



# OUTDOOR FITNESS RESEARCH

SUNDBY SPORTS PARK





## SUMMARY

- 23% OF THE RESPONDENTS WENT FROM INACTIVE TO ACTIVE BECAUSE OF THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE.
- INHABITANTS OF ALL AGES AND ETHNICITY WERE ATTRACTED TO THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE.
- WHEN ASKED IF PEOPLE PREFERRED TO TRAIN ALONE OR WITH OTHERS 58,5% ANSWERED THAT THEY PREFERRED TO TRAIN WITH OTHERS, WITHIN THE GROUP OF INACTIVE USERS THIS WAS 75%.
- 52% OF THE INACTIVE ANSWERED THAT THEY HAD FIRST HEARD ABOUT THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE THROUGH A FRIEND/NEIGHBOR/PARTNER WHICH HAD ENCOURAGED THEM TO USE THE SITE.
- 92% OF THE 106 PEOPLE INTERVIEWED, AN OVERWHELMING MAJORITY, SAID THEY WOULD RECOMMEND THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE.
- THE USERS APPRECIATED THE SITE WITH AN 8.6 ON A SCALE FROM 1-10. AND EVEN 20% OF THE PEOPLE INTERVIEWED THOUGHT IT WAS THE BEST OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE THEY KNEW, AND APPRECIATED IT WITH A SUBLIME GRADE 10.
- 85% OF THE USERS LIVED WITHIN 3KM OF THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE.



# INTRODUCTION

## THE WORLD HAS CHANGED. LEVELS OF PHYSICAL ACTIVITY HAVE DROPPED AND HEALTH CARE COSTS HAVE RISEN.

The increasingly sedentary nature of everyday life is creating communities with alarmingly low levels of physical activity.

Globally over 25% of all adults, and over 80% of adolescents, fail to meet even the minimum levels of recommended physical activity. The price is high, and everyone is paying, both individually and as a society.<sup>1</sup>

The cost of inactivity-related diseases, dependency, and lost productivity are impacting on us all. Insufficient physical activity is a top 4 leading risk factor for global mortality.

## WE SHOULD NO LONGER ASK OURSELVES IF WE NEED TO ACT, BUT RATHER HOW?

Research initiated by KOMPAN<sup>2</sup> shows that the desire to become more active is there but unnecessary obstacles are getting in the way, resulting in a downward spiral of inactivity. Time, money and motivation are the main reasons given for not being more active.

A low income can be linked to less free time, limited access to leisure facilities, and living environments that are unsupportive of physical activity. This is a valuable insight, as the research shows that a significant 60% of people feel that today's public spaces do not inspire them to be physically active.

## COPENHAGEN

In many ways Copenhagen already sets an excellent example when it comes to creating inspirational public spaces for its inhabitants to be active. It is one of the most cycle-friendly cities in the world. Public swimming areas and accessible parks are the norm. But there's still plenty of work to be done.

In Denmark, most 11-year-olds are active enough, but by the age of 15, this is no longer true<sup>3</sup>.

City leaders have realized there is no room for complacency. The result is a series of innovative approaches to the development of parks and public spaces. The creation of the outdoor fitness site at Sundby Sports Park is an example of such an innovative approach.

Mayor of Culture and Leisure, Carl Christian Ebbesen says the following about this initiative:

*"The system can be used by anyone. This includes children, the disabled and the elderly. It is simple, straightforward and is freely available. At the same time, it is located in an area where many people do not traditionally work out. So the whole idea is to try to get more people to exercise."*

## PHYSICAL INACTIVITY

A top 4 leading risk factor for global mortality.

## OBESITY AND OVERWEIGHT

39% of our population is either overweight or obese.

50% is expected to be overweight or obese in 2050.

## COST OF OBESITY

Is equivalent to the cost of armed conflict or smoking.

## 59% OF DANISH POPULATION WANTS TO EXERCISE MORE, MAIN BARRIERS NOT TO DO SO ARE:

56% Lack of **time**

33% Clubs are **expensive**

17% In need of a trainer to **motivate**

39% Lack of offering within **Community**

Source: McKinsey Global Institute; (UN) United Nations; WHO (Worlds Health Organization)

<sup>1</sup> WHO (2016): Global Health Observatory Data. Retrieved from: [http://www.who.int/gho/ncd/risk\\_factors/physical\\_activity\\_text/en/](http://www.who.int/gho/ncd/risk_factors/physical_activity_text/en/)

<sup>2</sup> CEDI-KOMPAN (2016): Fremtidens byer er aktive.

<sup>3</sup> Schipperijn, J., Klinker, C., Kerr, J. & Troelsen, J. (2011). "Physical Activity Among Teenagers in a Multi-Ethnic Neighborhood in Copenhagen, Denmark - Combining GPS and Accelerometer Data Using PALMS and ArcGIS." Presented at Active Living Research 2011. Retrieved from: <http://activelivingresearch.org/physical-activity-among-teenagers-multi-ethnic-neighborhood-copenhagen-denmark-combining-gps-and>



## OBJECTIVE OF THE STUDY

The objective of the study was to investigate who is using the outdoor fitness site, and whether we succeed in activating the inactive.

The reason for investigating was based on the main objective of the municipality of Copenhagen: "Create an outdoor fitness site which appeals to everybody, but most importantly, can attract the inactive to adapt a more active lifestyle".

## METHOD

To gain a better understanding of the users, their motivation and their usage of the fitness site we conducted interviews in combination with a questionnaire.

This made sure that the conversation was more consistent, careful and structured.

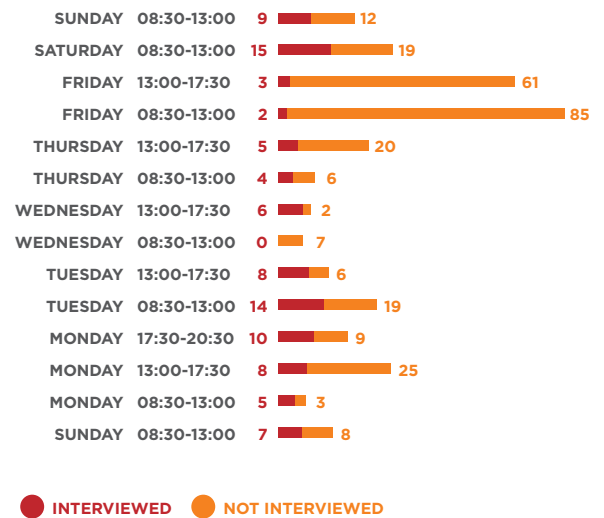
Another reason for combining the interview with the questionnaire was to avoid statements being interpreted differently than they were intended by the questioner.

Additionally, a combination of the interview and the structured questionnaire is considered to be less offensive, compared to only using a questionnaire, where answers cannot be explained.

## THE SURVEY (FIGURE 1)

- The survey was created with Google Docs
- Interviews were done using a tablet
- Interviews were done over an eight day period (10th -18th of September 2016)
- Over the eight days interviewers observed 388 people using the outdoor fitness site
- 106 interviews were conducted

FIGURE 1  
NUMBER OF USERS



## DESCRIPTION OF THE SUNDBY SPORTS PARK

Sundby Sports Park is one of the central sport facilities in Copenhagen and covers more than 150,000m<sup>2</sup>. The facilities have a wide range of activities, both indoor and outdoor. You can do many different sports such as football, athletics, tennis, volleyball, handball, floor ball, badminton and fitness.

### HIGH CAPACITY GROUP TRAINING LOCATION

The latest addition to Sundby Sports Park is a new outdoor fitness site, which is ideal for both individuals and group training classes. The area is divided into three zones facilitating some of the most popular training activities; Cross training, Street workout and Boot camp. The size and variation of the area enables multiple trainers to offer different types of group classes at the same time.

### CROSS SYSTEMS - INTELLIGENT DESIGNS, PROVIDING AN EFFICIENT AND EFFECTIVE TRAINING SPACE

Cross Systems offers familiar training known from the indoor gyms where users can train with products like suspension trainers and kettle bells in a safe and vandalism proof environment. This solution is ideal for group training and social interaction because many people can easily train side by side in this compact area. For trainers this means a fast overview, enabling them to offer support and guidance where needed.

### SOLUTION WITH HIGH TRAINING VALUE, INSPIRING CREATIVITY AND FREEDOM OF MOVEMENT

Another part of the area has Workout Systems installed, and up to 20 people can perform all of the street workout exercises they want. It provides the opportunity to be creative and learn how to control the body in a playful way. Almost any movement pattern can be created, resulting in a different workout each time.

### EXERCISE BENCHES AND SURFACE PATTERNS

An open training area is located between the cross training and street workout areas. This can be used for warming up, cooling down or Boot camp classes. The surface patterns can be used to improve one's acceleration, lateral speed and change of direction while enhancing balance, rhythm and body control. These core skills are critical to anyone, athlete or elderly. The benches are simple but effective. They can be used for multiple functional exercise for both upper and lower body.

### THE KOMPAN SPORT AND FITNESS APP

KOMPAN offers the support of a fitness app to allow users of all ages, fitness levels and abilities to make optimal use of the training location. The app functions as an online personal trainer, guiding users on exercise and nutrition, while motivating them to stay active.





## FINDINGS

### FINDING #1: THE OUTDOOR FITNESS IN SUNDBY IS BEING USED BY ALL

#### AGE

The outdoor fitness site attracted a mixed group of users (figure 2). Similar to an indoor fitness (figure 3),<sup>4</sup> all age groups were attracted to the site and the spread over the different age groups shows a similar pattern. Even so all age groups were represented, 72,7% of the users were between 16 and 55 years. As we know most people from the age of 15 do not meet WHO's recommended level of physical activity. The outdoor fitness site shows to be attractive to this age group and could increase the number of people that meet the requirements.

14,2% of the interviewed users were teenagers, where in the indoor fitness 9% of the users were younger than 19 years. This means that outdoor fitness seems to be more attractive for teenagers than indoor fitness.

A reason for this might be that a part of the outdoor fitness is equipped with Street Workout equipment. Street workout is training with your own body weight and consists of athletics and calisthenics. It is performed outdoors, commonly in parks and playgrounds. Another reason for teenagers' use could also be the fact that they can exercise for free.

#### GENDER

When it comes to the gender split between users, we do see a significant difference between the users of the outdoor fitness and the average indoor fitness (Figure 4). In the indoor fitness 55% of the users are women and 45 % of the visitors are men. At the outdoor fitness in Sundby we observed that just 27% of the users were women and the majority of 73% of the users were men. Possible explanation of this could be the choice of products at the outdoor fitness site. From the project "Health for millions" (Kasper Lund Kirkegaard & Karsten Østerlund, October 2010) we know that female visitors to an indoor fitness have a distinctive preference for cardio fitness whereas men are more interested in strength training.

The Outdoor Fitness Site at Sundby Sports Park was mainly created to facilitate Cross Training, Bootcamp Training and Street Workout. Adding cardio fitness equipment such as bikes, cross-trainers or hand bikes could be a good investment in order to make the outdoor fitness more appealing for women.

Organizing more fitness classes could also be a way to attract more female users to the site, as we know female users are very interested in social activities.

FIGURE 2  
AGE MIX OUTDOOR FITNES

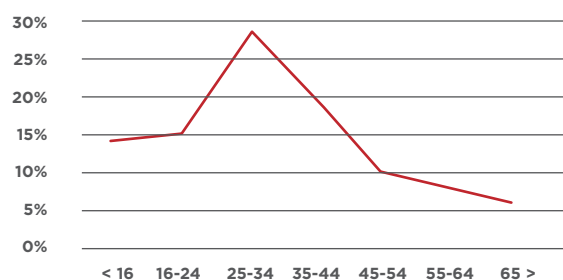


FIGURE 3  
AGE MIX INDOOR FITNES

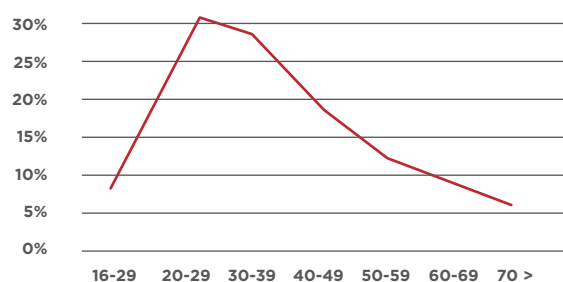
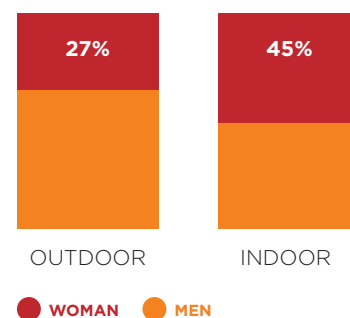


FIGURE 4  
GENDER MIX



<sup>4</sup> <http://www.idan.dk/vidensbank/udgivelser/sundhed-for-millioner-delrapport-5-fitnesskultur-mellem-forening-og-forretning-aktive-fitnessudoeveres-traeningsmotiver-tilfredshed-og-selvvrurderede-sundhed/24640e1e-8db2-4df6-9da0-9e0900a7fce7>

**GEOGRAPHY**

The outdoor fitness site is mainly used by local people. 85% of the users live within 3km from the site, and 95% lives within 5km. People coming further away mentioned the reason was lack of similar outdoor fitness facilities in their local neighbourhood and they could do a workout after work, which was close to Sundby.

**ETHNICITY**

Demographics show that 18% of the inhabitants of Copenhagen have a different nationality than Danish<sup>5</sup>. Of those people interviewed 18% had a different nationality than the Danish nationality (coming from 8 different countries). This shows that the users of the outdoor fitness site reflect the population of Copenhagen.

**ACTIVE OR INACTIVE**

The results of the survey show that many active people use the outdoor fitness site. The site is placed in the middle of Sundby Sports Park, so many users (57%) combine their fitness activities with other sports. Other users (12%) have switched completely from traditional sports to the free outdoor fitness. What is also interesting is that the group of people who used to be inactive and now active on the outdoor fitness site is rather big. 23% of the users have been activated (figure 5).

**FINDING #2:  
THE SITE ATTRACTED INACTIVE PEOPLE**

The outcome that 23% of the interviewed users responded they were not being physically active before, shows that the area is attractive for inactive people. This was the key objective for Copenhagen.

**AGE**

The outdoor fitness site attracted inactive people from all age groups (figure 6). Looking at the usage by people over the age of 45 there was a significant difference between active (19%) and inactive (42%) users.

**GENDER**

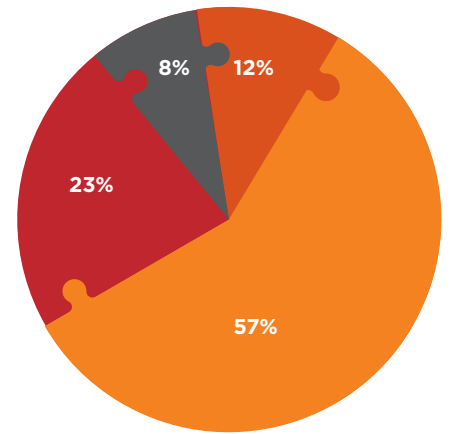
Overall, we saw that the outdoor fitness site was visited more by men than by women, but when it came to the inactive people the difference was not significant (figure 7). In future research it would be interesting to investigate why there are relatively few active female users (20%).

**TRAINING PREFERENCE**

When asked if people preferred to train alone or with others 58,5% answered that they preferred to train with others (figure 8), within the group of inactive users this was 75%.

FIGURE 5

**ACTIVE OR INACTIVE USERS**



- 12% I TRAINED EARLIER IN A CLUB OR IN A FITNESS CENTER NOW I ONLY TRAIN HERE
- 57% I TRAIN IN A CLUB OR IN A FITNESS CENTER AND NOW I ALSO TRAIN HERE
- 23% I DIDN'T TRAIN BEFORE. NOW I TRAIN HERE
- 8% OTHER

FIGURE 6

**AGE MIX**

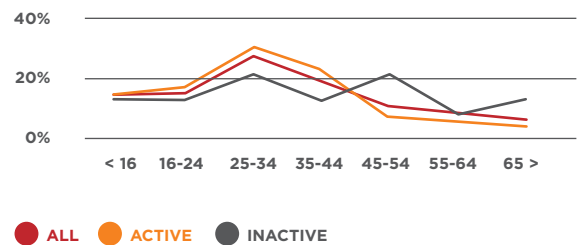
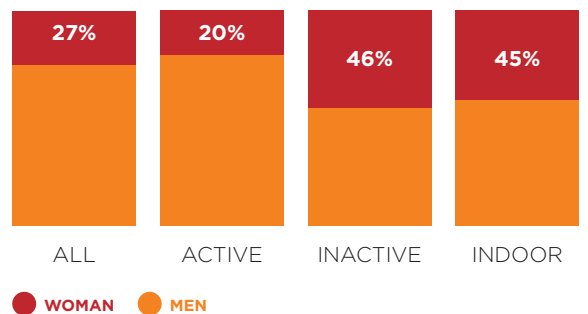


FIGURE 7

**GENDER MIX**



<sup>5</sup> Danmarks Statistik, <http://www.dst.dk>

The survey didn't question the reason why people find it more attractive to train with others, but in the conversation we had with the users it was mentioned that it was motivating and more fun to train with others. We know from research that trained users could have a positive effect on the motivation <sup>6</sup>.

**MOTIVATION AND ENCOURAGEMENT**

For both active and inactive users, the 2 most important reasons to use the outdoor fitness were the fact that the site could be used for free (active 46 %, inactive 71%) and the fact that it is outdoors (active 52%, inactive 38%) (figure 9).

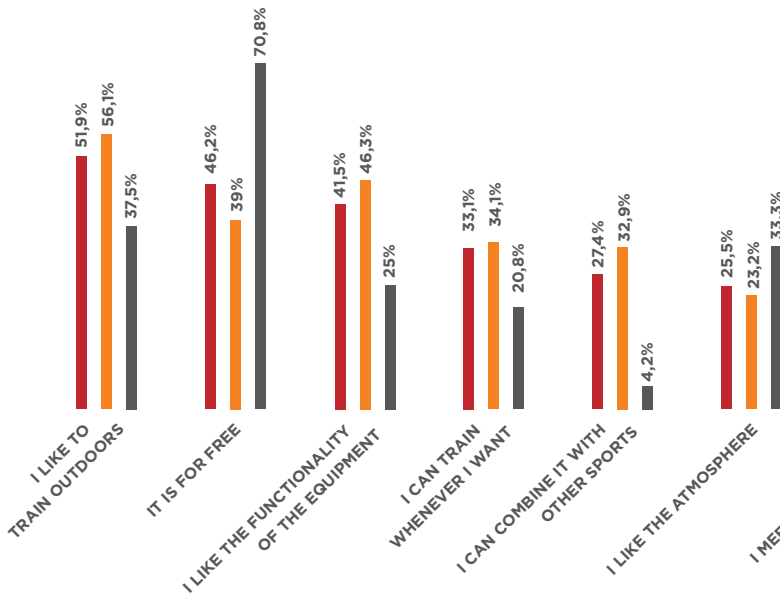


FIGURE 9

**MOTIVATION TO USE THE OUTDOOR FITNESS**

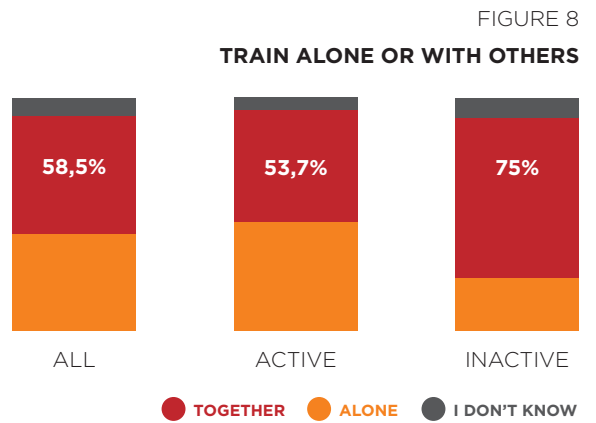


FIGURE 8

Where the active users mention practical reasons (24/7 availability, functional equipment) as other important reasons to use the outdoor fitness site, the inactive users mention social reasons as being important to use the outdoor fitness site. The confirmation that mouth to mouth publicity was one of the most important encouragements for the inactive to start using the outdoor fitness site, confirmed the interest in social interaction (figure 10).

52% of the inactive answered that they had first heard about the outdoor fitness site through a friend/neighbor/partner which had encouraged them to use the site.

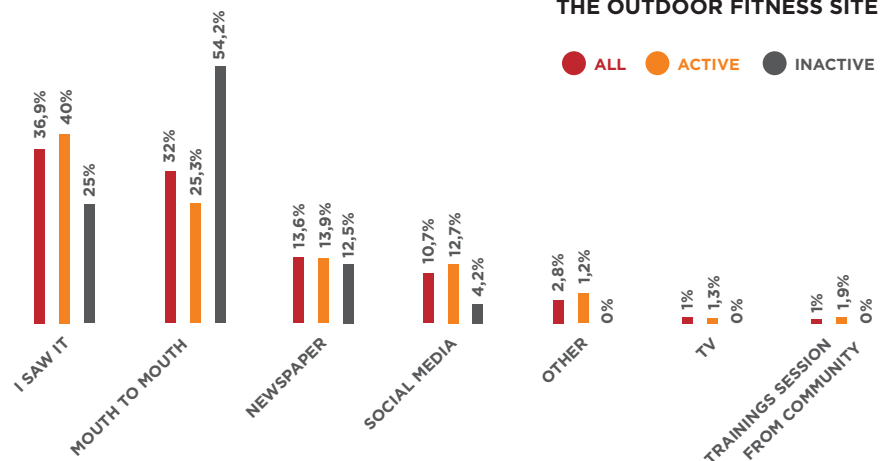


FIGURE 10

**HOW WERE YOU ENCOURAGED TO USE THE OUTDOOR FITNESS SITE**

<sup>6</sup> <http://www.idan.dk/vidensbank/udgivelser/sundhed-for-millioner-delrapport-5-fitnesskultur-mellem-forening-og-forretning-aktive-fitnessdoeveres-traeningsmotiver-tilfredshed-og-selvvaerdere-sundhed/24640e1e-8db2-4df6-9da0-9e0900a7fce7>



### FINDING #3: THE SUNDBY FITNESS SITE IN COPENHAGEN IS THE BEST

One of the key measures of the success of the outdoor fitness site is whether the users of the equipment would recommend it to other people. Of the 106 people interviewed, an overwhelming majority of people (92%) said they would recommend the outdoor fitness site, no one said that they would not recommend it (figure 11) Only 8% of the users said they didn't know if they would recommend the outdoor fitness site, mainly because they were first time users.

Another measure of success was the high appreciation expressed by the users when asked how they would rate the outdoor fitness site. On average the users appreciated the site with an 8,6 on a scale from 1-10. 20% of the people interviewed even thought it was the best outdoor fitness they knew and appreciated it with a sublime grade 10.

*“Cool, in Copenhagen are other outdoor fitness sites, but none of them is of this quality!”*

*“I recommend it to everyone, in the country where I come from we don't have these kind of free outdoor fitness facilities. I love it!”*

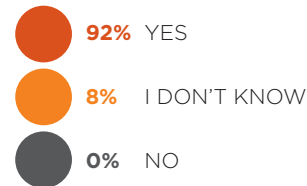
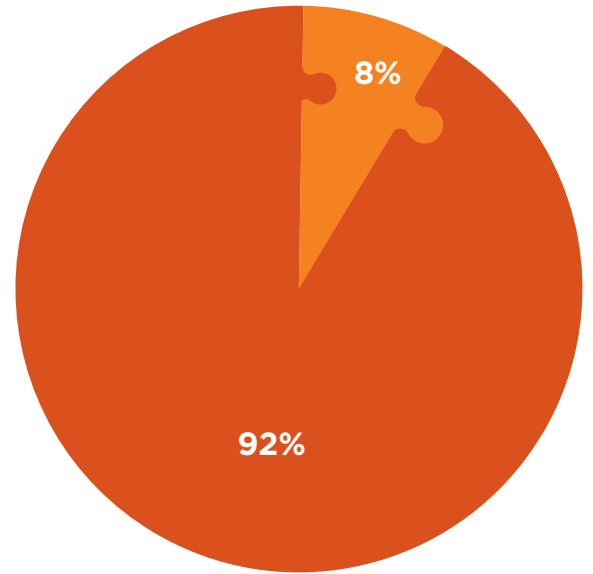
*“This is upgraded outdoor fitness, much better than the other outdoor fitness sites I have tried.”*

*“I think that it is wonderful, really glad that the municipality created this outdoor fitness. I would recommend it to all my friends”*

*“Fantastic place, I hope that more of these areas will be created in Copenhagen.”*

FIGURE 11

WOULD YOU RECOMMEND  
THE OUTDOORFITNESS SITE?



## CONCLUSION

The study showed that the outdoor fitness site at Sundby is a great success. It's getting used by people of all ages and by both Danes and inhabitants with a different ethnical background. The users showed a very high appreciation of the site with 8,6 as an average score. 20% even mentioned that it was the best outdoor fitness site they knew, and gave it a sublime grade 10. Almost everyone (92%) already had or would recommend the outdoor fitness site to others.

Even though all age groups were using the site, we saw that more men than women were represented. The reason could be that women in particular have a distinct preference for cardio fitness, which was obviously not a part of the site. To attract more women and in general users in the age group of 20-49, the installation of cardio equipment could be recommended.

A key finding in the survey is the fact that 23% of the users were people who were inactive. This shows that the installation of the outdoor fitness site can persuade people to adapt a more active and healthy lifestyle.

Proximity of the site is another important factor. The survey showed that 85% of the users came from within a distance of 3 km. Exercising options should always be close and easy accessible. If you install qualified and functional equipment based on research and user test, people nearby will actually be interested in using it.

Looking into the use of the fitness site, it is very interesting to see that the inactive users between the age of 45-55 are using the site more often than the active users.

Besides the fact that the use of the outdoor fitness site is free of charge the main motivation for the inactive users is the interaction with others. This is supported by the fact that 75% of the inactive users prefers to train with others.

Connecting users to the SPORT & FITNESS APP could help to fulfill the demand for interaction. When using the platform people can invite others online and arrange training sessions. Trainers from the local sport clubs can also use the platform to announce training sessions.





## APPENDIX

### 1 WHAT IS YOUR GENDER?

73,3% Male  
26,7% Female

### 2 WHAT IS YOUR AGE?

14,2% Under 16  
15,1% 16 - 24  
27,4% 25 - 34  
19,8% 35 - 44  
10,4% 45 -54  
7,5% 55 - 64  
5,7% 65+

### 3 WHAT IS YOUR ETHNICAL BACKGROUND?

82% Danish  
18% Other

### 4 HOW OFTEN DO YOU TRAIN, DO SPORTS?

18,9% 5 times a week or more  
36,8% 3 - 4 times a week  
28,3% 1 - 2 times a week  
13,2% 1 - 3 times a month  
18,9% Less than once a month  
0,9% Never  
1,9% I don't know

### 5 HOW DO YOU PREFER TO TRAIN?

38,7% Alone  
58,5% With others  
2,8% I don't know

### 6 WHICH OF THESE STATEMENTS DESCRIBES BEST HOW YOU ARE CURRENTLY ACTIVE AND HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST?

12,3% I trained before in a club or in a fitness center now I ONLY train here  
56,6% I train in a club or a fitness center and now I ALSO train here  
22,6% I didn't train before. Now I train here  
8,5% Other

### 7 HOW OFTEN DO YOU USE THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS?

0,9% 5 times a week or more  
9,4% 3 - 4 times a week  
66,0% 1 - 2 times a week  
18,9% 1 - 3 times a month  
2,8% Less than once a month  
0,0% Never  
1,9% I don't know

## 8 HOW LONG, ON AVERAGE, DO YOU TRAIN?

4,7%	0 - 15 min
34,0%	15 - 30 min
47,2%	31 - 60 min
12,3%	61 - 90 min
0,0%	91+ min
1,9%	I don't know

## 9 WHY DO YOU USE THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS?

(Multiple answers possible)

46,2%	It is for free
33,1%	I can train whenever I want
51,9%	I like to train outdoors
25,5%	I like the atmosphere
20,8%	I meet other people
41,5%	I like the functionality of the equipment
2,8%	There is a training app
27,4%	I can combine it with other sports or activities
10,4%	My trainer told me to go here
12,3%	It was suggested by other people
9,4%	Other

## 10 HOW DID YOU FIRST HEAR ABOUT THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS?

36,9%	I saw it
1,0%	Community training session
10,7%	Social media
13,6%	Newspaper
1,0%	TV
32,0%	Mouth to mouth
4,9%	Other

## 11 WHICH EQUIPMENT DID YOU USE?

29,2%	Everything
27,4%	Dip Bench
53,8%	Multi Station
33,0%	Push Up Bars
40,6%	Decline Bench
43,4%	Parallel Bars
44,3%	Jump Boxes
39,6%	Magnetic Bells
29,2%	Multi Net
53,8%	Suspension Trainer
11,3%	Surface Grid
23,6%	Surface Speedladder
13,2%	Surface Compass
17,0%	Surface Agility Dots

## 12 DID YOU USE THE APP?

14,9%	Yes
85,1%	No

## 13 HOW FAR DID YOU TRAVEL TO THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS?

28,3%	Less than 500 m
36,8%	0,5 km - 2 km
18,9%	2 km - 3 km
11,3%	3 km - 5 km
4,7%	Over 5 km

## 14 HOW WOULD YOU RATE THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS? (1-10)

0,0%	1
0,0%	2
0,0%	3
0,9%	4
0,0%	5
0,9%	6
9,4%	7
34,9%	8
33,0%	9
20,8%	10

## 15 WOULD YOU RECOMMEND OTHERS TO USE THIS OUTDOOR FITNESS?

92,4%	Yes
0,0%	No
7,6%	I don't know

## 16 HOW WOULD YOU DESCRIBE THE OUTDOOR FITNESS IN YOUR OWN WORDS?

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