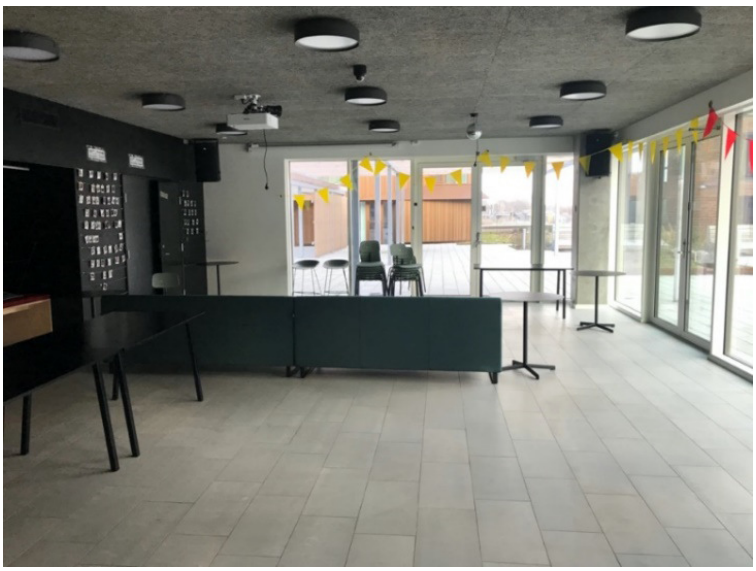


Figure 5. Bar for residential activities at Nordbro. While students and young people find these facilities fantastic, others feel excluded. This points to the importance of target groups and cohesion between lifestyle and shared facilities. Source: Mechlenborg and Hauxner (2021, p. 143).

community space. This indicates that while these social spaces are on the front stage of branding and marketing, they do not necessarily include residents who would like to join. Rather they require a deliberate action by residents (see also Generalova & Generalov, 2020) and a closer link between residents' lifestyles and the specific facilities, as Fincher (2007) also suggests in his study.

5.4. How Danish Skepticism Indirectly Inhabits Residents' Stories of Social Life

As Baxter (2017, p. 399) argues, home making is "a complex practical activity that involves the addition of material and imaginary dimensions to home." In general, we noticed that many residents in our study used the conventional Danish suburban way of life to explain differences and similarities when we asked them about their life in their high-rises, especially, when they talked about their balconies and access to light and fresh air, but also when explaining how they perceived social life. A significant portion of the residents we spoke to had personal experience with suburban living (empty-nesters and retired couples or singles), which could explain the comparison. However, residents that had only lived in cities or in apartments would sometime also use ideas about Danish suburban culture to underscore their point of view (such as the resident from Bohr's Tower who made fun of his neighbors' "suburban life").

In addition, residents did not automatically associate the high-rise building typology with their housing choices. They often referred to their buildings using other terms, such as a tower, house, multi-story building, or college, or they would call them by the name or nickname: "AARhus" or "Sisters" (the Five Sisters, Vejle). Even residents of Bohr's Tower and Nordbro in Copenhagen, both classic tall buildings with 29 to 30 floors, did not consistently associate their buildings with a high-rise typology. As a resident of Bohr's Tower answered when we asked if he considered himself to live in a high-rise: "No, I do not think I would say that. I would say I lived in a tower. The big tower." Similarly, a resident in Nordbro said, "I like to call it the tower at Norrebro station."

For some residents, the high-rise building typology was decidedly misleading. Some explained that they did not think their building's physical shape resembled a conventional high-rise building; this perspective dominated our interviews from AARhus and Amaryllis House and suggests a rethinking of the typology (see Figure 1). Others had never considered their building to be a high-rise. For many, the term "high-rise" either belonged to the infamous concrete social housing blocks of the 1960s or something found in large, international cities such as New York or Dubai. In both cases, high-rises were associated with social density and social isolation. A couple from Siloetten in Løgten, when we asked if they lived in a high-rise building, answered: "No. Here we have social clarity, and it is easy to get to know everyone." Many of the residents we spoke to, however, considered the building they lived in as a new type of construction, not necessarily affiliated with existing high-rises typologies, but with a re-thinking of Danish dwellings: "We wanted our new dwelling to be different, and it is. A bit like an adventure," a resident of the Five Sisters told us. This underscores how residents are more likely to experience their way of living, not from the position of an outside view or as part of a larger structure, but from the inside, through the perspective of home.

6. Conclusion: Social Practices Are Also Bound to Local Home Culture

From previous research, we know that social ties in high-rises are strongest on the floor level (Gifford, 2007). We also know that dwellings in high-rises enable residents to conduct vertical social practices (Baxter, 2017), and that building infrastructure like lifts and stairs, as well as balconies and walkways, can be seen as both personal and collective mediators of memories and social life (Arrigoitia, 2014; Shilon & Eizenberg, 2021). These studies suggest looking closely at the links between forms of bodily activities, forms of mental activities, spaces and facilities, and individual and collective actions. Thus, the recent ethnographic turn in high-rise studies emphasizes the need to better understand the complex ways in which vertical living, social life, and practices are entangled (Harris, 2015; Jacobs et al., 2007). Our study of social practices in contemporary Danish high-rises has used practice theory to investigate the social practices of residents (Schatzki, 1996). While focusing on individuals as carriers of practices, involving general understandings of home, social life, and—in this case—high-rise living from a Danish perspective, we have investigated how necessarily shared spaces, housing support facilities, and social spaces inform and influence these practices and vice versa (Welch & Warde, 2017). Based on our interviews and observations, we can summarize three main findings.

First, the article suggests that social life in Danish high-rises starts horizontally at the private front door. That is, social functions and community activities are not the main drivers in vertical neighborhoods, though they might contribute to strong social ties and interaction. The fundamental factor in building vertical neighborhoods—at least in Danish high-rises—is basic social recognition between neighbors living next to one another. Also, based on the stories we heard, social recognition—or the lack of it—outside your door is something you carry with you when you leave the horizontal space of your floor and move vertically up and down in the building's infrastructure and into additional shared spaces, such as when you do your laundry in the common facilities, pick up your mail, or meet residents at the workshop while fixing something that is broken in your home. Housing support facilities like these are individual platforms for potential social meetings that may lead to more active and committed social relations. The potentiality of

social life is key. Knowing one's close neighbors enables the possibility of more. This potential reflects individual needs and abilities to connect, according to the social ideals of the hotel (for people with a low interest in social activity) or the vertical village (for residents with a high interest in social contact). This means that social life is something that is home-centered and something that must be built up horizontally before it can become vertical (see Figure 6).

Second, recognizing that materiality (objects, spaces, and technology) informs and enables practices (Schatzki, 2016; Shove et al., 2012), our study investigated how different kinds of material, sizes, and designs affected residents' ability to perform social practices. Our study showed that the architectural design of necessary shared spaces, especially on each floor, was of major importance, especially in buildings with a high social density or with social spaces located far away from residential areas. In general, residents were able to identify whether these spaces felt inviting or uninviting for social interaction. Materials (e.g., carpets or concrete), decorations (e.g., panels, colors, and posters), size, and physical organization were all elements that—in combination with residents' tastes—contributed to or prevented social practices. In particular, material homemaking practices (Després, 1991), such as leaving one's stroller outside the door or decorating walls with personal items, were described as actions that humanized the space and mediated social activities.

Third, while social practices are mutually constructed by the material setting and actions (Shove, 2007), collective values and beliefs—conceptualized in practice theory as "general understandings"—also play a role (Welch & Warde, 2017). While some studies have identified a historically biased narrative involved in the planning of and research on high-rise living (Modi, 2014; Whitzman & Mizrachi, 2012), our study suggests that similar narratives also exist among the residents. The traditional Danish skepticism of high-rises and the common narrative of Denmark as a low-rise suburban nation to a significant extent dominated residents' stories, both negatively and positively. Despite their mixed feelings about low-rise housing areas as ideal for social life, all residents gave evasive answers in terms of recognizing their building as part of a high-rise typology. This indicates that general understandings also influence social practices and imaginary dimensions of home and social life.

Overall, our study shows that social life in Danish high-rises is enabled by different kinds of social spaces and routinized movements as a point of departure (see Figure 6). This also means that social life is not an activity that can be considered a practice in itself. On the contrary, sociality is performed while we carry out the diverse practices that make up our everyday lives (Shove, 2007). Based on the influential studies of Arrigoitia (2014), Baxter (2017), and others, we also recommend focusing on the affect and emotions related to materiality (design, size of space, and residents' material interactions), especially in the intimate spaces of necessary shared rooms and infrastructure that are part of residents' everyday routines, to further elaborate on vertical living and its implications for home. While recognizing that these ethnographic studies offer new details into "domestic verticalities" and homemaking in high-rises across cities and cultures, the present study has also aimed to emphasize common local beliefs and historically inherited ideals. Thus, our study indicates that homemaking and social practices are (also) something that bridge past and future traditions within a local culture. This suggests that future studies need

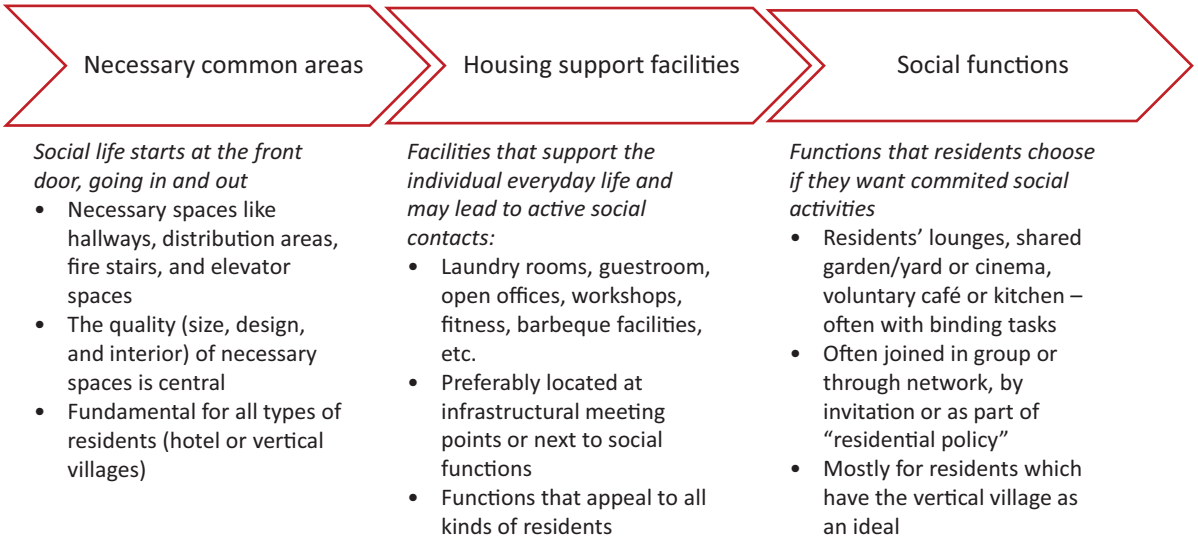


Figure 6. Steps in establishing vertical neighborhoods. This study shows that establishing vertical neighborhoods in Danish high-rises is deeply home-centered. Social practices start at the front door and are something you bring with you (or not). Housing support facilities make everyday life routines possible and are mediators of informal social interactions (second step). Social spaces are mostly for residents who expect a high level of community (third step).

to be sensitive to the ways local and national narratives of home and social life work both productively and counterproductively in social practices, including in high-rise buildings.

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Conflict of Interests

The author declares no conflict of interests.

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