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## Back to the village

### - perspectives for the future

The countryside of Denmark has been depopulating during the past century and our villages are disappearing. The population drainage from the smaller settlements, has affected the local market of housing and detail and welfare institutions such as schools and health care facilities are being dismantled and centralised in bigger cities.

Errindlev, on the southern coast of Lolland, is a classical example of the struggling Danish village. This settlement used to be a thriving community with a strong cooperative tradition, but is today fighting for survival. As our society has developed, the village has lost it's relation to it's original source, the agricultural landscape. The village which gave birth to the cooperative movement is no longer an important driver in our contemporary society.

Rural municipalities are today finding new foothold, such as planning for tourism as their future livelihood. In connection to new strategies for tourism the countryside is in need of new organisation and a rediscovery of local identity

This thesis is a study of future perspectives for the village. What could be survival strategies for areas with population decline? How can urban and rural as two opposites come to support, instead of being competitors against one another. Could the recreational, scenic rural be developed as an attraction compared to the intense, urban life. How can such areas find relevance again?



Currently 13 % of the houses in Errindlev are left empty.

The cooperative movement is what has pushed and kept things going in this community.

We still manage to keep the old organisation, even though the original people are not here anymore. New residents get involved in the village and continue the work with the cooperative movement which has formed and still characterises this place.

Klaus Jensen, local resident

**a. Horskærgård**  
One of the beautiful buildings in the village which today is left empty.

**b. Gartnervejnet 3**  
This building shows obvious signs of abandonment. It has been uninhabited for years and is very overgrown. The only solution for this house is demolition, which will leave an empty hole in the structure of the village.

**c. The blacksmith**  
This building used to be a blacksmith, but is no longer in use.

**4. Church**  
The village church has been positioned at the center of the village since year 1850. It is a landmark seen from all of the mainroads going through the village.

**1. Dairy**  
The cooperative dairy is one of the best preserved examples from its time. It was protected by the agency for culture in 2000. Since then a group of villagers have continuously worked to ensure maintenance and repair.

**The village road**  
Today the road running through the village is a monotonous experience of asphalt. The road was developed and expanded as the population grew and the car became a common form of transportation.

**c. The manor house landscape**  
Errindlev is surrounded by manor houses. In the local area many roads are flanked by avenues of trees as a part of the cultural landscape of the manor houses.

**d. The dyke**  
Today the dyke is not only a protection against the rising sea levels, but has also become a recreational route along the southern coast of Lolland.

**a. Nature conservation area**  
South-west of Errindlev is a nature conservation area which is known for its amazing landscape and rich bird life. Just west of the area is a little beach.

**b. Agricultural landscape**  
Errindlev is surrounded by farmland. The crops blossom during the spring and is harvested in the late summer months. During the warmer months of the fields lie bare.

