Access over ownership: the case of meeting facilities in Lyngby

Collaborative Consumption, access economy or the sharing economy are all terms describing the new fast growing business built on the sharing of resources and promoting access over ownership. It is a paradigm shift that has made it to the Times magazine list of the “10 ideas that will change the world”. Within this overall paradigm, shared space, is also gaining grounds. The purpose of the study is to investigate the attitude towards shared space in an urban context with a particular focus on meeting facilities. To what degree is there an interest in sharing meeting facilities within a city or a municipality? The Lyngby-Taarbæk City of Knowledge is used as case, as this strategic collaboration on municipal level includes a vision of sharing facilities to stimulate regional development. The attitude towards shared space in the Lyngby-Taarbæk City of Knowledge is studied in a three-step qualitative research process. The first survey investigates the City of Knowledge’s members attitude towards shared space in general with questions like, what are you most likely to share with others? And what would you like to gain access to? A workshop further explored motivations and practical needs. The second survey investigates in particular the attitude towards shared meeting facilities. The Brinkø Typology of Shared Use of Space and Facilities is used as the theoretical frame of the study (Brinke et al 2015). This study show that the members of the Lyngby-Taarbæk City of Knowledge collaboration are very positive towards the concept of shared space, but more reluctant about sharing own facilities. A majority of the informants are often using externally owned facilities for meetings and events, and they prefer professional meeting facilities to schools, universities and sports facilities. This point to the need for buildings owners/operators to develop relevant service concepts, if a shared space strategy, should increase the use rate of existing buildings. The study show that in the Lyngby-Taarbæk City of Knowledge there is a positive attitude towards shared space as concept and as local strategy for gaining access to e.g. meeting facilities. The survey also demonstrates the member’s experience of barriers, which suggest that there are practical barriers to overcome before access is more important than ownership, not only in theory, but also in practice.