

# Sustainability report - 2020

## Åsnen Top100 Nomination Form

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# 1. Reporting context

Åsnen is a nature destination in southern Sweden, that in recent years has received an increased interest on international markets, partly due to the unique mosaic of nature qualities found here and the newly established Åsnen National Park. The lake with its inland archipelago and thousand islands, as well as the surrounding land area, offers an immensely great opportunity to experience nature on nature's own conditions. Here, we promise "*Nature for real*".

In order to be able to offer "*Nature for real*", we need to be sustainable destination. We need sustainability for our climate, for our world, for our species in nature, for our future generations, and for ourselves. As a nature destination, sustainability is especially important. As a starting point for our sustainability work we wanted to audit our destination based on world-wide-recognised criteria. This way we will know our strenghts, and weaknesses. This way we can increase our knowledge and spread said knowledge among businesses and locals, which is the only way to be able to further develop as a destination.

## 2. Company data

Åsnen

**Tourist volume**

**Number of employees**

**Type of tourism**

**Special target groups**

**Destinations offered**

**Sustainability coordinator**

Sandra Pfaus

# 3. Introduction

# 4.Mission statement & policy

## 4.1 Mission statement

### THE VISION

The visitor industry in Åsnen consists of a number of private, nonprofit and public businesses. In order to be competitive, all these businesses need to pull in the same direction and show a unified picture of Åsnen.

**Sustainable.** Nature and the natural values in Åsnen are the destination's raw material and our greatest competitive advantage. In all our products and services we must be able to demonstrate our responsibility and care for the nature we are set to manage. Our guests have the right to expect this.

**Enriching and unique natural and cultural experiences.** For those offering experiences, it is no longer enough to just "show" something. Visitors expect more – we want to learn something new and develop as people, to be moved and use all our senses. Our guests should go home richer than they came, richer in impressions, knowledge and experiences. That is when we will have succeeded!

Therefore;

*Åsnen is the obvious choice for people who seek sustainable, enriching and unique natural and cultural experiences.*

## 4.2 Policy

## 5. Assessment overview

Main theme	Criteria	Completed
0. Destination characteristics	13	13
1. Destination management	4	4
2. Nature, scenery & animals	4	4
3. Environment & climate	7	7
4. Culture & tradition	4	4
5. Social well-being	8	7
6. Business & hospitality	3	2

# 6. Detailed overview

## 0. Destination characteristics

13

### General information

11

Action			Details
0.1. Sustainability coordinator			Sandra Pfaus info@destinationasnen.se
0.2. Organisation managing the destination			Destination Åsnen
0.3. Annual number of overnight visitors			100,000-500,000
0.4. Number of inhabitants			8300
0.5. Destination attributes			Outdoor bathing water (sea or fresh water sites where swimming is formally allowed), Nature-based tourism (ecotourism), Culture-based tourism (heritage – tangible and intangible)

## 0.6. Destination pictures & video



1. Lake Åsnen from above, showing some of the 1000 islands and inlets and how the lake is surrounded by nature everywhere.

2. A photo from our new national park; Åsnen National Park. New bridge decks were built in polygonal shapes which are recurring everywhere in the national park – they can be found in everything from the weather protection buildings, to the grills, benches and tables. (The polygonal shape was inspired by rocks and other polygonal forms found in nature in the Åsnen area. We have an image explaining this, let me know if you want to see it.)

3. Broadleaf forest in Bjurkärr nature reserve right by the national park. The nature reserves have trails of different lengths to hike along as to not destroy nature by creating own paths. (The same goes for the national park - lots of trails to choose from, many of which have been made accessible for wheelchairs/prams etc.)

4. Photo from one of the wild meadow orchards in Åsnen where apples grow in wild meadows. These are of a national interest in Sweden and of great importance in Åsnen.

5. The ideal activity on lake Åsnen - kayaking. It enables you to get as close to nature as you possibly could, and with a map (that is sold at every establishment around the lake) you know where bird protection sites and areas with prohibited access are located. This is on of the greatest ways to enjoy the space, silence and nature that Åsnen has to offer.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=DXP6p7ayJk8>



1 Åsnen from above, photo by Per Pixel.jpg



2 Åsnen National Park, photo Alexander Hall.jpg



3 Bjurkärr, photo by Cathrine Rydström.JPG



4. Wild meadow orchards, photo Hans Runesson.jpg

			 5. Kayaking with Åsnen map, photo Karin Nilsson.jpg
<b>0.7. Destination description</b>	✓	✓	Åsnen is a nature destination that has a distinctive and atmospheric inland lake archipelago with more than 1000 islands, and a mosaic of different natural habitats – some of which have not had any human impact for a very long time. Rare and sensitive birds, as well as rare species of plants, mosses and lichen, thrive in the destination.
<b>0.8. Sustainability pitch</b>	✓	✓	The main goal for Destination Åsnen is to preserve the remarkable qualities of the landscape that we have whilst supporting the local economy. Visitors (and locals) are actively encouraged in different ways to make an active contribution to the preservation of the exceptional diversity of this environment by acting with care, caution and respect towards the fauna and environment, and also through supporting the local economy. Small scale local enterprise makes it possible for people to remain in the area, caring for and supporting its continued, sustainable development; economic, social and environmental. We want to be able to continue our promise "Nature for real"!
<b>0.9. Awards</b>	✓	✓	In 2018, Åsnen National Park was established and May 25 2018 the national park officially opened, where an opening ceremony was held by HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden. Also in 2018, the nature guide book "ÅSNEN Nature, National Park and Wildlife in South Sweden – a Travel Guide" was published in English for the first time, and in an updated Swedish version. The guide book focuses on sustainable nature activities that respect nature and animals, and guides readers how to best enjoy and explore nature without disturbing or destroying it. Before the guide chapters start, much emphasis is put on describing the Swedish Right of Public Access and other laws and rules that apply in the area, for example regarding bird protection areas and making fires/fire prohibitions.

<b>0.10. Destination main website</b>	✓	✓	www.visitasnen.se
<b>0.11. References</b>	✓	✓	<p>1a) Oskar Wijk, 1b) CEO of AB Destination Småland, 1c) <a href="mailto:oskar.wijk@destinationismaland.se">oskar.wijk@destinationismaland.se</a>, 1d) +46 470 73 32 73</p> <p>2a) Karin Nilsson, 2b) Project manager of "Projekt Nationalparksdestination Åsnen", 2c) <a href="mailto:karin.nilsson@destinationismaland.se">karin.nilsson@destinationismaland.se</a> 2d) +46 708 62 25 80</p>

## Scope of the assessment

1

Action			Details
<b>0.12. Destination surface</b>	✓	✓	95000

## Sustainability Good Practice Story

1

Action			Details
<p><b>0.13. Sustainability Good Practice Story</b> Submit here your sustainable tourism good practice story. Share with others what you are really proud of. If interesting for travelers, your</p>	✓	✓	<p>Our Success Story, with links, is attached! Also attached is a picture from the netnographic study mentioned in the success story.</p>

stories can be highlighted in your page in the Green Travel Guide. Success stories submitted by 2 January 2019 are eligible for the Sustainable Destinations Top 100 Awards ITB Berlin 2020, if you reach at least Silver Award level by 1 January 2020. All stories must be in English.

For more information:

<https://greendestinations.org/2020-top-100-awards-itb-berlin>

Pictures;

No. 1 - from the opening of Åsnen National Park, where HRH Crown Princess Victoria of Sweden attended. Joy and pride permeated the whole day. (Photo: Sandra Pfaus)

No. 2 - Photo from one of the meetings during the destination work process. Here, two very driven, female, Åsnen entrepreneurs are collaborating and brainstorming ideas together.

No. 3 - named "1 Åsnen from above". This photo symbolises our common brand and core values for Åsnen; an untouched lake archipelago with more than 1000 islands. A photo that is free for the companies in the destination to use in their own marketing to show their belonging to Åsnen.



1 Åsnen from above, photo by Per Pixel.jpg



Åsnen\_s success story.docx



No 1. Opening of Åsnen NP.jpg.jpg



Netnographic study Åsnen.pdf

# 1. Destination management

4

## Commitment & organisation

2

Action			Details
<p><b>1.1. Sustainability coordinator</b>            A person has been assigned the responsibility and authority for the adequate implementation and reporting of sustainable destination management.</p>	✓	✓	<p>a) Destination Åsnen does currently not have a trained sustainability coordinator, but Sandra Pfaus is responsible for the inventory and reporting to this system. Her task is to gather information so that we can have a clearer coordination in the future.</p> <p>Sandra is a full-time employee of the company and her day-to-day tasks include working as a project assistant for the development work in Destination Åsnen, as well as working as a marketing coordinator for AB Destination Småland.</p> <p>This is Destination Åsnen's first clear initiative to work on the destination's sustainability.</p> <p>b) The organisation, AB Destination Småland, is structured as followed:</p> <p>AB Destination Småland is a company wholly owned by Region Kronoberg, whose mission is to develop and market the visitor industry in Kronoberg County, as a part of Småland. The vision for Region Kronoberg is; <i>South Småland – Europe's greenest place to visit. Viable companies work long-term with regard to the environment and people. A region to visit and return to for genuine and unique experiences in nature, culture and design - both for recreation and business.</i></p> <p>Destination Åsnen is a prioritised development area in both the regional strategy and the general work of AB Destination Småland. The responsibility for various sustainability issues within the destination structure lies with the destination's different stakeholders; e.g. the municipalities, the county administrative board, etc.</p> <p>Here is a list of all employees of Destination Småland and short descriptions of the main</p>

		<p>task assignments of each employee: <a href="http://www.destinationsmaland.se/om-oss/personal-22346038">http://www.destinationsmaland.se/om-oss/personal-22346038</a>. Within the individual task assignments, each employee also has a responsibility to be mindful of sustainability and work towards sustainability.</p>
<p><b>1.2. Vision</b> The destination has defined in consultation with stakeholders a Vision which has integrated sustainability principles and is publicly communicated.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>— a) The Åsnen brand is not here. It is found at the back of people's minds. The thoughts, images and associations that appear when they hear "Åsnen", positive and negative, are our brand. In a place with a strong and positively charged brand, it is easier for companies to do business and have opportunities to get paid more for their experiences and services. We do not own the brand, but we can work with it.</p> <p><b>Our vision (Swedish):</b> Åsnen är det självklara valet för människor som söker hållbara, berikande och unika Natur- och KultUrupplevelser.</p> <p><b>Translated:</b> Åsnen is the obvious choice for people who are looking for sustainable, enriching and unique Nature and Cultural experiences.</p> <p>b) <a href="https://destinationasnen.se/app/uploads/2017/04/brandbook-2.pdf">https://destinationasnen.se/app/uploads/2017/04/brandbook-2.pdf</a></p>

## Planning & development

2

Action		Details
<p><b>1.3. Inventory of destination assets</b> The destination has a publicly available and regularly updated inventory of its assets and attractions including natural and cultural sites.</p>	<p>✓</p>	<p>The destination has a detailed website that presents the wide range of assets in nature, culture and how to experience different sights of interest. The nature reserves, the national park, scenic qualities, tourist attractions, events, infrastructure and such are all presented on the visitor website, <a href="http://www.visitasnen.se">www.visitasnen.se</a>.</p>

- Scenic qualities: <https://visitasnen.se/discover/must-see/>, <https://visitasnen.se/experiences/?category=19414>
- Ecology (flora, fauna, protected areas): <https://visitasnen.se/experiences/?category=19443>, <https://visitasnen.se/nature/asnen-national-park/>, <https://visitasnen.se/nature/asnen-nature-guidebook/>, <https://visitasnen.se/nature/this-is-asnen/>, <https://visitasnen.se/our-tips/asnen-big-five/>
- Culture (heritage, traditions, folkore, cultural events): <https://visitasnen.se/culture/>, <https://visitasnen.se/culture/stories-and-legends/>, <https://visitasnen.se/experiences/?category=19439>, <https://visitasnen.se/experiences/?category=19440>, <https://visitasnen.se/events/>
- Tourism supply (tourist attractions, sites, facilities, services etc.): <https://visitasnen.se/experiences/> as well as the rest of the website.
- Infrastructure (roads, airports, transport, water, sewage, waste etc.): <https://visitasnen.se/discover/faq/>, <https://visitasnen.se/getting-here/>
- Stakeholders (private, public, non-governmental and social groups, and their representative organisations): <https://visitasnen.se/about/>

As the destination assets are located in three municipalities (Växjö, Alvesta and Tingsryd), they are gathered and presented together on VisitÅsnen to present the wide range of offers available in the destination. If changes are made to the different attractions/assets by the municipalities, they are automatically updated with the same information on VisitÅsnen. The website also presents other information, both for locals and visitors; information on infrastructure, places to stay (accommodation), places to eat, as well as local traditions and stories.

Official information and updates regarding Åsnen National Park (incl the natural sites), can be found here; <http://www.nationalparksofsweden.se/choose-park---list/asnen-national-park/> as

		<p>well as on the visitor guide <a href="https://visitasnen.se/nature/asnen-national-park/">https://visitasnen.se/nature/asnen-national-park/</a>.</p>
<p><b>1.4. Tourism policy</b>  The destination has an up-to-date, publicly available, multi-year tourism policy or strategy addressing environmental, aesthetic, social, cultural, economic, quality, health and safety issues.</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>The regional board for southern Småland, Region Kronoberg, together with the regional tourism board Destination Småland, have a combined policy/strategy for tourism in southern Småland (file attached, only available in Swedish), which applies to destination Åsnen as well. The current strategy ranges from 2013-2020, and a new one for the following period is currently being worked on.</p> <p>Main relevant pages: 8, 14 (Sammanfattande diskussion), 15 (Strengths and weaknesses in Kronoberg), 18 (Ekonomisk utveckling + Miljö och klimat + Råvarutillgången), 21 (Trender), <b>27 + 28</b> (Kronoberg's vision for tourism), 29 (Socially, economically and ecologically sustainable growth), 35 (Åsnen one of the prioritised development areas in the strategy).</p> <p> Regionala_Strategin_2013_2020_Full.pdf</p>

## 2. Nature, scenery & animals

4

### Nature & conservation

2

Action			Details
<p><b>2.1. Nature protection</b>                      The protection of natural sites, habitats, species, and ecosystems (incl. marine and aquatic) is effectively addressed and enforced. Nature degradation is mitigated and where necessary addressed and reversed, or compensated.</p>	✓	✓	<p>a) Our understanding is that locals and visitors usually are quite aware of how to act in nature in order to not destroy and contribute to the degradation of nature. One challenge might be to get people to take in the information regarding regulations and laws (that apply to the whole of Sweden), for example regarding the Right of Public Access/the Freedom to Roam, and the rules in national parks and nature reserves. Swedes generally have a greater understanding of their obligations and their rights when it comes to the Right of Public Access, as it is part of our upbringing. There is translated information and material available, but the greatest challenge probably lies in reaching international guests and to make them see the difference or balance between rights and obligations when it comes to the Right of Public Access. Most have a general idea of it, but lack concrete knowledge of what it actually entails.</p> <p>b (+ c) The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency have clear environmental objects that apply to the whole country, based on rules by the Swedish Parliament. They are followed up on a regular basis.  <a href="http://www.swedishepa.se/Environmental-objectives-and-cooperation/Swedens-environmental-objectives/">http://www.swedishepa.se/Environmental-objectives-and-cooperation/Swedens-environmental-objectives/</a></p> <p>See attached files for the management plan for each nature reserve in the destination as well as the national park, in Swedish, except Osby Offerlund;  <a href="https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/besoksmal/naturreservat/osby-offerlund.html">https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/besoksmal/naturreservat/osby-offerlund.html</a> &amp; Långö;  <a href="https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/besoksmal/naturreservat/lango.html">https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/besoksmal/naturreservat/lango.html</a> &amp; Osaby;</p>

<https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/besoksmal/naturreservat/osaby.html>

Åsnen National Park is an indication that nature in the area is well protected and taken care of, as the denomination "National Park" is the strongest protection you can give to valuable nature in Sweden. There is an extended fire ban in the destination between April 1-September 30. There are information signs and booklets in the national park and nature reserves. The Åsnen nature guide book has extensive information on the Right of Public Access and being in nature. There are several bird protection sites in Åsnen. Our new website will have an alert function. Businesses are encouraged to act sustainably and are invited to workshops and trainings The target groups are those who have a natural interest. With the message the importance of nurturing nature for future generations <http://www.swedishepa.se/Enjoying-nature/Protected-areas/> Rangers patrol the lake (Åsnetillsynen)



Agnäs skötselplan.pdf



Ekefors skötselplan.pdf



Förarm skötselplan.pdf



Hackekvarn Skötselplan och karta.pdf



Hunshult skötselplan.pdf



Husebymaden skötseplan.pdf



Lunnabacken skötselplan.pdf



Torne bokskog skötselplan.pdf



Utnäsuddens övärld Skötselplan.pdf



Åsnens nationalpark föreskrifter.pdf

## 2.2. Natural resource protection

The protection of natural resources is adequately organised and enforced, and unsustainable use is avoided.



a) One challenge in the area is largely to develop the area as a nature destination while at the same time constantly focusing on not consuming the high natural values of the area. By inspiring companies to offer guided activities, visitors can be channeled to areas that do not have exceptionally sensitive species.

Another challenge is an invasive plant, *Nymphoides peltatum*/fringed waterlily, that has rooted in some places in the southern parts of the water system. Powerful measures are underway to combat the growth by one of the municipalities and the County Administrative Board with the help of state money. The model developed for combatting the plant has also been studied by other places that are affected by the plant. (See attachment "beware of fringed water lily")

b) Destination Åsnen has a core area of approx 950 km<sup>2</sup>. Large areas within the destination are covered by comprehensive plans for nature protection. Within the area is a national park and 12 nature reserves (see app. 1). Extensive parts of the destination are covered by Natura 2000 (see app. 2). The whole lake with surrounding land areas is designated as national interest for both nature conservation and outdoor life (see app. 3). In the southeastern region, the National Heritage Board has classified an area as national interest for Sweden's best-preserved and most cohesive meadow fruit orchard with a popular fruit growing tradition based on combined fruit and vegetable production. Kronoberg County's only fruit growing district with a clear local identity linked to the fruit production (see app. 4).

c) The whole lake is included in the RAMSAR convention - the Convention on Wetlands of International Importance, especially as a Waterfowl Habitat. <https://www.ramsar.org/>  
- There is a general shore/coastal protection in Sweden, with an extended protection in the Åsnen area. The extended shore protection has been decided by the County Administrative Board.

- Åsnen rangers patrol the lake by boat with the aim of making sure that the rules for the area are observed and that information is physically available in the area.

- Jet skis and house boats are not allowed on Åsnen.

- Extensive areas in Åsnen are covered by a special access ban, with the aim of not disturbing the sensitive bird life. Thus, it is also recommended not to fly drones in the

area. In the national park, it is forbidden to start or land with a drone.



1 Natrureservat\_Nationalpark\_Åsnen.png



2 Natura2000\_Åsnen.png



3 riksintresse naturvård.png



4 riksintresse Ångsfruktodlingar.png



beware of fringed water lily.pdf

## Nature & animal experience

1

Action			Details
<p><b>2.3. Captive animals in tourism</b> The use of animals in tourism is effectively controlled in order to decrease the risk of unnecessary suffering, disease, and death.</p>			<p>a) The only animals used in tourism in the destination are horses for riding tours.</p> <p>b) The County Administrative Boards of Sweden, as well as the Swedish Board of Agriculture, work preventively to ensure that all animals are healthy, comfortable and well, and see to that laws are being followed. The Kronoberg County Administrative Board conducts spontaneous animal welfare checks to control that animals are transported, housed and treated correctly. In Sweden, you have to seek for permission from your local County Administrative Board in order to be able to include animals in your business.</p> <p>Links (Swedish):  <a href="http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/sjukdomarochsmittskydd/bestamme/iseromhygien/hygienreglerforbesoksverksamhet.4.2ae27f0513e7888ce2280007865.ht">http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/sjukdomarochsmittskydd/bestamme/iseromhygien/hygienreglerforbesoksverksamhet.4.2ae27f0513e7888ce2280007865.ht</a></p>

		<a href="#">ml</a> <a href="http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/olikaslagsdjur/hastar.4.389b567011d9aa1eeab80008.html">http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/olikaslagsdjur/hastar.4.389b567011d9aa1eeab80008.html</a> <a href="http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/hastar/tillstandforverksamhetermedhast.4.4b00b7db11efe58e66b8000332.html">http://www.jordbruksverket.se/amnesomraden/djur/hastar/tillstandforverksamhetermedhast.4.4b00b7db11efe58e66b8000332.html</a> <a href="https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/foretag/lantbruk-och-djur/djur-i-verksamheten/verksamhet-med-djur.html">https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/foretag/lantbruk-och-djur/djur-i-verksamheten/verksamhet-med-djur.html</a>
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## Landscape & scenery

1

Action			Details
<b>2.4. Landscape &amp; Scenery</b> Natural and rural scenic views are protected and the sense of place is maintained; landscape degradation and urban sprawl into scenic landscapes is effectively avoided.			<p>In Sweden, there are strict rules regarding shore/coastal protection ("strandskydd") according to the Swedish Environmental Code. The aim of the shore protection is to, in the long run, 1) secure the conditions for public access to beach areas and 2) to maintain good living conditions for animals and plants on land and in water. The shore protection means that we can all enjoy nice shore areas and that animals and plants can continue to live in their environment. The shore protection applies to courses, regardless of size both in urban areas and in sparsely populated areas, whether or not there are plenty of lakes and streams regardless of what nature types or species exist 100 meters from the shore edge both up on land and out into the water, also the environment under the water. (In Åsnen, the rule is 200m)</p> <p>Within a protected area it is forbidden to: construct new buildings change buildings or set up other facilities or devices that prevent the</p>

public from moving there dig or otherwise prepare for such construction work perform other measures that can damage plant and animal life

Nature reserves and national parks are protected nature and prevent urban sprawl and nature/landscape degradation. In addition, there are also 7 protected biotopes in Sweden that are commonly found in rural landscapes. These are: allees, water springs with surrounding wetland in farmland, cultivation cairns ("odlingsröse") in farmland, willow allees, ponds/small lakes and wetland in farmland, stone walls in farmland, and "åkerholmar" (smaller areas of natural land surrounded by cultivated land in some form.) Several of these are found in Åsnen.

(<http://www.naturvardsverket.se/Var-natur/Skyddad-natur/Biotopskyddsomraden/>)

To construct new buildings or homes in Sweden, you first need to apply for a building permit which is issued by the municipality in which you want to build, which helps protect nature as you are not allowed to build wherever and whatever you want. Several steps have to be followed before they eventually (may) grant a permit. See Växjö municipality, for example <https://www.vaxjo.se/sidor/bygga-och-bo/bygga-nytt-bygga-om-bygga-till/bygga-hus.html> (In Swedish)

The Forestry Act expresses what demands society has on forest owners. The law states that the forest is a renewable resource that must be managed so that it yields a good return on a sustainable basis. (Swedish link: <https://www.skogsstyrelsen.se/lag-och-tillsyn/skogsvardslagen/>)

### 3. Environment & climate

7

#### Land use & pollution

1

Action			Details
<p><b>3.1. Air pollution</b> Air pollution is adequately addressed, based upon the risks and impacts identified in the Baseline Assessment; impacts of tourism related air pollution are effectively controlled.</p>	✓	✓	<p><b>a)</b> The air in Destination Åsnen is exceptionally clean and free of pollution compared to the rest of the region. Many species of plants and fungi that are very sensitive to pollution thrive in the Åsnen area. Åsnen does not see heavy traffic at all which contributes to the air being so unpolluted.</p> <p>Identified air pollution issues for Kronoberg county (where Åsnen is located) through an air pollution monitoring program are ground-level ozone and particles. Besides ground-level ozone, the problems are greatest in traffic intensive environments. Substances transported over a long distance and that the county is a sparsely populated county affect the county's air quality. Transport, use of studded tires and wood burning are important for local air quality. Air quality is affected/helped by a good community planning with regard to the design of the roads, living environments and the traffic situation. The problems are identified and addressed in the Kronoberg County Administrative Board report (attached) "Länsprogram Regional Miljöövervakning År 2015-2020", starting on p. 18.</p> <p><b>b)</b> The municipalities are responsible to inform themselves on prevailing air pollution issues and address and coordinate accordingly. One example is Växjö municipality whose previous years' measurements have been one of the driving forces for establishing district heating and pedestrian streets. <a href="https://vaxjo.se/sidor/hallbar-utveckling/naturvard/luftkvaliteten-i-vaxjo.html">https://vaxjo.se/sidor/hallbar-utveckling/naturvard/luftkvaliteten-i-vaxjo.html</a></p> <p>Tingsryd municipality has an environmental program (attached, "Miljöprogram for Tingsryds kommun), which includes the regional environmental goals and the measures they are taking locally to achieve the goals (p. 14-15). One example being to "2.1 Map</p>

the small-scale firing of biofuels in the municipality" and "2.2 Formulate a detailed goal and suggestions for measures based on the survey".

Other links with information regarding the air quality in Kronoberg county:

<http://www.kronobergsluft.se/>

Alvesta

municipality: <https://www.alvesta.se/Bostad--Miljo/Miljo/miljoprojekt/matning-av-luftens-innehall/>

Today, Destination Åsnen does not address air pollution as it is not a problem in Åsnen, nor is it a risk to public health. Had that been the case, or if it were to change in the future, appropriate measures would be taken as a change in air pollution would change the nature values and the core value of the entire destination.



Länsprogram för Regional miljöövervakning för kronobergs län år 2015\_2020 fastställd 2014\_10\_14.pdf



who air pollution Åsnen.png



MILJOPROGRAM FOR TINGSRYDS KOMMUN.pdf



Tätortsprogram i Kronobergs län 2017.pdf

## Water management

1

Action			Details
<b>3.2. Waste water treatment</b> Waste water treatment is adequately organised and relevant			<b>a)</b> In order to manage the wastewater in Sweden, we have about 1,700 sewage treatment plants and a total of 101,000 km of sewage pipes in the country. (The

regulations are enforced, aimed to minimise impacts to people and the environment; this also relates to siting, maintenance and testing of discharge from septic tanks.

#### Swedish Water & Wastewater

Association <http://www.svensktvatten.se/om-oss/in-english/>). The water that comes to the treatment plants is wastewater and drainage water, and to some extent storm water.

In **Alvesta municipality**, there are just over 3,100 individual sewage plants. Alvesta municipality has begun a quality work (according to REVAQ's rules) to reduce the amount of unwanted substances to Alvesta municipality's sewer network. This is to get as good a final product as possible from the municipality's sewage treatment plant. In this way, the sewage sludge must be able to be used in the best possible way, for example on agricultural land such as plant nutrients. In the case of new construction, Alvesta municipality sets requirements, on purchase contracts and detailed planning regulations, on delay and purification of stormwater directly on the property.

[\(https://www.alvesta.se/Bostad--Miljo/Vatten--avlopp/\)](https://www.alvesta.se/Bostad--Miljo/Vatten--avlopp/)

**Tingsryd municipality** addresses waste water treatment in "MILJOPROGRAM" (attached) on p. 26. The national environmental objective they aim for (as must all municipalities) is that "The groundwater must provide a safe and sustainable drinking water supply and contribute to a good habitat for plants and animals in lakes and watercourses." They list a number of local measures for this, e.g.; "9.1 Conduct and report the results of water inventories with respect to the water areas of the business areas, access to suitable water resources and shortcomings in the water supply" and "9.4 Continuous control of individual drinking water wells within the framework of supervision".

**Växjö municipality** has a water and sewage policy (attached), stating among others how the municipality needs to manage the water and sewage treatment, to "contribute to ensuring that the municipality's residents receive a good supply of water, while buildings, land areas, lakes, watercourses and groundwater bodies must be protected from pollution or over-utilization." (p. 1)

As Åsnen lies in all three municipalities, the inserts may differ to some extent, but in the end the municipalities all have a common aim, as they follow/base their efforts on the national environmental objective.

**b)** One common challenge is the climate change and what result it will have on our water and water treatment. Worries are addressed in their policies.

-  MILJOPROGRAM FOR TINGSRYDS KOMMUN.pdf
-  VA\_policy för Växjö kommun.pdf
-  Hållbarhetsprogrammet Hållbara Växjö 2030\_antaget av KF.pdf

## Sustainable mobility

1

Action			Details
<p><b>3.3. Soft mobility</b> The destination has a soft mobility strategy to minimize high-impact transportation (as identified in Baseline Assessment) in touristic zones; walking and cycling is facilitated and encouraged.</p>	✓	✓	<p>Increased tourism can of course lead to increased traffic (e.g. cars and RVs), but in Åsnen we always encourage people to regard soft mobility measures. For example, the Åsnen nature guide book explains how easy it is to arrive in Åsnen by train. Once you arrive by train in Alvesta or Älmhult, now more than ever it is easy to rent a bike and cycle to the destination – much thanks to the fact that there is a newly established business (<a href="http://www.rentbike.se">www.rentbike.se</a>) that conducts cooperations with businesses/establishments within the destination. The visitor website, <a href="http://visitasnen.se">visitasnen.se</a>, also focuses on getting here by train rather than car or airplane, and "soft experiences" in nature.</p> <p>The Åsnen nature guide book also gives you tips on hikes/walks (and cycle tours) you can do in the area, which of course is easier on nature than going around by car. There are two longer, well-maintained cycle routes in the destination; one of Sweden's two national cycle trails, "Sydostleden", goes through part of the destination <a href="https://sydostleden.se/en">https://sydostleden.se/en</a>, and "Åsnen runt" – a 140 km long cycle route around the lake. For the "Åsnen runt" tour there is a packaged tour available, including the rental of a bike and 4 overnight stays along the way! <a href="https://rentbike.se/en/asnen-runt-pa-4-dagar">https://rentbike.se/en/asnen-runt-pa-4-dagar</a></p> <p>The opening of Åsnen National Park has not necessarily meant an increase in traffic either. People (locals and visitors) are encouraged to cycle, for example along the old</p>

railway embankment which leads you straight to the national park. The County Administrative Board has put up visitor counters along the disused railway embankment, and last years' visitors along that road were well above 100 000. There have definitely not been that many cars in the parking lot, which means that many visitors cycled or walked there. Many of the pathways in the national park have been adapted for accessibility, meaning that the national park is open and available for everyone, regardless if you can walk, are in a wheelchair or are pushing a stroller/pram. Also in the national park, information signs describe nature in the destination and for example that lichen and mosses grow that need clean, unpolluted air. This, we believe, although perhaps subconsciously, is something that makes people think about their environmental footprint!

## Waste and recycling

2

Action			Details
<p><b>3.4. Solid waste reduction</b> Any solid waste is adequately monitored, reduced, separated and recycled, and quantitative goals are set, especially regarding the reduction of plastic waste.</p>	✓	✓	<p><b>a)</b> The Åsnen municipalities strategically work towards minimising solid waste. See e.g. the public documents "Avfallsplan Tingsryd" (p3), Växjö "Avfallsplan_Webb" and Alvesta "Avfallsplan-alvesta". The national trade association <a href="#">Avfall Sverige</a>, which Swedish municipalities are members of, monitors what happens in the waste industry in Sweden, Europe and the rest of the world. They also offer extensive training activities tailored to the industry's competence needs. Development within the entire area of waste is an important part of the business.</p> <p>Tingsryd's and Växjö's municipal waste management is managed by the regional company Södra Smålands Avfall och Miljö (<a href="#">SSAM</a>). Alvesta's municipal waste management is run by the municipal company Alvesta Renhållning AB (<a href="#">ARAB</a>). Attached are the waste management policies and the waste plans for each municipality.</p>

The policies regulate how the waste is to be collected/separated and the obligations for residents in the municipality. The waste plan is the long-term goal of improving waste management. Furthermore, SSAM have a quantitative goal to minimise food waste and residual waste 20-25% by year 2025.

Common for all three municipalities is that there are recycling facilities where residents, free of charge, can drop off and sort into different containers, any solid waste that does not belong in household waste bins. There are also recycling containers for plastic, paper, metal, batteries and glass placed around the municipalities. In Växjö and Alvesta municipality you separate food waste in each household which further reduces the amount of solid waste.

SSAM have just launched a new waste separation system - [garbage bins with 4 compartments](#), including one for plastic. This will make it easier for people to separate in their homes and thus minimise waste. 95% of those offered to change to the new bins have thus far taken the offer.

Solid waste, especially plastic, is also minimised through the fact that Sweden uses deposit bottles, i.e. for each plastic bottle (or aluminum can) that you bring back to the deposit station (which can be found in almost any supermarket) you get 1 or 2 SEK back (approx €0,10-0,20). This also applies to some glass bottles.

**b)** While (most) residents are fully aware and good at separating waste and recycling, one challenge could be that visitors do not know what to do with their solid waste, that they need to separate it, or that they can return deposit bottles. Another challenge, according to SSAM, is that some people do not know what waste goes in which compartment of the new compartment bins, as well as in the food waste bins.



Avfallsplan\_webb.pdf



renhallningsordningen Alvesta.pdf



Avfallsplan Tingsryds kommun.pdf

		 Avfallsföreskrifter Tingsryds kommun.pdf  Avfallsföreskrifter Växjö kommun.pdf  _2_ Återvinningsstation.jpg  pantstation_pantamera.jpg  arsmangder_2010_2018.pdf  avfallsplan_alvesta_150616.pdf
<p><b>3.5. Waste separation</b> Facilities are in place for an adequate separation of municipal and industrial waste.</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>As already touched upon under section 3.14, each municipality has several recycling facilities where residents and businesses can drop off/separate into different containers, any waste that does not belong in household waste bins or other recycling bins (plastic/glass/paper/metal) - there are 5 just in the Åsnen area (Ryd, Väckelsång, Växjö, Alvesta and Grimslöv) . The recycling facilities collect and then recycle, for example, coarse waste, hazardous waste and garden waste. Combustible waste goes to an incineration plant in Ljungby for waste incineration. Everything that is not combustible, goes to different types of reuse/recycling.</p> <p>For plastic, paper, metal, glass, batteries, e.g. there are several stations with recycling containers placed around the municipalities – usually several in the larger cities and at least one station in each village/locality. This of course also applies to the Åsnen area and there is every possibility to separate waste into the different containers. The containers are then collected/emptied and recycled accordingly (<a href="https://www.ssam.se/sortering-och-atervinning.html">https://www.ssam.se/sortering-och-atervinning.html</a>).</p> <p>In Åsnen National Park, there are three "environmental buildings". These buildings also contain accessibility-adapted toilets and the possibility to separate waste. It is important to provide the possibility of sorting garbage in one of Sweden's most important natural sites. Preserving everyone's nature means that visitors' waste can be disposed of in a</p>

		<p>good way. There are four bins/compartments for waste separation, which are emptied/collected by Alvesta Renhållning AB.</p> <p>Several enterprises in Åsnen also have recycling containers on their sites where they encourage their visitors to separate waste, e.g. <a href="#">Norraryds Camping</a> and Getnö Gård Lake Åsnen Resort.</p> <p>According to Swedish legislation, you are obliged to separate your waste and leave it in the right place. Thus, the tourism sector in the destination (hotels, Växjö Småland airport, other visitor businesses and establishments) also separate and recycle their waste – otherwise they might receive penalty fees and, as a result, even lose any possible environmental certifications that they might have.</p> <p>Informative/useful link on recycling and recycling habits in Sweden: <a href="https://sweden.se/nature/the-swedish-recycling-revolution/">https://sweden.se/nature/the-swedish-recycling-revolution/</a></p>
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## Energy & climate change

2

Action			Details
<p><b>3.6. Reduction energy consumption</b> Measures are taken to reduce energy consumption in the destination; residents and visitors are encouraged to reduce energy consumption without compromising service or safety.</p>	✓	✓	<p>The Swedish Municipal Energy Planning Act (SFS 1977:439) stipulates that every municipality must have an up-to-date plan for the supply, distribution and use of energy in the municipality as well as promote measures to save energy. Hence, the three Åsnen municipalities' environmental strategies all contain sections on environmental objectives and targets that include reducing the energy consumption and to improve the energy use so that more of the energy comes from renewable sources. Växjö municipality's energy plan is attached in English ("Energiplan 2016"). Alvesta's and Tingsryd's unfortunately are only available in Swedish, but are also attached.</p> <p>Some steps towards reducing energy consumption and investing in renewable energy</p>

sources and new technology (which in the end also will lead to overall greater economic savings) within the destination, as found in the strategy documents, include:

The municipalities are to buy eco-labeled electricity for the municipal operations/businesses Continued district heating expansion and increased capacity in the district heating plants, e.g. cogeneration Active support of the development of renewable energy, e.g. biogas Investigating the conditions for installing solar heat/solar panels in all new construction with the aim of actually installing solar heat/solar panels Taking measures to make buildings more energy efficient Introducing incentives for energy saving in the rules for association grants Installing a solar heating plant on at least one outdoor facility, campsite or other object that is mainly used during the summer months (one example being Getnö Gård, a campsite in Tingsryd's municipality that has invested in solar panels) Regularly conducting new energy-saving campaigns based on positive experiences from previous energy-saving projects Coordination between municipal players to improve the infrastructure for renewable fuel and electricity

In addition to this municipal strategic work and the target steps, Swedes as a general are quite aware of how to be "energy smart", as it is part of our upbringing and education to learn about the different energy sources and how it affects us, the climate and the world. We are taught about renewable and non-renewable energy sources, that we should turn off lamps and stand-by settings when possible, to turn off the indoor heating when it is not needed and when we open windows to air our homes, etc.

Workshops for the enterprises also are provided by the destination, such as one on the environmental adaption of enterprises in a nature destination.

<https://destinationasnen.se/app/uploads/2017/05/Milj%C3%B6f%C3%B6rel%C3%A4sning-p%C3%A5-storm%C3%B6tet-151022-2-1.pdf>



MILJOPROGRAM FOR TINGSRYDS KOMMUN.pdf



energi\_\_och\_klimatstrategi\_inkl\_handlingsplan2.pdf



Energiplan 2016\_eng\_webb.pdf

### 3.7. Reduction fossil fuel dependency

Adequate measures and incentives exist to reduce reliance on fossil fuels and to encourage renewable energy technologies.



While all three municipalities in the destination have quite well-composed strategies for fossil fuels, Växjö municipality is in the forefront when it comes to environmental work (which is great for the destination and the whole county as they are a leading example!) As stated in Växjö's energy plan (attached, "Energiplan 2016", p4), the municipality is well on its way to becoming a fossil-fuel free municipality and the ambition for this has been part of the strategy since back in 1996. The main aim is for the energy used in residential premises, in the business sector and to meet needs for transportation, to be climate-neutral in terms of fossil carbon dioxide emissions.

Tingsryd municipality's aims in the strategy include promoting renewable energy sources in order to create good quality of life and long-term sustainable development. National, regional and local environmental goals must be fulfilled while securing the energy supply. The municipality wants to be an example in its actions.

The overall objective of Alvesta's energy and climate strategy is that the direct use of fossil fuels in the municipality in principle should have ceased by the year 2030.

Thus, common measures in the municipalities are, amongst others:

to work to further improve the infrastructure for renewable fuels and charging facilities for electric vehicles coordination between municipal players to improve the infrastructure for renewable fuel and electricity to actively support and encourage the building of solar heating/solar panels to actively reduce the emission of carbon dioxide from direct use of fossil fuels to about 3,5 tonnes per resident (Tingsryd specifically), and to reduce the emissions from work vehicles and transportation etc

Measures specifically in the destination:

Charging stations for electric cars have been installed in Tingsryd, Alvesta and in several places in Växjö. There have been talks about installing charging

stations in the parking lots of the national park entrances too. Solar panels have been installed at Getnö Gård (see attached picture), and the farm Malva Gård will also install solar panels this year which is expected to cover their total electricity requirement for their private property.

Växjö is participating in "One Planet City Challenge" this year which will have a positive impact for the whole destination.

[http://wwf.panda.org/our\\_work/projects/one\\_planet\\_cities/one\\_planet\\_city\\_challenge/](http://wwf.panda.org/our_work/projects/one_planet_cities/one_planet_city_challenge/)



Solar panels Getnö Gård.jpg



MILJOPROGRAM FOR TINGSRYDS KOMMUN.pdf



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Energiplan 2016\_eng\_webb.pdf

## 4. Culture & tradition

4

### Cultural heritage

2

Action			Details
<p><b>4.1. Cultural heritage conservation</b>                      The conservation, authenticity and aesthetic presentation of cultural resources such as sites and built heritage, typical or traditional architecture, town design, cultural sense of place, urban scenic views, and archaeological sites, is adequately organised and enforced according to internationally recognised standards.</p>	✓	✓	<p>a+b)Åsnen is teeming with cultural heritage and has a rich cultural landscape. Åsnens meadow apple orchards are the only preserved meadow orchards in Sweden and the only remaining fruit growing district in Kronoberg County. It is of both regional and national interest to maintain and preserve fruit cultivations in general, and meadow fruit cultivation in this part of Kronoberg in particular. The <a href="#">Swedish National Heritage Board</a> judged that the apple orchards in southern Åsnen are so culturally and historically valuable that it has significance from a national and general viewpoint. (The investigation and regarding the values of the apple orchards in Åsnen can be found in the attached file, Ångsfruktodlingomr_kronoberg.pdf). Attached are also some of the cultural and historical valuable places in Åsnen that are protected by the applicable laws.</p> <p>The Cultural Environment Act is the central law for cultural heritage conservation. Through the Cultural Environment Act, society sets out basic clauses for the protection of important parts of the cultural heritage. Among other things, the law contains clauses for the protection of valuable buildings as well as ancient remains, ancient finds, church cultural monuments and certain cultural objects, as well as for the export, export and return of older cultural objects. <a href="#">Link</a>. Valuable natural and cultural environments are also protected in accordance with the central environmental legislation - the Environmental Act. Municipalities are also responsible for cultural environmental issues based on the provisions of the Planning and Building Act. <a href="#">Link</a>.</p> <p><i>Kulturmärkning</i> is a designation in Sweden's urban and zoning plans for cultural protection of a land area or a construction work. It is also a collective term for many different types of law protection intended to protect buildings and environments of</p>

		<p>cultural historical interest. Often, the protection of the law means that a building must not be demolished or changed in such a way as to reduce the cultural-historical value. The protection of parks/nature can mean that trees and other vegetation must not be removed and that vegetation must be managed in a certain way (e.g. by traditional haymaking).</p> <p>Law (1998: 814) states among others that (Section 6) message boards, signs, inscriptions or similar devices for advertising, propaganda or similar purposes must not be permanently installed outdoors without the permission of the government or state or municipal authority as the government decides. (Enterprises have to seek permission first). Section 8 states that message boards or other devices may not be installed if it is obviously disruptive. I.e. there are clear laws for traffic signs and incompatible visual or spatial intrusions.</p> <p>Cultural Strategy 2016-2020: <a href="#">Link</a></p> <p> Blood at Blodberget_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p> <p> Ångsfruktodlingomr_Kronoberg.pdf</p> <p> Igelön 1_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p> <p> Igelön 2_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p> <p> Lunnabacken 1_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p> <p> Lunnabacken 2_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p> <p> RAPPORT_vastra_Asnenomr_webb.pdf</p>
<p><b>4.2. Managing tourism impacts on culture</b> Tourism that appreciates cultural sites, built heritage, culturally</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>The nature guide book "ÅSNEN – Nature, National Park and Wildlife in South Sweden" is a great handbook for tourists (and locals) when it comes to visiting sensitive areas</p>

important landscapes, land-use and sense of place is carefully managed to avoid negative impacts. Any impacts such as damage, disruption of local life and culture, and degradation are adequately monitored and addressed.

and also culturally important landscapes. It gives them advice on how to act and where to go/not to go, as well as guides to them making the most of their nature and culture experience without having a negative impact. The book is easy to access as it can be found in several places in the destination and online at [RentBike.se](http://RentBike.se). Information can also be found on the visitor's guide [www.visitasnen.se](http://www.visitasnen.se) which has clear entryways to the topics Culture, Nature and Nationalpark (and Outdoor), which makes information and guidance even more readily available.

Local heritage associations are an important part of managing some of the cultural sites in the destination, one example being: Hembygdsföreningen Gamla Urshult, <https://www.hembygd.se/hembygdsforeningen-gamla-urshult>, that arrange the traditional events at Lunnabacken such as haymaking and Midsummer celebrations.

Åsnens brand promises never to offer anything that is not real or authentic, to not make up new things that do not belong.

Nature reserves and biotopes are managed, as mentioned under previous topics, by the municipalities and County Administrative Boards, which have strategic plans for the management. The County Administrative Board shall also ensure that ancient monuments in the county are preserved and not damaged. All ancient remains have automatic protection through the Cultural Environment Act. This applies to both the ancient remains that we already know of, and those that have not yet been discovered. (See <https://www.lansstyrelsen.se/kronoberg/samhalle/kulturmiljo/fornlamningar-och-fornfynd.html>)

## People & tradition

2

Action			Details
4.3. Intangible heritage			a + b) The Swedish UNESCO Council is tasked with being the link between UNESCO

Intangible cultural heritage is adequately protected and respected.

and the Swedish government, and to advise the government on UNESCO's activities and to inform and disseminate knowledge about UNESCO in Sweden. Part of the activities relate to the Intellectual Heritage Convention, adopted at the 2003 UNESCO General Conference. The convention was signed by Sweden in 2011 and at the same time the Institute for Languages and Memories got responsibility for the national work on the convention. The Institute is responsible for conducting language care and on a scientific basis increasing, enlivening and disseminating knowledge about languages, dialects, folk memories, names and other intangible cultural heritage in Sweden. (The Swedish National Heritage Board: <https://www.raa.se/kulturav/immateriellt-kulturav/>)

Myths and legends and the tradition of telling stories is an extremely important intangible cultural heritage, present everywhere in the destination. It is preserved among others through "The land of legends" and The Museum of Legends, which recently was listed on UNESCO's register of good methodological examples of how to work with securing intangible cultural heritage <http://www.sagobygden.se/en/the-land-of-legends>.

Some local storytellers lived or stayed at Huseby Bruk, for example Gunnar Olof Hyltén Cavallius (b.1818-d.1889) and Huseby's ironmaster Peter Rudebeck (b.1660-d.1710). Huseby still is connected to many stories and is full of history regarding the ironproduction and ironworks. Each year storytelling events are arranged at Huseby Bruk in order to keep the tradition of telling stories alive (and some of the events have even held been by a relative to Gunnar Olof Hyltén Cavallius.)

Local myths and legends include the legend of Blända (page attached from Åsnen nature guide book) and legends of the troll's mountain (with the actual troll mountain located in Åsnen National Park). Currently, guided tours with focus on keeping genuine stories, myths and legends alive, are under development.

Traditional celebrations take place yearly in the destination as well. Midsummer celebrations at the homesteads and traditional haymaking ensure that the traditions are protected and kept alive for future generations. The local association Hembygdsföreningen Gamla Urshult have a panoramic view from Lunnabacken in Åsnen on their website <http://h-g-u.se/vy/>. There, visitors can choose between three languages and can then find information about some of the locations that you see from

		<p>Lunnabacken and read about some local legends based on the locations on the photograph.</p>  <p>Blood at Blodberget_Åsnen nature guide book.png</p>
<p><b>4.4. Respecting authenticity</b>  Tourism is respectful of the living culture and traditions, supportive to its protection and celebration, and not interfering with its practice. The practice of tourism in observing the living culture and traditions is genuine and respectful. When traditions are replicated they remain genuine and authentic.</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>This far, tourism has not had any noticeable disruptive effect on local traditions in the destination. Visitors that come to Åsnen are looking for authentic experiences – experiences that Swedes and people from Småland are very careful of and keen to preserve. Authentic experiences include traditional events like Midsummer, Walpurgis bonfires, haymaking, farmers' markets, crayfish parties, etc, which would have been arranged and taken place regardless if there were tourists present or not. To our knowledge, based on information from the tourist offices in the Åsnen area, visitors greatly appreciate when they are advised on where to find and partake in traditional, Swedish happenings. The destination receives most tourists in summer (June-August) but still does not experience any threatening mass tourism that could impact traditions – rather the opposite.</p>

## 5. Social well-being

7

1

### Human respect

1

Action			Details
<p><b>5.1. Protection of people</b> The destination takes adequate measures to protect all people legally and effectively against commercial, sexual, or any other form of exploitation and harassment, particularly of children, adolescents, elderly, disabled, women, and minorities.</p>			<p>As a general for all of Sweden, by the Swedish Work Environment Act (file attached), every business and establishment has a duty to make sure that their employees are healthy and safe from any kind of harassment or exploitation. The purpose of the Act is to prevent occupational illness and accidents and to otherwise ensure a good work environment. The Swedish Work Environment Authority sometimes do drop-in visits to workplaces in order to check that the working environment is good and that the employers live up to the demands made in the Work Environment Act.</p> <p>When it comes to the destination, the protocol for Destination Åsnen's business network states, among other things, that businesses have to "[...]comply with applicable laws for their business" in order to be included in the network. In Sweden, if one suspects that any kind of illegal or suspicious business takes place, one has to report it to the authorities so that it is investigated and, if necessary, legal measures can be taken.</p> <p><a href="https://www.av.se/arbetsmiljoarbete-och-inspektioner/lagar-och-regler-om-arbetsmiljo/arbetsmiljolagen/">https://www.av.se/arbetsmiljoarbete-och-inspektioner/lagar-och-regler-om-arbetsmiljo/arbetsmiljolagen/</a></p> <p> sfs_19771160_work_environment_act.pdf</p>

### Community participation

Action			Details
<p><b>5.2. Residents informed about sustainable tourism</b> Residents are regularly involved in discussions on opportunities, challenges and sustainability of tourism development.</p>	✓	✓	<p>Local residents have been included and involved in Destination Åsnen from day 1. When the development work started in the area, everyone was given the opportunity to participate in the process. An open invitation was sent out with the postal service to local residents. The fact that residents in the area as well as businesses were able to voice their opinion and hear more about the plans, was a great beginning step towards a sustainable destination and tourism development.</p> <p>There are also meetings with the local community on a regular basis to talk about the development work in the destination, and to get opinions from permanent residents.</p> <p>An overall aspect of the development is to develop at a balanced rate and with a focus on the destination being transformed into an even more attractive place to live in. In these dialogue discussions, sustainability is a red thread. We are clear in our dialogue, that we in no way intend to create mass tourism to the destination, but rather that we focus on the positive development that benefits the local community by creating job opportunities for people and ensuring service in rural areas.</p> <p>Regarding schools/tourism education, there are three schools offering higher education (upper secondary school &amp; folk high school) within tourism that Destination Åsnen have a dialogue with on a regular basis. Representatives from the schools are invited to relevant workshops, key notes, etc. offered by the destination, so that they can take information with them back to their students. Study trips have been arranged to the Åsnen area by some of the schools.</p> <p>One of the schools lies within the destination; <a href="#">Grimslöv Folkhögskola</a> offering the 1.5-year-long program "Tourism &amp; Adventure". Sustainability and recreation are important aspects of the education and they study nature and ecotourism. <a href="#">Ryssbygymnasiet</a>, just outside the destination, has an orientation within the three-year-program "Natural resources" (Swedish: naturbruk) called "Nature &amp; Adventure" that prepares students for higher education (university) while at the same time offering vocational training. Last, but not least, <a href="#">Kungsmadskolan</a> in Växjö, also offers a three-</p>

			year-program, "Hotel & Tourism".
<b>5.3. Inhabitant satisfaction</b> The satisfaction of residents with tourism development and destination management is monitored regularly, and the results are publicly reported in a timely manner.	✓	✗	Today, the measurement of the satisfaction of the local population may be considered non-scientific. Views and opinions are mainly picked up in different meeting contexts or through direct contact. The contact paths are short, and information is led both through the municipalities, the destination organisation and the business network. Through the on-going process of organisation and role distribution for the area, these issues will also get a clearer focus.  A signal value of resident satisfaction may be that the demand for and prices for private properties is increasing.

## Local economy

2

Action			Details
<b>5.4. Optimising private sector contribution</b> Small- and medium-sized enterprises are supported; and measures are taken to optimise the private sector's contribution to the local economy.	✓	✓	Destination Åsnen is a prioritised destination in the regional tourism industry strategy. The regional tourism organisation, Destination Småland (DS), that shall work towards/for:  increased collaborations and more cooperation initiatives within the county and with various businesses in the hospitality industry in other counties as part of the work to strengthen the industry and supply in the region, DS will work to ensure that companies and organisations in the hospitality industry collaborate and create bookable products and packages DS shall identify competence needs and, on the basis of these needs, initiate and coordinate competence

		<p>development initiatives aimed primarily at the industry DS shall cooperate with and utilize the knowledge and experience from regional initiatives/projects that are deemed to be of use in the work of developing the hospitality industry</p> <p>From the outset, the agenda for the development in the Åsnen area has had a clear focus on ensuring that development benefits visitors, residents, local companies and nature. It was also a clear input from the local business community in the initial dialogues that the development in the Åsnen area shall be based on local values and assets. This has been a guiding star throughout the whole development process. Developing the hospitality industry is an important tool to create sustainable businesses and ensure economic growth. Revenue from the hospitality industry indirectly contributes to businesses being able to offer food, fuel, etc. to residents during times of the year when it otherwise would not be profitable to keep open. Small supermarkets in the countryside are completely dependent on the turnover of tourists to be able to be open all year.</p> <p>The enterprises in the area are small, not least one-man companies, and many entrepreneurs have other jobs. By providing opportunities to collaborate, the companies get help in their development. Destination Småland also contributes with information on financing support, business development and knowledge-enhancing efforts for the benefit of an sustainable local economy. The Åsnen nature guide book, also available in English, encourages visitors to benefit the local business community/local economy instead of consuming in the chain stores of the cities.</p> <p>The focused destination development contributes to existing enterprises being able to develop activities as the Åsnen brand works as a lever, and local start-ups take place.</p>
<p><b>5.5. Promoting local products and services</b> The inclusion of local artisans, producers and service providers in the tourism value chain according to fair trade principles is supported; local and sustainable products that are supportive to the area's nature, culture, local identity, and local economy, are promoted. These may include food and beverages, crafts, performance arts, agricultural</p>	<p>✓ ✓</p>	<p>Considering its geographical location, the Åsnen area has a unique growth zone and terroir. The large water surfaces together with rocks and the climate, create especially unique conditions for cultivation. Parts of the area have been designated as a national interest of the National Heritage Board for their unique meadow cultivation.</p> <p>Fruit products, mainly apples, have a prominent place in the range of local products.</p>

products, etc.

The area is well-known for its fruit, must/juice and other processed products. These are clearly marketed on both destination-specific and region-specific channels as they are of great interest both in Sweden and internationally. Åsnen products are also highlighted in the Åsnen nature guide book and they are shown on press visits. Large grocery stores (chain stores) in Växjö city choose to sell local products from the Åsnen area. Right now, several of the destination's enterprises are developing their businesses to offer more and more refined products in the area. Some of these businesses are investing entirely on organic farming.

Every year a large food fair is arranged in Växjö, MAT2019, which is the largest food fair in Sweden where many of Åsnen's producers participate. Many of the producers are part of a local network connecting food producers, unified by Destination Småland. Last year they went on a study trip in Åsnen to visit Åsnen producers. There is also a food market/farmers market two times a week at the market square in Växjö, where Åsnen producers sell plants, fruit, vegetables and honey.

The Michelin-awarded restaurant PM & Vänner in Växjö uses produce from the Åsnen area in their restaurant and are also very clear in their communication about where their raw products originate from. There are also cafés and restaurants in the area that use local products such as wild game meat from local forests and fish from the lake, e.g. Getnö Gård <https://visitasnen.se/produkt/getno-gard-lake-asnen-resort-summer-bistro-and-country-cafe>.

In the destination there are art crafts as well as silversmiths, ceramics, textiles and wooden crafts etc. The handcrafted products are available both in the artisans' studios and at Kronobergsslöjdarna, located at Huseby Bruk.

When we arrange internal meetings and conferences, we always aim to hold them within the destination and also that local food is served.

## Social impact

Action			Details
<p><b>5.6. Optimising social impacts</b> The impact of visitors to the local community and other visitors is appropriately monitored, and measures are taken to optimise their contribution to the local economy.</p>	✓	✓	<p>Two different guest surveys have been conducted in 2012 and 2014. The outcome shows that the guests were satisfied with their stay and that they are happy to come back. This ensures a positive effect for the companies. Through educational initiatives in digitalisation, many companies have become aware of the power of reviews on digital platforms. After the initiatives, the reviews have generally become better and the companies more aware of the demands of the market which helps them develop their offers better. The area has a significant number of holiday homes, and more and more AirBnB objects become available each year. The possibility with e.g. AirBnB is also something that is highlighted in the dialogues with the local community as an opportunity to be part of the destination development. Now we also work towards the enterprises developing activities on AirBnB Experiences. We hope to be able to offer workshops regarding opportunities with AirBnB soon. The effect of the development of guest nights has previously only been measured within municipal boundaries and not for a whole destination that extends over different administrative boundaries. This year, for the first time, we have been able to present statistics for guest nights in the destination. This shows an increase of about 12% for Destination Åsnen, while the region as a whole has an increase of 1%. The figures refer to the guest night development 2018 compared to 2017.</p>
<p><b>5.7. Real estate exploitation</b> The impact of real estate development on the local community is appropriately monitored, and measures are taken to optimise their contribution to the local economy.</p>	✓	✓	<p>The attraction value has been raised in the area since the start of the destination development. However, this is considered a positive factor in the area. Previous tendencies, on a general level, have shown that people seek out cities and that rural areas are depopulated. Increasing migration to the area is an important factor for the municipalities. This means that schools can remain, that stores are not closed, and that community service can be maintained. From the beginning, it has been clear that Åsnen will focus on developing in a sustainable way and not invest in mass tourism.</p> <p>The fact that prices for houses in rural areas have increased is so far a positive effect,</p>

	<p>and so far we see no tendencies that this prevents permanent residents from moving there. However, the issue is important and we have seen the negative effects of such development when studying other cases and countries. Awareness and the reminder that one does not lose focus on the issue is highly relevant for the future.</p> <p>Since about 2008, a web-based real estate agency (Booli), has designated the Åsnen area specifically in their presentation; <a href="https://www.booli.se/asnenomradet/867355/">https://www.booli.se/asnenomradet/867355/</a>. (As a result, this has also been applied for one of the largest Swedish web pages for searching for telephone numbers!) When we are in contact with people who are interested in moving to the area, we mainly choose to refer to local estate agents.</p> <p>Exploitation of the area is also affected by the local authorities' zoning plans that regulate the different types of constructions and businesses/operations.</p> <p>Worthy to note is that the range of AirBnB offerings are at an extremely balanced level at this time, and seeing it increase to some extent would rather have positive effects.</p>
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### Health & safety



Action	  Details
<b>5.8. Health &amp; safety prevention &amp; response</b> Crime, safety, and health hazards are adequately prevented and addressed.	<div style="display: flex; justify-content: space-between;"> <div style="width: 20px;">  </div> <div style="width: 20px;">  </div> </div> <p>a)+b) Sweden is a country of high reputation among international visitors. The Åsnen area does not differ from this. It is in fact possible that security here is greater based on the fact that it is a rural destination which generally are safer than urban environments. The national organisation for the Swedish visiting industry <a href="#">presents a number of reports</a> that testify to the image of Sweden as a safe destination.</p> <p>The country has a strong democracy and a history of neutrality in times of war. Safety and the state of peace is very high in Sweden and according to <a href="#">Vision of Humanity</a>. The country stands out for low corruption. Sweden is also known for openness and freedom,</p>

a healthy lifestyle that in many ways connects to nature. Spending time in nature is a huge part of our lives and not a constructed activity. Society is seen as modern, equal and welcoming. Health care is financed by taxes and available to all, including visitors. This means that access to healthcare is not controlled by income levels.

The alcohol consumption per capita is low in an international perspective. The availability of alcohol is limited through a state monopoly and alcoholic beverages can only be purchased in special stores. Sales are also limited to people over the age of 20.

There is an Emergency Response called "Krissamverkan Kronoberg". They collaborate both before, during and after a crisis to reduce vulnerabilities and to increase the ability to handle different events, as well as to cooperate if/when a crisis occurs. An important part is also the exchange of knowledge between the organisations and the common learning after a crisis. ([Link](#)). Information booklets regarding this were sent out to all households in Kronoberg County and are available in multiple languages online.

On the destination website there is general information regarding safety in nature and, e.g. where the nearest hospitals/doctors are. There is also an alerts function where current events/prohibitions are addressed, e.g. the fire prohibition between 1 April to 30 September. The destination has offered first aid training for enterprises in Åsnen on several occasions with extra focus on accidents that can happen in nature, lifesaving and CPR.

Other links:

<http://solability.com/the-global-sustainable-competitiveness-index/the-index>

<https://www.goodcountry.org/index/results#SWE>

<https://visitasnen.se/nature/common-sense-safety/safety/>

## 6. Business & hospitality

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### Business involvement

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Action			Details
<p><b>6.1. Sustainability standards</b> Internationally recognized sustainability standards consistent with the GSTC Criteria for tourism enterprises are promoted by the destination or the business sector.</p>	✓	✓	<p>Historically, there have been no internationally recognised sustainability standards in the destination which also is why it has not been promoted. However, Destination Åsnen's participation in the Green Destinations award programme, as well as Åsnen's Sustainable Top 100 Award, work both as inspiration and promotion for an ambition to proceed further with international sustainability standards.</p> <p>The importance of sustainability and sustainable development has been made clear since the beginning of the development work in the area. This is a recurring message to the companies in the destination. Different types of companies are engaged in their respective trade associations, e.g. SCR (for Swedish campsites), and their classifications are based on assessments on, for example, environmental/sustainability work, health, services, activities and events. The companies are also offered a screening by the quality development concept Swedish Welcome, that has a clear sustainability agenda. <a href="https://www.swedishwelcome.se/en/promises-to-guests/">https://www.swedishwelcome.se/en/promises-to-guests/</a></p> <p>During the development of the destination, we have continuously seen more private involvement as a result of the clear agenda on sustainable environment. Enterprises invest in solar panels, avoid single-use products as much as possible, boat motors are almost exclusively 4-stroke or electric motors.</p> <p>Dialogue has been started with the municipalities, which are positive to this development. Växjö municipality, which is part of the destination, has clear goals towards Agenda 2030. <a href="https://vaxjo.se/sidor/hallbar-utveckling/kommunens-hallbarhetsarbete/agenda-2030---globala-malen-for-hallbar-utveckling.html">https://vaxjo.se/sidor/hallbar-utveckling/kommunens-hallbarhetsarbete/agenda-2030---globala-malen-for-hallbar-utveckling.html</a></p>

		<p>Tingsryd municipality and Växjö municipality are two of the 90 municipalities and regions that have been adopted in the Swedish UN Association's and SKL's joint project "Glokala Sverige". The project is about working with Agenda 2030 and the global goals for sustainable development in municipalities and regions throughout Sweden.</p>
<p><b>6.2. Solid waste</b> Enterprises are encouraged to reduce, reuse, and recycle solid waste.</p>	<p>✓ ✗</p>	<p>As mentioned under the criteria for solid waste reduction, solid waste is minimised by the municipalities working strategically and long-term towards it. As the enterprises are located in the different municipalities they have to follow the regulations accordingly in order to not receive high fees or, in the worst case scenario, be shut down. The Åsneen municipalities have not been able to provide any concrete examples on (if and) how enterprises are encouraged to reduce solid waste, though.</p> <p>Recycling facilities enable residents and enterprises to dispose of any waste that does not belong in household bins, and containers for plastic, paper, metal, batteries and glass are also located around the municipalities. Some enterprises have recycling containers on their land/at their enterprise, and then pay extra to have them emptied.</p> <p>In Sweden, there are simple solutions for returning large amount of deposit bottles and cans, if enterprises sell soft drinks that come in such bottles, which also helps them in their work to reduce waste. <a href="https://pantamera.nu/om-oss/returpack-in-english/">https://pantamera.nu/om-oss/returpack-in-english/</a></p> <p>Nationwide campaigns by e.g. the Keep Sweden Tidy Association encourage companies to work towards more sustainable goals. <a href="https://www.hsr.se/english">https://www.hsr.se/english</a>. A higher environmental awareness both among local residents and visitors is also likely to help contribute to reducing solid waste among enterprises. Businesses want to be appealing and inviting, and an environmental, sustainable focus definitely is the way to go.</p>

## Information & marketing

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Action			Details
<p><b>6.3. Visitor behaviour at sensitive sites</b>            Guidelines for appropriate visitor behaviour are developed and made available, aimed to minimize adverse impacts on sensitive sites and to strengthen positive visitor behaviour. Local stakeholders are involved in the development of information for visitors.</p>	✓	✓	<p>The Åsnen nature guide book provides detailed information for what is allowed and what is not - by law and from an environmental/sustainable perspective. There are extensive chapters covering the Right of Public Access, "nature sensibility", rules and regulations for the national park and nature reserves, rules for fishing, etc. The visitor webpage <a href="http://www.visitasnen.se">www.visitasnen.se</a> presents information and guidelines, similar to those in the nature guide book. The new website (launching June/July) will have even clearer entryways to information on being sustainable in our destination. The free map of Åsnen is made by the non-profit association in Åsnen i.e. the local enterprises/stakeholders. A map of the Åsnen area which is sold in the destination provides valuable information regarding permanent and temporary access bans, fire bans and bird protection sites. The Åsnen rangers "Åsnentillsynen" patrol the lake in order to e.g. make sure that rules are being followed and that bird protection sites are not disturbed. The County Administrative Board and the Swedish Environmental Protection Agency provide official leaflets and information signs in the nature reserves and in Åsnen National Park, for example. This helps lessen the impact on sensitive nature/areas as information is directly available on site. The "Keep Sweden Tidy Foundation" have nationwide campaigns regarding keeping Sweden clean, providing fun yet informative posters, booklets and other information in Swedish and, normally, English. <a href="https://www.hsr.se/english">https://www.hsr.se/english</a> The Swedish Environmental Protection Agency has official information in other languages in Swedish, making it easier for visitors to access the information. Rather than saying what is not allowed, they focus on what IS allowed, making it a much more positive message; <a href="http://www.swedishepa.se/Enjoying-nature/The-Right-of-Public-Access/This-is-allowed1/">http://www.swedishepa.se/Enjoying-nature/The-Right-of-Public-Access/This-is-allowed1/</a></p>