



Town centres summit sustains momentum



BID programme manager and founder of Campaignz, Gary Holmes, *pictured*, attended the World Towns Leadership Summit in Malmö, southern Sweden, last month.

Gary is an International Director (ex officio) of the International Downtown Association (IDA) which ran the event.

We caught up with Gary on his return to New Zealand to find out more about the event.

The need to sustain prosperous business districts is the same the world over so it was no surprise that this was the key theme of this year's World Towns Leadership Summit.

"A key goal for the 2017 summit was to establish a global action plan to enable the work of all participating organisations and build consensus on policy directions necessary to sustain healthy commercial districts," says Gary.

"While the business community and property owners remain the primary stakeholder audiences for our member organizations, we must consider the long-term needs of residents, visitors, and workers, all of whom fuel the growth and success of every city centre, commercial district, corridor, and neighbourhood."

In addition to the time spent in Malmö, Gary and his fellow delegates crossed the Öresund Bridge to visit the Danish capital city of Copenhagen.

The itinerary included a visit to the self-proclaimed autonomous neighbourhood of Christiania, *see below*, and the site of the old Carlsberg Brewery which is being transformed into a new city centre for Copenhagen.



The broad agreed actions were

The uniqueness of place:

- We need knowledge. Storytelling (all tell the same story across borders). Proactively search for knowledge
- Carry out surveys. Be open-minded
- Try semi-permanent solutions / installations. Be brave. Interact with community
- Ask for mandate. Get politicians on board. Build trust. Be creative with resources. Pool resources.

Governance and Citizenship

- Develop guiding principles – value statements that connect all urban places
- Create lists of examples to assimilate culturally different people
- Create list of community engagement techniques.

Local economies

- Market and promote all types of local businesses
- Standardise what should be measured
- Create a local dashboard for everyone to keep track of results
- More technical visits with each other
- Take a lead in City-logistics.

Environments

- Prototyping as research: quick, reversible, "do-it projects"
- Shared capacity: link city skills, value all knowledge
- Authentic listening principle: agreed by all leaders.
- Designate space for diversity

