

Norrdjurs Kommune, DK

SAINT – Strategies on e-Tourism

The aim of the SAINT – Strategies on e-Tourism pilot was to develop new tourism-oriented digital services to enhance the visitor experience in Norrdjurs Municipality and increase the awareness of how Next Generation Networks (NGN) can boost the local economy. The pilot was divided into three areas:

- | deploying a pilot WiFi Hotspot in one tourist attraction in a nature area,
- | providing access to tourism-oriented digital services and information,
- | developing a good practice guide for local businesses to help them boost business activities and tourism in rural areas using the benefits offered by NGN.



Background

Every year thousands of tourists visit the region of Djursland (which includes Norrdjurs and Syddjurs), located in a beautiful nature area facing the Kattegat sea. Tourists expect to have the same digital opportunities when they are on holiday as they have at home, and providing free WiFi access in a nature area may therefore enhance the visitors experience. Norrdjurs has a special interest in tourism as part of improving the local economy and business activities in the area, and their development strategy specifically works to support local SMEs, in order to boost the economy of the municipality and the area of Djursland.

How has it been delivered?

As a local authority with control over the nature area, the pilot delivery team were able to engage an NGN expert and install a local WiFi hotspot to the nature area at the port of Bønnerup. A second WiFi spot was also installed in February 2020 at Fjellerup Beach, hosted by a popular local ice cream house and waffle bakery. This was chosen as an ideal location for tourists and residents alike.

Designing and delivering the pilot

How has it been designed?

The pilot was designed to support the development strategy of Norrdjurs Municipality and in particular their commitment to support local SMEs. The Municipality sought to provide at least one WiFi hotspot to support tourists, alongside conducting workshops with local tourist businesses to support their digital skills.

Who is it for?

The main beneficiaries of this project would be visitors to the area, residents of the municipality and the local tourism industry. These groups aligned with the development strategy of Norrdjurs Municipality. Interested businesses and individuals were identified using advertising, workshops, interviews and presenting the project at local fairs.

The Municipality remains committed to providing workshops to support businesses digital skills (needs, challenges and current use of NGN), and is conducting interviews first to gauge interest and ensure local businesses, such as holiday home owners, are motivated to attend and give them the courage to explore digital opportunities.



Outcomes of the pilot

What outputs have the pilot achieved?

The pilot has worked with businesses and stakeholders, conducting interviews to get a picture about digitalisation and what needs they have in the region. Two WiFi hotspots were successfully installed. The project is still developing a process for collecting data from these hotspots (i.e. how many users access it, how often, where do the visitors come from, where do they go afterwards and so on).

Unintended outcomes?

By keeping costs low on the first WiFi hotspot installation, Norrdjurs Municipality have installed a second, additional, hotspot in another tourist area, working with a local business as host.

Lessons learned

Creating awareness about digitisation

- | Even before the WiFi hotspots were installed, the Municipality's participation in CORA had created a greater awareness of the need, and possibilities for digital infrastructure and digital skills.

- | The demand for access to digital services in general has increased since the start of CORA, and it is becoming a focus for all stakeholders in the region including local businesses and tourism organisations.

Challenges

- | Whilst national strategies can underpin digitalisation, Norrdjurs Municipality has found that the national strategy is too far for a rural municipality. It is therefore left to local groups to promote and work to achieve greater digital infrastructure and services. This puts a strain on staff time and resources.
- | There can be conflict between public provision of broadband or WiFi services and private companies. In Norrdjurs, such tension delayed the second WiFi hotspot – a local private company planned to provide services in the same area as a proposed public WiFi spot, which resulted in the installation of the second hotspot in an alternative location to the one originally planned.

Remaining pilot activities and future plans

Norrdjurs Municipality is now focused on the education element of their pilot, which involves running interviews and two workshops with local tourism businesses across Djursland on the theme of 'Data driven business development for tourist businesses'. Norrdjurs plan to use outputs from the interviews, workshops and the two CORA WiFi hotspots to develop and write a good practice guide for local businesses to help them identify and engage with the benefits offered by NGN.

